Section 2
Chapter IV
Homogeneity and Differences: The Concept of a ‘Core Europe’ for the Future?

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Introduction

Especially at times when European integration is stagnating, the idea of a ‘Core Europe’ is discussed as a possible solution. This concept embodies the idea of a group of states who continue to integrate and through this provide impetus for the remaining Member States to follow them, immediately or after a period of observation. Is this idea, which has notably and strongly been put forward in the German discussion of this matter, adequate in order to resolve barriers and resistance to integration?

In the German political and legal debate two events have been decisive. The first one concerns the questions surrounding EU enlargement and the second, EU institutional reform, in particular the project of a constitution for the European Union. This project, which has developed in a very short period,