



The Great Migration of Europeans to One Europe

by Sergiu Manea



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We live challenging times, and the history taught us that challenging times create strong people. Yet I do ask myself how these times can be turned into an opportunity to strengthen European unity.

How willing are we to stand united for our common political, economic, cultural, and social values? Or how many resources do we have to maintain the needed solidarity and cohesion of Europe in an **increasingly unstable and complex world?**

First, I want to believe that these resources are primarily a personal resort. And they are unlimited, as we find our strength in freedom and the power to decide for ourselves and make independent choices. Moreover, the last three years showed that there is not only unity in diversity, but unity in coordinating and applying common measures meant to sustain our **territorial integrity and energy supply, food, health, or financial security**. This comes not only as a blessing and a confirmation for collective responsibility, but also as an assurance that there is only one path: One Europe.

Therefore, I would like to invite you to a picture-story exercise on how we can encourage **migration of Europeans to One Europe**. How can we design One Europe across all operational areas? How can we change “the way we do things around here” with “the One Europe way of doing things”? How can we notch up the formality without creating dizzying bureaucracy? Not least, how we can add a significant layer of

communication and inclusivity policies that even the Eurosceptics understand and approve?

To this moment, EU remains **the most proficient experiment of economic, social, and political integration in the human history**. Nevertheless, almost 30 years after the EU officially came into existence, we have failed to consolidate it **as a single point of contact** in the collective mind. There are still a whole suite of organizations, processes, and areas where we need to be enrolled, or from which we expect integration. For instance, **Eurozone**, a cluster of EU countries which have adopted euro as their primary currency and sole legal tender. Or the **Schengen** area, which allows free movement and travel in an EU country without special formalities. These initiatives have set the administrative foundation of the European Union, but today there is a growing demand to have a better enrollment of their purpose: **to break down barriers**.

A hammer in this wall is the development of **EU capital market**, by integrating national capital markets into a single one. The key benefit of this commitment stays in building a stronger financial system, with a competitive economy and new opportunities for investors and savers.

In this view, One **Strategic Europe** starts with the financial health of its citizens and it is crucial to talk about the benefits of integrated capital markets towards this achievement. Starting from securing the path towards a green and digital economy to building a reliable foundation of funding and investment, all topped by the transparency and integrity guarantee.

On the other hand, One **Resilient Europe** asks for immediate collaboration. Because, wherever you place your finger on Europe's map, your first instinct is to rank and compare the performance of the country in sight. There are the Western regions or Northern countries, known as wealthy and high-income economies. They are known as best practice examples for their highly developed market economy with notable state participation in strategic sectors. At the same time, there are the worst performer countries, suggesting that country-specific factors can play a major role in regional development. Truth be told, we are talking about a fragile Europe, if the average COVID-19 vaccination rate is 95% in Portugal, Ireland, and Malta, while in Romania and Bulgaria reaches only 25%. Or when we say that national security in Slovakia is at an

all-time high, while France is facing terrorist attacks. **These differences lead to Europe's development bottleneck, taking in consideration that the strength of a chain is limited to that of the weakest link in the chain.**

One **Inclusive Europe** should not be an average calculation, but a standard for 700 million of citizens, on each level of development. Starting from the daily shopping basket and the quality of their food to access to utilities, education, and health services. It is about a level of incomes that ensures all a decent lifestyle, including the immigrants living here - continuing to better the lives of all Europeans over the long haul requires sustainability, inclusion, and growth. So, I strongly believe this is the best mark of **One Europe - a mental and physical space featuring the amenities we long for: security, prosperity, stability, and democracy.**

However, we also need the resources to become competitive at scale, close the technology gap and grow our strategic autonomy. Performant economies are the wedding witnesses of the welfare state and innovation state, while the true meaning of this marriage lies in the fact that you can't reach prosperity without digitalization. **The very existence of the welfare state is conditioned by use of technology and automatization, safe work processes, upskilling and reskilling, and, above all, by engaged and satisfied people.**

One **Technological Europe** can outline the technology revolution in different areas, from agri-food to tourism, defense, and service sectors. One Europe can grow the IT&C sector with strong investments in the STEM ecosystem and talent. One Europe can enable disruptive innovations while bridging separate stakeholders' groups and create common goals. One Europe can lead the global clean energy transition, setting the highest standards of climate and environmental protection. One Europe can benefit from novel technological military advances, and there is no doubt that if European Union armies bring together all their capacities, they can be undefeatable. Together we can put Europe's assets in the spotlight, along with the ways in which **digitization can help to improve specific aspects of both safety, efficiency, and sustainability.**

One **Safe Europe** is about stimulating cooperation among national defense industries. We have already made progress towards producing, using, and exchanging technology, equipment, and tactics. Additionally, over the last years, the EU

developed an even closer cooperation with NATO, focused on concrete results. Now, we can step forward on these capacities and establish a single security framework based on shared responsibilities. With evolved defense and security structures, our crisis-management tools can become a key strength in **developing a strategic culture based on our capacity and willingness to act together.**

Competition is the engine of economic growth – it leads to specialization, higher quality of goods and services, greater variety, lower prices, and more innovation. Yet collaboration brings magnitude. Sustained collaboration is about growth and change, about achieving more impact and build large-scale projects anchored in the humanistic, technical, creative talent of half a billion people, where everyone's experience is valuable.

We are many countries in Europe. Many languages, many peoples, many regions. We know very well that we do not get to choose the country we are born in, or who our family is. **But it stays in our power to build the European family, along a living territory that fosters development, democracy, peace, and equality.** Nobody will do it for us if we are not able to do it for ourselves. It is within us to fix what does not work in Europe at this moment, from social inequalities to individualism and nationalism. Moreover, it depends on us to design **Europe as a place where future generations can focus on innovation rather than restoration.**

One Europe is part of ourselves, as diverse we may be, because we live together, and we face the same challenges. **One Europe** is about how we can shift the norms to make things easier, better, and safer for all. **You, me, us - the present and future cast of One Europe.** Because Europe does not belong to us, it doesn't even belong to our descendants, it belongs to the descendants of our descendants... and **this is what history of the Old Europe has really taught us: that One Europe always breeds New Europe.**