

[youtube:<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=emLT5CG5BQs>] **Keynote speaker on geopolitics and global risks**

Try to imagine what historians will write about Europe in the year 2100 about the Future of the European Union - does it still exist?

Did integration succeed in preventing a Third World War - as was the hope of the founders of the European Union?

How stable was the Union after expansion to include many former Eastern bloc nations?

What happened following the economic crisis of 2009 - 2011, threats to the Euro, problems with Brexit and COVID?

How did that expansion stabilise or destabilise the region - in relation to Russia?

What was the outcome of major showdowns between The Federal States of Europe and America through 2020-2030?

How did the European Union cope with massive influx of foreign nationals? What happened to national parliaments, laws, markets, and cultures?

**\* *"How AI Will Change Your Life - A Futurist's Guide to a Super-Smart World"* - Patrick Dixon's latest book on AI is published in September 2024 by Profile Books. □ It contains 38 chapters on the impact of AI across different industries, government and our wider world.**

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)

**This article below was written over 10 years ago - so you can JUDGE for yourself the forecasts made.**

## **Major challenges to the EU ahead**

Major challenges to the future of Europe lie ahead.

If the great experiment succeeds, it will create an economic, political and military force to pose real challenges to the United States, with its enlargement to 25 countries and a population approaching 500 million. Expansion over the last few years already added 23% to the EU's land area and included 75 million additional citizens, with a combined economy of \$9.3 trillion, approaching that of the U.S.

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- his latest book.

## **Future of European Union will be costly**

Expansion is a costly business: EU subsidies to the Eastern countries continue to be a large slice of the annual Brussels budget - unlikely to scratch the surface in future. Anyone following the decline of Germany's economy following the years of integration had to recognise the immense investment of resources by old West Germany into the East, for little economic return.

Just visit smaller towns and cities in places like Slovakia or the Czech Republic, dominated still by Stalin-influenced mass-housing projects and decaying ex-communist infrastructure.

Many of those 75 million additional Euro citizens are existing on average incomes of no more than \$450 a month, yet have an expectation of the same kinds of economic and social rights

that those in France and Germany take for granted.

They have find themselves bound by tens of thousands of EU directives, such as rules on food preparation and hygiene in restaurants, which are impossibly expensive to implement without help.

Deutsche Bank studies of GDP growth, productivity and other factors suggest it will take Slovenia, the most developed country, up to a decade to catch up with the EU average.

The problem is most acute for Poland, the largest country in the new group, with a population of 39 million. At current rates it could take 20+ years for Poland to reach average EU living standards.

Tensions may grow if workers in the West feel their jobs are not only moving East, but also their own tax money, which is being used to rebuild nations they care little about.

If the future of the European Union continues as planned, a Greater Europe will rebalance unequal power struggles on the world stage, currently dominated by America even though America is consistently out-voted on many issues. But if the European experiment fails, it will disintegrate eventually into conflict and chaos.

### **The Most Likely Future for Europe**

The most likely scenario for the future of the European Union over the next decade and a half will be slow but steady progress towards integration, held back by the rich diversity of cultures and economic crises.

A Greater Europe cannot be built without stronger EU governance and visionary [leadership](#) , yet these are the two issues which are notably missing at present.

The European Parliament does not command the same sense of respect as national

Parliaments, nor the connection with ordinary people.

This is a serious problem. Who makes decisions in Europe anyway? Is it EU councils of Ministers who are appointed by their own governments? Is it elected representatives of the people (MEPs)?

What happens when an economic crisis unfolds rapidly - affecting different nations in conflicting ways?

What happens if a nation behaves irresponsibly, in ways that create instabilities and liabilities for other members of the Euro Zone?

## **The Future of Europe: Challenge of Tribalism**

Culture differences are profound and deeply sensitive to the future of the European Union.

Take language for example. In France there is great resentment about the dominance of the English language and it is illegal to play too many English songs on the radio.

It is hard to imagine such a profound division between different States of America.

Passions of large numbers of people within the EU can be easily inflamed by insensitive decrees from Brussels, or by "unfair" treatment by one country of another.

Disputes over budget deficits, overspending, beef, lamb, asylum seekers, chocolate, Iraq and so on are not just superficial. They often hide very long, historical issues and profound resentments. Finding a way through will mean finding a common EU voice, a clear moral lead from a commanding EU figurehead who will bring confidence and clarity.

The current system of a 6 monthly rotating leader is unsustainable, confusing, destabilising and makes effective [leadership](#) impossible.

## **The Future of Europe: Challenge of Rapid Enlargement**

The European model changed forever with rapid expansion to the East, doubling the number of countries and embracing nations that are extremely poor in comparison.

Governance will continue to be complex (we don't even have an elected President), and so will be the culture mix.

Ethnic cleansing is a daily reality in Europe - as has been seen over the last few decades in the UK. Every night somewhere in Belfast we see sectarian attacks and every morning the removal vans arrive to take another family away to another location.

It is the same in Bosnia, and Kosovo, both part of old Yugoslavia, yet another part of the same old nation is entering the EU: Slovenia.

So here we have nations rushing to become one, who cannot even stop people in the same street butchering each other because they want to be so different. So expect growth, extension, vast economic trading areas, and with it growing tensions, economic tensions, xenophobia and resentment.

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