

**Record from the international colloquium on
CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND POSSIBLE WAYS OUT
OF THE CURRENT CRISIS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Prepared by Martin Potůček, May 22, 2017

Organised by the European Movement in the Czech Republic and the Center for Social and Economic Strategies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, the colloquium took place on May 19, 2017, in the Auditorium of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, Charles University, at Malostranské náměstí 25, Praha 1, Czech Republic. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Office in the Czech Republic was the main partner of the colloquium, Collegium Europaeum, Faculty of Arts, Charles University & Institute of Philosophy, Czech Academy of Sciences, was a collaborating organisation, and support was received from the Europe for Citizens programme. Simultaneous interpretation was provided during the meeting and a video recording of the entire programme was taken.

The goal of the colloquium was to stimulate public discourse on the crisis of the European Union, possible ways out of it and the Czech Republic's place in managing it. The main issue areas were as follows:

- causes of the different crises of the EU (fiscal, migration, citizen confidence, Brexit, external relations) and the possibilities of managing them simultaneously,
- cultural and civilizational differences between EU member states,
- future of the common currency,
- EU bodies' strategic decisionmaking capacities,
- place of the Czech Republic in future European Union.

The international colloquium was attended by 90 experts, public officials, politicians, diplomats, civic sector leaders, public figures and students from the Czech Republic and abroad. A press conference was held during the meeting, attended by the Czech Television, the Czech News Agency, Impuls Radio and other journalists. The participants gave a number of other interviews to the press.

After the opening remarks by Aleš Chmelař, the colloquium focused on two panel discussions. Tanweer Ali, Paul Blokker, Marek Mora, Martin Potůček and Ivo Šlosarčík spoke on the panel on causes of the unprecedented crisis of the EU and ways to manage it. On the other panel, Věra Jourová, Vladimír Špidla, Peter Weiss and Daniela von Bethlenfalvy debated the options of EU bodies, member states and citizens to effectively respond to the current challenges. The subsequent session was a moderated discourse on the threats and opportunities of the Czech Republic in the European Union with participation by Petr Hlaváček, Jiří Malý, Aleš Chmelař and Michael Romancov. A rich discussion ensued in all three cases.

Finally, recommendations that arose from the colloquium's discussions were briefly presented by Martin Potůček:

1. In-depth debate about the place of future Czech Republic in future European Union is of fundamental importance to the country's further orientation and should become a political priority.
2. The Czech Republic is facing the essential choice between the stream that prefers more accelerated integration (including stronger political integration and the necessary expansion

of the EU budget) and the concept of slow particular integration steps in line with existing practice.

3. In this decisionmaking field, the choice to adopt or not to adopt the common European currency will be fundamental for the Czech Republic. Such a choice should be weighed in the broad context of its foreseeable longer-term economic, political, social and security consequences.
4. The Czech Republic should become more active in the EU in order to best further its legitimate interests and realize its visions of the Union's future state.
5. The efforts to pull Czech citizens into the debate about the Czech Republic's future in the EU should be as effective as possible.