

## SEPARATISM AND SECESSIONISM: CONCEPTUAL FEATURES IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROJECT

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**Abstract.** *Assessing the nature and specifics of ethno-regional issues in Western Europe, researchers have noted several factors that have contributed to the change and to the elucidation of a whole range of problems associated with regional self-government.*

*One of the important dimensions of modern ethno-regional processes is the deepening of contradictions within the European integration complex. Over the past decade, the EU has not adequately responded to the challenges posed by the global financial and economic crisis of 2008–2009.*

*Moreover, the scheme of asymmetric transfer of authority to the level of “subnational” autonomous regions has not provided a universal and comprehensive solution to all diverse ethno-regional problems in the countries of the European Union. This despite significant progress in the decentralization of power. As the experience of Scotland and Catalonia illustrates, the idea, thought universal, protection of the right to democratic self-government at the regional level has appeared ineffective in some regions with stable historical traditions, developed forms of self-awareness and a strong economy.*

*In both cases, discontent with the economic situation and the lack of sufficient economic regulatory instruments have become an incentive for the manifestation of the phenomenon of political separatism. In Scotland, this factor was the claim to increase oil revenues, and later - a protest against the decision of the British authorities to withdraw from the European Union. For Catalonia, the main factor behind discontent was the refusal of the Spanish government to grant a full-scale tax and budgetary autonomy following the example of the Basque Country. In both cases, the European structures expressed a fundamentally negative attitude towards the plans for creating new independent states. This position has mitigated the issue but has not contributed to its settlement. In a broad political context, the problem of Western European separatism directly depends on the prospects for resolving the main contradictions within the framework of the European integration project. Given the increasing destructive processes within the European Union, the prospects to determine the status of Scotland and Catalonia are unclear*

**Keywords:** *separatism, autonomy, federation, regionalism, decentralization, distribution of powers, subsidiarity, Scotland, Catalonia, European Union*

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