

At the moment of its constitution (1945), the Organization of the United Nations (UN) included 51 countries. Today, the total amount of member countries reaches 193, while the world amount of countries with different statuses (independent, autonomous, associated countries...) raises up to 243. In short, we can say that one of the main features of the second half of 20th century, and of the beginnings of 21st, has been the configuration of new countries in parallel with the birth of some big socio-economical regional groups: North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America (ALBA); Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); and, above all, the European Economic Community (EEC), now European Union (EU).

It is certain that the birth of new countries was often soaked with violence, especially in the case of decolonization and of the disintegration of Yugoslavia. It is also true that some of the most recent processes were the result of a mutual agreement, like Greenland and Denmark, or Quebec and Canada, where the referendums didn't give, as a final result, the independence of Quebec, but they did acknowledge the right to hold them. On the rebound, inside the EU we can see a rise of the social and political movements claiming for the independence of Scotland, Flanders, Catalonia and the Basque Country. Denying that means deny the reality of some processes that demand a political and academic attention to understand and explain better what it is happening.

This is precisely the goal of this congress: understand and try to explain what it is happening with the help of professors (historians, political scientists, jurists...), experts in these processes, and of Euro MP's, that could account on how these processes are being considered inside the EU. So, it is a congress that, on the academic and political side, will try to bring some light on a current phenomenon that, surely, will bring some consequences on the future configuration of EU and of the concerned states and countries. All this, finally, without forgetting two basic premises. On the one hand, that on the political side every proposition is legitimate, provided that it is exercised democratically and pacifically: on the other hand, that each secessionist project is the expression of a double political conflict: internal, between citizens in favor or against independence; and external, between citizens who want to become sovereign and the country which includes them.