

## Summary – Presentation “*A Kantian Reality? Conflict Resolution Peace Building and the Evolution of the European Union (EU)*”

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Federalism is downgraded or completely overlooked in European Studies. That is so because the EU is not a sovereign state and therefore not a federation. Yet, because of its level of integration, it is really difficult to compare it to other supranational bodies.

The Schuman declaration of 1950 was written by Jean Monnet. It is considered as the ‘birth certificate’ of the EU because it is the first concrete foundation of a European federation that is indispensable to the preservation of peace. After the two World Wars, Peace and reconciliation were important factors and this declaration built the foundation of what became the EU. In fact, federalism was a tool to overcome conflict in Europe, particularly between Germany and France and a new way to shift the perspective from a German problem to a European problem. Schuman and Monnet had envisioned a European federation as the final structure. There is a link between a ‘step-by-step’ integration and wider goal of creating European federation. Indeed, one dimension of the EU as a federal project is that federalism is an ideology with a set of values (e.g. solidarity, reciprocity). Another is to build a federal-like political system concretely. For example, the political system rests on a parliament, the governance as well as the courts are very representative institutions where every member state is represented. Given these dimensions, the EU has more federal institutions than most federal states.

The idea of the common market further illustrates that there has always been a clear federal objective running through the integration process, both federalism as an ideology to promote shared-rule and self-rule (Elazar) and by creating a new, sui-generis federal political system: The European Union.

The Kantian idea of federalism is a very specific idea of federalism and functional integration whereby interdependency is key: The more you are interdependent and interconnected the less you go to war. In the case of the EU, federalism works as a conflict resolution because it provides self-rule for certain groups, shared-rule strengthens integration with a focus on territorial integration. Another aspect of the logic of the EU as a conflict resolution mechanism is that it protects the identity of member states but limit their ability in going to war by pooling resources and «Europeanizing» key policy areas. This logic has been consistently applied throughout the process of EU integration.

Because the EU works in practice on the basis of federalism, but not in theory KEIL concludes that comparative political science has to come to terms with some serious conceptual rethinking about the nature of the state, sovereignty and federation if we are to capture the complexity of what is going on. The EU is a new federal model which defies conventional understandings of our traditional conceptual categories and tools of analysis.