**Can You Create a Community through Economic Means?**

**The Case of the European Union**

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**Introduction**

There exist a number of interesting theories that address the issue of the integration and the coming-into-being of the European Union.[[1]](#footnote-1) There is, for example, the spill-over theory as well as theories that emphasize the federal or intergovernmental element in the integration process (e.g. Wiener and Diez 2009). There also exist general social science theories about integration, which can be applied to the European Union, from Durkheim and onwards. Given the turmoil that EU has been going through during the last few years, one is however justified in taking up this issue once more and re-examining its general strategy for integration and more generally for creating a new community. While it for a long time has seemed as if the unification of Europe was steadily moving ahead, even if it was a slow and non-linear kind of movement, things are not so sure today. In 2012, for example, a number of politicians and observers feared that the euro would break up, and with it, the EU. In this paper I will try to add to the current discussion of the integration and unification of Europe by focusing on what has been so far the main way to construct EU. This is that unification and integration of Europe should primarily be created through economic means. The main strategy should in other words not be to use political means or social means or cultural means but *economic means*.

1. For helpful comments I first and foremost thank Mabel Berezin. I am also grateful Sigi Lindenberg, George Ross and the participants at the conference on new theoretical tendencies in economic sociology September 12-14, 2013 at Noors Castle in Sweden.for helpful references and more. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)