

## **ROCCO CANGELOSI**

### **The European Union from the single market to the Social Union**

The European Union has been a success story until the failure of the Constitutional Treaty. After the French and Dutch referenda and the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Council became the most important Institution and the rule of unanimity in the decision making process is now prevailing. The right of veto prevents the EU achieving any significant reform towards an “ever closer Union”, except for some modifications concerning the single currency, budget and austerity.

In order to overcome this deadlock the European leaders should go back to the origins and concentrate their action on a specific aim, according to the model of ECSC. In 1950 the winning idea was to create a Community aiming to manage the steel and coal market through common institutions acting on the basis of the principle of shared sovereignty between Federal institutions and National governments.

The austerity policy as well as the incapability to face unemployment, growing inequality, social exclusion, poverty, migration, has triggered a large distrust of the citizens in the Union and has added fuel to xenophobia and populism, as well as nationalism jeopardising the existence of the Union itself as it was conceived.

The Union should go back to the spirit of the founding fathers in order to win back confidence and credibility by its citizens.

Nowadays the main objective should be a Social Union to face the most pressing needs of European citizens, in particular unemployment, social exclusion, poverty inequality.

Social Union should be achieved step by step, starting from a single market of welfare, to be realized by an enhanced cooperation or by a social compact similar, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Fiscal Compact.

The exercise should lead eventually to a new organization with federal nature initially formed by a restricted number of member states.

Main objectives should be growth, full employment, social security, health protection, solidarity between generations, health protection, education, migration.

As ECSC shared the resources of coal and steel market, in the same way member states should pool their respective systems of social welfare, to be harmonized and improved.

A special Fund for employment and growth should be set up, financed by own resources such as a federal tax, managed by a High Authority with supranational powers.

The social Union should cooperate with the European Union and make use, if necessary, of its institutions, but the decisions in the Council will be taken only by MQV without any veto right.