

Good Governance and Bad Neighbours. The End of Transformative Power Europe?

by

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Abstract

The Eastern Enlargement of the European Union (EU) is considered to be one of the (few) successful experiments of international democracy promotion. By contrast, the EU's transformative power appears to be weak or non-existent vis-à-vis its (old) neighbours in the South and its (new) neighbours in the East. Both are not only marked by "bad governance" but also lack a (credible) membership perspective. While the Western Balkans and Turkey have made significant progress towards good governance, both with regard to effectiveness and democratic legitimacy, the European Neighbourhood Countries (ENC) appear to be stuck in transition or never got that far in the first place. Most have improved the effectiveness of governance institutions, but their democratic quality is still wanting or even in decline. This paper explores whether a membership perspective could turn around the negative trend in the EU's neighbourhood of more statehood and less democracy, and if not, to what extent the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) provides an alternative. We will argue that the transformative effect of accession conditionality is still unclear. The prospects of EU membership stabilize rather than drive the move towards effective and democratic governance in candidate countries. Even if the ENC received a membership perspective, it would be unlikely to push them towards democracy. The ENP may lack any transformative power, but still has some domestic impact consolidating rather than undermining authoritarian regimes by helping to strengthen their capacities for effective governance.

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1. Introduction

Research on the transformative power of Europe is thriving. With the borders of the European Union (EU) having moved eastwards, we have been awarded yet another real-world experiment on the transformative power of the EU. As in the case of the Central and Eastern European countries (CEEC), the EU seeks to transform the domestic structures of its neighbours in order to foster peace, stability and prosperity. Turkey and the Western Balkan states have received a membership perspective, which, however, increasingly loses its credibility, particularly with Turkey. While some of the Western Newly Independent States and the Southern Caucasus might foster hopes for being accepted into the club in a distant future, the EU has made it clear that all the Mediterranean countries could expect was increasing access without accession. Since its Southern and Eastern neighbours lack a (credible) membership perspective, the transformative power of the EU seems to be exhausted. Yet, the Western Balkans and Turkey have made significant progress towards good governance. The European Neighbourhood Countries (ENC), by contrast, appear to be stuck in transition or never made it that far to begin with. While most have improved the effectiveness of governance institutions, their democratic quality is still wanting or even in decline.

Against this background, this paper explores whether a membership perspective could turn around the negative trend in the EU's neighbourhood of more statehood and less democracy, and if not, to what extent the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) provides an alternative. We argue that the transformative effect of accession conditionality is still unclear. The prospects of EU membership stabilize rather than drive the move towards effective and democratic governance in candidate countries. Even if the ENC received a membership perspective, it would be unlikely to push them towards democracy. The ENP may lack any transformative power, but still has some domestic impact consolidating rather than undermining authoritarian regimes by helping to strengthen their capacities for effective governance.

The first part of the paper compares the trajectory of the new CEEC member states with the Western Balkans and Turkey, which are in the pre-accession stage, as well as the Eastern and Southern ENC, which lack a membership perspective. Accession conditionality, somewhat ironically, did not make much of a difference in the case of the CEEC, which had already acquired a relatively high level of both statehood and democracy when the EU accepted them as potential members in 1991. Starting from a much lower level, Turkey and the Western Balkans have made significant progress towards both statehood and democracy after the EU recognized them as candidate countries in 1999 and 2003, respectively. Yet, this trend had

started much earlier. Hence, it is not at all clear whether membership really makes a difference. While the domestic change in the CEEC and Turkey had been well under way when the EU put out the golden carrot, the Western Balkans had been subject to external attempts of state-building and democracy promotion by international actors, among which the EU was not the only game in town. The EU might be a stabilizing rather than a transforming power. The second part of the paper zooms into the ENC to explore the domestic impact of the ENP, which the EU has set up as an alternative to accession as to promote good governance. Unlike Turkey and the Western Balkans, the Eastern and Southern ENC have on average increased in statehood but made no progress or even regressed in democracy. This trend confirms earlier findings of the Europeanization literature on the role of the EU in exporting stability rather than promoting good governance. At the same time, we find some interesting deviations from this regional trend with regard to both the level and magnitude of domestic change that cut across the East-South dimension. Algeria and the Ukraine show some improvements with regard to the democratic quality of their regimes while the statehood of Moldova, Lebanon and Belarus has declined. If the ENP has deployed some domestic impact, its effect is not uniform. In the final part of the paper, we argue that these deviations are largely unrelated to the EU but reflect domestic developments. The paper concludes with some critical reflections on the EU as a stabilizing rather than a transforming power, which is particularly problematic in the case of non-democratic regimes, which form the vast majority of the EU's neighbourhood.

2. Membership matters, but when and how?

Since the end of the Cold War, the EU has sought actively to foster peace, stability and prosperity in the post-communist countries by essentially exporting its norms and principles of good governance. To make them adopt its constitutional principles and sectoral policies and adapt their domestic structures accordingly, the EU has developed a sophisticated tool box that heavily draws on 'reinforcement by reward' (positive conditionality) and 'reinforcement by support' (capacity-building) (Schimmelfennig et al. 2003; cf. Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). Both instruments are linked in the membership perspective, which is conditional upon compliance with the EU's Copenhagen Criteria and comes with comprehensive financial and technical assistance to strengthen the reform capacity of state institutions. The 'golden carrot' of membership is considered to form the core of the EU's transformative power, which explains the success story of Eastern Enlargement, the differential progress of the Western Balkan countries and Turkey as well as the lack of improvement in the European Neighbourhood Countries (inter alia Magen 2006; Schimmelfennig and Scholtz 2009). In the absence of a (credible)

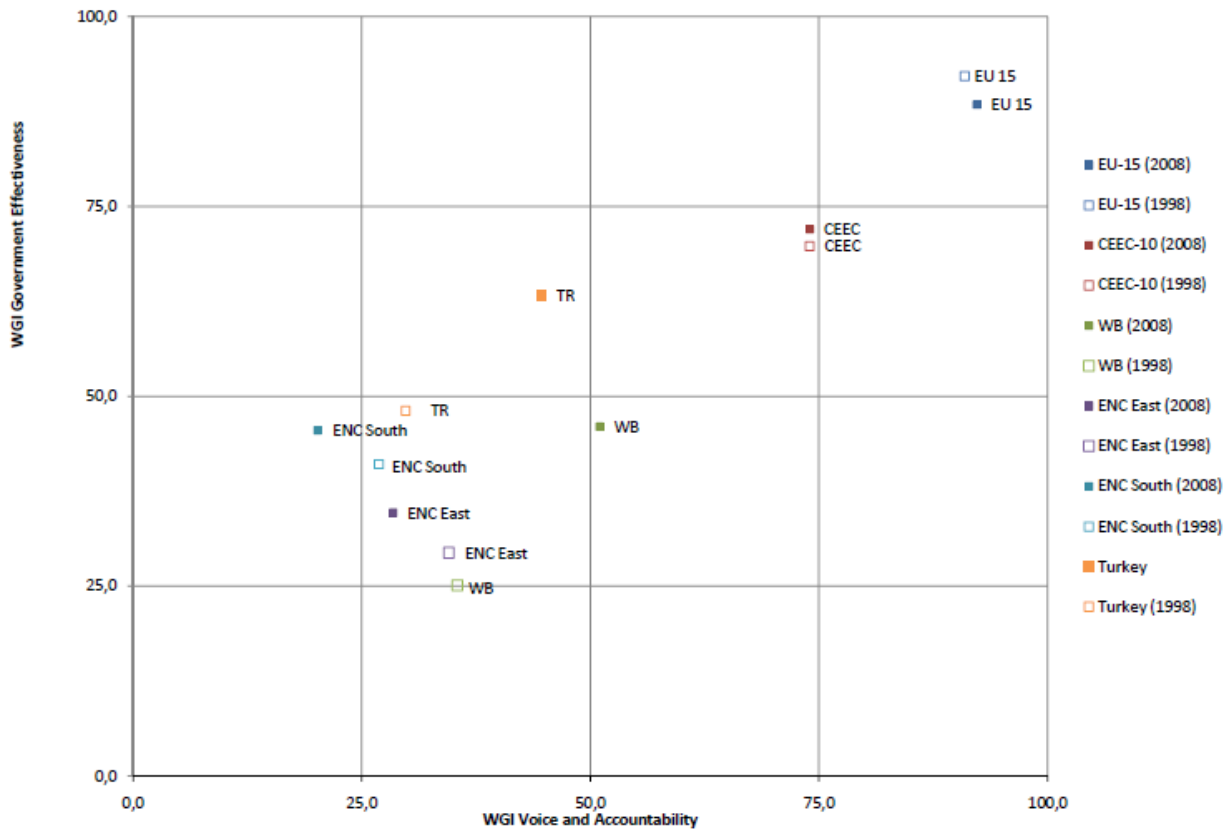
membership perspective, the EU is unlikely to have a transformative effect on governance in third countries.

Yet, a comparison of the effectiveness and democratic quality of governance institutions across time and countries paints a more ambivalent picture. We still lack reliable data to draw causal inferences between the EU's attempts to transform the domestic structures of accession and neighbourhood countries, on the one hand, and changes in the effectiveness and democratic quality of their governance institutions, on the other. However, the data available suggest some interesting correlations that are supported by the emerging empirical research on Accession and Neighbourhood Europeanization. We use the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) *Voice and Accountability* (VA) and *Government Effectiveness* (GE) as a proxy for democracy and statehood, respectively, to trace changes towards effective and democratic governance. Unfortunately, data are only available for the time period of 1998 and 2008.¹ But they still yield themselves to some interesting observations.

First, for the CEEC, membership might not have been so important, after all. The 10 CEEC, which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, respectively, had reached a relatively high level of statehood and democracy when they started negotiating their accession to the EU in 1999. Since then, they have not made any significant progress (figure 1 below). Case studies confirm that accession conditionality was successful only in the cases of unstable democracies where democratic and authoritarian and nationalist forces competed for power. While the prospects of membership and the threat to postpone it empowered liberal politics and locked-in democratic reforms in Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Rumania, the "shadow of accession" has been hardly relevant in countries with strong democratic constituencies (most of the CEEC; see Vachudova 2005; Schimmelfennig 2005). The EU has certainly supported but definitely not driven the successful transition of the CEEC (cf. Sadurski 2004; Kelley 2004; Schimmelfennig et al. 2006).

¹ While these indicators are certainly no perfect measure of the levels of democracy and statehood in a country, they provide a valuable starting point for a systematic comparison across countries and over time. Especially indices for statehood are still under development, such as the 'stateness' dimension in the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI), which is only available from 2003 onward. This is why we chose the WGI GE, because it highly correlates with the BTI sub-indicator 'basic administration', capturing the state's capacity to govern effectively, and it is available since the mid 1990s. Accordingly, we opted for the WGI VA among other indices for the democratic quality or the degree of political liberalization of regimes, such as the Freedom House Freedom in the World index or Polity IV. Even though the WGI are available for 1996-2009, we focus on the ten years between 1998 and 2008 because of changes in measurement (cf. Kaufmann et al. 2009).

Figure 1: Democracy and Statehood in Europe and beyond



Second, Turkey (TR) and the Western Balkans (WB) have made substantial progress since the EU recognized them as candidate countries in 1999 and 2003, respectively. While they started at a much lower level of both statehood and democracy than the CEEC, they have moved ever closer. Similar to the CEEC, EU conditionality has certainly empowered liberal reform coalitions in Croatia and Macedonia, the two Western Balkan country that opened accession negotiations, Montenegro, which received candidate status, and Serbia, which is about to follow suit. At the same time, the Western Balkans have been subject to comprehensive state-building and democratization efforts by other external actors, including the UN and NATO, which makes it difficult to discern the effect of the EU. Moreover, Albania has been less responsive to EU conditionality and assistance resisting necessary reforms to make its governance institutions more effective and democratically legitimate (Elbasani 2009) and relapsing in political crisis recently. Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo, finally, are seriously lagging behind and have not even applied for membership (Elbasani 2012). Turkey, by contrast, has continued to make progress towards both statehood and democracy despite the declining credibility of its membership perspective (Tocci 2005; Saatcioglu 2010). Domestic reforms in Turkey appear to be as much endogenously driven as in the CEEC and the Western Balkans. Finally, EU conditionality and assistance does not only empower liberal reform coalitions. The governments of Turkey and Albania, for instance, have been cherry picking issues from the EU's reform

agenda for good governance that align with their political preferences and help consolidate their power (Yilmaz 2011; Elbasani 2009).

Third, the European Neighbourhood Countries, which lack a membership perspective, have not made any significant progress towards good governance.² Both the seven Arab regimes in the Mediterranean and the six former Soviet Republics that form the Eastern Partners of the EU have somewhat improved in statehood, but declined in democracy, although only slightly. Whether this trend towards more statehood and less democracy is the result of a lacking membership perspective, however, is questionable. Conditionality is only an instrument. As long as the EU seeks to promote stability rather than democratic change (van Hüllen and Stahn 2009; Börzel et al. 2008), the prospect to join the EU is unlikely to reverse the regional trend. Notwithstanding the question, whether they qualify as “European”, the Southern and Eastern ENC would have to make substantial progress towards democracy to meet the Copenhagen Criteria if they wanted to obtain a membership perspective in the first place.

In sum, membership matters but it is unclear whether before or after the EU offers the possibility to join. We do not know whether the membership perspective provides the crucial incentive for countries to initiate the domestic changes setting the trend towards effective and democratic governance or whether these countries only receive a membership perspective once they have entered the trend and made substantial progress. The CEEC and Turkey had already significant reforms under way, which seems to suggest that the prospects of joining the EU reinforced rather than induced domestic changes towards good governance. In the case of the Western Balkans, membership has been a means of last resort for the EU after previous attempts at state-building and democracy promotion appeared to have failed. Whether the ‘golden carrot’ is big enough to overcome domestic resistance against democratic change, on the one hand, and come to terms with problems of deficient state capacity and contested statehood remains to be seen, particularly in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Börzel 2012).

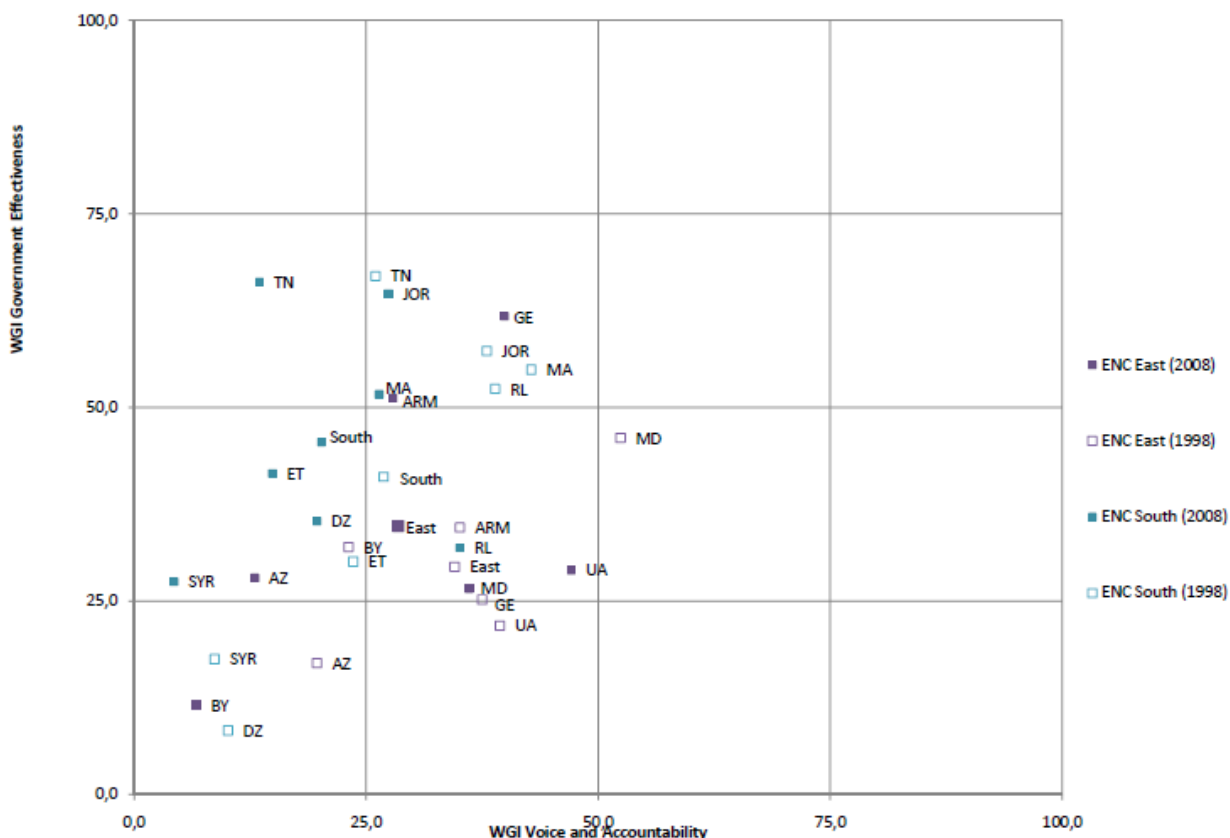
² Among the countries officially listed by the European Commission as participating in the ENP, we focus on six Eastern seven and Southern neighbours: In the East, we include all six ENC in our investigation, namely Armenia (ARM), Azerbaijan (AZ), Belarus (BY), Georgia (GE), Moldova (MD), and Ukraine (UA). Regarding the Southern ENC, we include Algeria (DZ), Egypt (ET), Jordan (JOR), Lebanon (RL), Morocco (MOR), Syria (SYR), and Tunisia (TN) as seven Arab authoritarian regimes that have always been integrated into the EU’s Mediterranean policy. We exclude Israel and Palestine, because they clearly have a status apart from the other Southern neighbours which is not only due to the ongoing Middle East conflict. Israel has much higher levels of socio-economic development and democratic quality than the other Mediterranean neighbours and Palestine is simply not yet a state. We also exclude Libya, because the EU had sanctions in place until 2004 and since then, the EU and Libya have only slowly proceeded in establishing bilateral relations comparable to those with other Southern ENC, clearly limiting any impact the EU might have had on domestic change.

Since membership is neither in the cards for the European Neighbourhood Countries nor likely to make a difference, the question arises whether the new European Neighbourhood Policy provides an alternative. To explore these questions, the next section zooms into the European Neighbourhood Countries. On average, the seven Arab regimes in the Mediterranean, the three Western Newly Independent States and the three Southern Caucasus countries have increased in the effectiveness of their governance institutions but stalled or even regressed in their democratic quality. At the same time, some of the ENC deviate from this regional trend.

3. Zooming into the European Neighbourhood: Going against the Tide?

As we have already seen, the ENC scores of the WGI VA and GE in 1998 and 2008 reveal a similar trend throughout the European neighbourhood (figure 1 above): In both the South and the East (sub-)regions, a minor decrease of VA and a similar increase in GE over time suggest that successful state-building does not go hand in hand with a democratization of the regimes, but that the Eastern and Southern neighbours move even further away from the model of liberal democracy advocated by the EU. Still, there is a difference between the two (sub-)regions: The ENC in the East have, on average, a slightly higher level of democratic quality than the ENC in the South, whereas the opposite is the case for the level of statehood, where the Southern ENC score higher than the Eastern ENC. However, moving beyond the (sub-)regional level and zooming into the individual ENC, these (sub-)regional trends hide significant variation across countries, both regarding the initial levels of statehood and democracy and their variation over time (figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Democracy and Statehood in the European Neighbourhood



Focusing on the patterns of change, we identify three groups of ENC: First, countries that are perfectly in line with the regional trend, with a decreasing level of democracy and an increasing level of statehood; second, those countries that deviate from the regional trend in that both their levels of democracy and statehood decrease over time; and third, countries that show progress on both dimensions, with increasing levels of democracy and statehood (table 1). Interestingly, these trajectories cut across the two (sub-)regions and they are not systematically linked to the (initial) levels of democracy and statehood in the individual countries.

Table 1: Patterns of Change in the ENC 1998-2008

democracy statehood	less	more
more	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Jordan, Syria	Algeria, Georgia, Ukraine
less	Belarus, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia	-/-

The regional trend: Consolidating authoritarian states?

For Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, the change in levels of democracy and statehood between 1998 and 2008 reflect the regional average of less democracy and more statehood. Except for Jordan, the increase of state capacity is more important than the loss of democratic quality. Overall, the magnitude of change in the individual countries is very similar so that the variation across countries remains more or less the same over time. Only in Syria and Jordan, the change in levels of respectively democracy and statehood is below average, which is not surprising, as Syria starts from the lowest level of democratic governance and Jordan from the highest level of effective governance among the five to begin with. We see the same trajectory at very different (initial) levels and while there seems to be a rough co-variation of the levels of democracy and statehood, this is not always the case. Azerbaijan and Syria, for instance, have similar levels of statehood but diverging levels of democracy as opposed to Azerbaijan and Egypt as well as Armenia and Jordan, which start from similar levels of democracy but diverging levels of statehood.

Against the regional trend 1: Failing authoritarian states?

Another five ENC from the East and the South go against the regional trend in that they are marked by a decline in both dimensions of good governance: Belarus, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, and Tunisia score worse on both indicators of effective and democratic governance in 2008 than they did ten years earlier, albeit to very different degrees. Especially regarding state capacity, the magnitude of change varies significantly, with only a minor decrease in the case of Morocco and Tunisia and a major decline in the cases of Belarus and Lebanon. Changes in the democratic quality vary to a much lesser degree. Lebanon is marked by only a slight deterioration of its democratic quality, while all other countries experience greater change. On average, the decline of GE goes hand in hand with a much bigger decrease of VA compared to the group of countries in line with the regional trend. Again, we see the same pattern of change at very different levels of democracy and statehood, but most countries in this group start from relatively high levels, especially of statehood, but also in some cases of democracy. Only Belarus departs from significantly lower levels of statehood and democracy so that the decrease in both dimensions brings the country to the very bottom of the ENC in 2008. Belarus and Moldova are the two countries where the trend towards less democracy and less statehood is most pronounced. Lebanon, by contrast, is marked by a major drop in state capacity, but the decrease of democratic quality well below the regional average and at a comparatively high level is negligible. As Morocco and especially Tunisia start from high levels of statehood and only experience a minor decrease in that dimension, they rather belong to the group of consolidating authoritarian states being in line with the trend rather than going against it.

Against the regional trend 2: Consolidating democratic states?

Finally Algeria, Georgia, and Ukraine move into the same direction as Turkey and the Western Balkan countries, improving on both dimensions of effective and democratic governance. However, the initial levels and the magnitude of change of statehood and democracy vary significantly between the three countries. Algeria and Georgia make the biggest leap in terms of GE among the ENC, but show only little improvement on VA. For Ukraine, change in both dimensions is similarly small and its trajectory is thus much more even. While Algeria jumps up from extremely low levels of both statehood and democracy, Georgia and Ukraine start from similar and much higher levels before their trajectories diverge.

In sum, the different patterns of change cut across the two (sub-)regions and show no systematic relation with the initial levels of democracy and statehood and the magnitude of change (table 2 and 3). Zooming into the European neighbourhood reveals significant variation across countries and more diverse variation over time than focusing on average scores of effective and democratic governance in the region suggests. If the EU and the ENP have an effect on (good) governance in its near abroad, it is clearly differential. How can we account for the three country patterns that cut across the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood? Are they the result of a differential treatment by the EU or do they rather reflect domestic developments?

Table 2: Levels in the ENC 1998 (group 1, group 2, **group 3**)

democracy statehood	low	medium	high
high	-/-	<i>Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia</i>	-/-
medium	<i>Egypt, Belarus</i>	<i>Armenia, Georgia</i>	<i>Moldova</i>
low	Algeria , Azerbaijan, Syria	Ukraine	-/-

Table 3: Magnitude of Change in the ENC 1998-2008 (group 1, group 2, **group 3**)

democracy statehood	small	medium	big
big	Algeria, Georgia, Lebanon	<i>Belarus</i>	-/-
medium	<i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Syria</i>	<i>Moldova</i>	-/-
small	Ukraine	<i>Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia</i>	-/-

4. EU External Governance – does it make a difference?

The EU has developed a “one-size-fits-all” institutional framework for promoting good governance in its external relations with (neighbouring) countries (Börzel et al. 2007). The ENP brings together pre-existing policy frameworks which have, however, always relied on similar instruments and highly standardized provisions in line with the EU's global policy on human rights, democracy, and good governance. Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement (EMAA) in the South and Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in the East form the legal basis for political dialogue and democratic conditionality. The EU can provide capacity-building through various external cooperation programmes. The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) has replaced the former (sub-)regional programmes TACIS and MEDA in 2007. In addition, the ENC are eligible to a number of thematic programmes such as the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR, 2000), Twinning (2003), and TAIEX (2006). The EU has never established a joint multilateral framework for all ENC. Instead, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (1995) and more recently the Union for the Mediterranean (2008) co-exist with the Eastern Partnership (2009).

While the EU has developed a common institutional framework, it treats countries differently in the implementation (Börzel et al. 2008). This differentiation can take place in the content and objectives of specific measures, for instance focussing in one country on the fight against corruption and in another country on the respect for human rights. More fundamentally, the EU adjusts the depth of bilateral relations as part of its political conditionality, using the exclusion and inclusion into its policy framework as sanctions and rewards vis-à-vis individual countries. Thus, Syria and Belarus, which can be considered as the “bad guys” of the ENC, are the only ones which are not fully integrated into the institutional framework of the ENP as a result of EU sanctions (negative ex-ante conditionality). Neither the EMAA negotiated with Syria in 2004 and renegotiated in 2008, nor the PCA signed with Belarus in 1995 are currently in force. Although a PCA was signed in 1995, it never entered into force due to the authoritarian backlash Alexander Lukashenko around 1996 (Mihalisko 1997). Similarly, the EU refused to sign the EMAA negotiated with Syria in 2004 because of the regime's role in the Middle East conflict, and despite a renegotiation in 2008, the signature is still pending (European Commission 2008). Azerbaijan and Egypt score as low on statehood and democracy as Belarus and Syria, however, their PCA/EMAA with the EU are in force and they participate fully in the ENP. They have developed Action Plans with the EU and benefit from all forms of technical and financial assistance, including the TAIEX and Twinning Programmes of the EU. This differential treatment cannot be explained by different trajectories because Syria, Egypt and Azerbaijan are in line with the regional trend of more statehood and less democracy while Belarus has declined

on both. So have Lebanon and Moldova without being downgraded in their relationship with the EU.

The EU is as inconsistent in rewarding progress as it is in punishing the lack thereof. The two “poster children” of the ENC, Morocco and Ukraine, were the first neighbours that have been elevated by the EU moving bilateral relations beyond the standard institutional framework of the ENP. In 2008, the EU and Morocco adopted a joint document establishing Morocco’s “*statut avancé*” in Euro-Mediterranean relations and serving as a road map for cooperation, complementing the EMAA and the ENP AP. In a similar vein, the EU and Ukraine agreed in 2009 on an “Association Agenda”, replacing the ENP AP in preparation of a new association agreement. Yet, despite the Orange Revolution in 2004/2005, Ukraine has not significantly progressed, neither with regard to statehood nor democracy. Nor has Morocco, which has rather regressed in both dimensions. Likewise, Georgia has made some significant progress in statehood but not in democracy but is treated by the EU and US as an anchor for democracy in Russia’s near abroad (van Hüllen and Stahn 2009). Other countries that also have substantially improved in statehood and at least not declined on democracy have not received similar rewards. Interestingly, Algeria is the ENC that has improved most in statehood and democracy since the late 1990s. At the same time, it is the only Southern ENC with an EMAA in force that has kept its distance to the ENP, refusing to engage in the benchmarking and monitoring exercise of ENP AP and progress reports (van Hüllen 2010).

Overall there is no consistent differentiation of the EU’s approach on the basis of different levels of democracy and statehood or the direction and magnitude of change therein. While the EU might consider these factors for some countries, in other cases the EU’s differential treatment rather seems to be guided by geostrategic and economic interest, such as energy security in case of Azerbaijan (Börzel et al. 2008) and the (diverging) roles of Syria and Egypt in the Middle East Conflict. As we have already seen, the different country patterns of change do not correlate with particular levels of statehood and democracy either. Both the ENC in line with and going against the regional trend vary significantly in the effectiveness and democratic quality of their governance institutions (see above). Their trajectories are driven by domestic factors that are largely contingent and have hardly been influenced by the EU and its Neighbourhood Policy. In a first assessment of domestic developments and the EU’s role, we discuss the driving forces behind major changes in statehood (Algeria, Belarus, Georgia, Lebanon, and Moldova) and the significance of the rare improvements of democratic quality (Algeria, Georgia, Ukraine).

The major decrease in government effectiveness in Lebanon is due to the resurgence of violent conflict in the aftermath of the assassination of Rafiq Hariri, Prime Minister of Lebanon, in 2005,

marked by the Israeli-Lebanese war in 2006 and domestic violence surrounding the succession of Michel Suleiman to Emil Lahoud as President in 2008. The situation in Moldova is similar. The frozen conflict over Transnistria, where a Russian minority seeks secession to join the neighbouring motherland, does not only challenge the monopoly of force of the Moldovan state but also undermines its overall stability. While the EU is certainly not responsible for the decline of statehood in the two countries, its attempts at conflict resolution in the context of the ENP have not made much of a difference either (Vahl and Emerson 2004). Conversely, Algeria significantly improved in statehood when the civil war ended in 2002 and (political) life slowly returned to normal over the following years. The EU had remained conspicuously passive after the 1992 coup interrupting the electoral process in Algeria, and negotiations for an EMAA with Algeria were only suspended temporarily in 1997-1999 in light of the political situation and in particular the increased violence (Hugh 2002). However, bilateral relations with the EU have strengthened again in the post-conflict period, with the conclusion of the EMAA in 2002 and increased capacity-building under MEDA, especially since 2004. The EU has certainly not played a major role in ending the civil war, allowing the Algerian regime to govern more effectively again, but it might have supported the process of slowly consolidating statehood. The influence of external actors on the increase of government effectiveness is more obvious in Georgia, where pressure and assistance by the EU and other donors supported the Saakashvili regime in its fight against corruption (Börzel and Pamuk 2011). Conversely, EU sanctions might have contributed to the loss in statehood of Belarus, even though this would have been an unintended consequence; the EU seeks to punish the low democratic quality of Belarusian governance institutions rather than undermine their effectiveness (van Hüllen and Stahn 2009). Turned positively, the Belarusian case could be interpreted as the absence of the EU's otherwise positive impact, as Belarus does not benefit from similar levels of capacity-building and is excluded from several EU programmes such as TAIEX and Twinning. This would suggest that the EU indeed contributes to the overall positive trend for government effectiveness in the region, at least in those countries where it deploys its entire means at promoting effective governance and which do not face major challenges to statehood in the form of violent conflict.

Increases in democracy in Algeria, Ukraine, and especially Georgia are very modest and clearly endogenously driven. For Algeria, the improvement at very low levels has to be placed against the background of the end of violent conflict around 2002. It has allowed the restoration of Algerian political institutions, including elections, which largely explains the improvements in democratic standards in Algeria. In addition, political rights and civil liberties are no longer overshadowed by the threat of domestic violence, reviving pluralism in media, civil society, and political participation. Algeria has been very cautious in actively engaging in the ENP, including

parts of the EU's policy for promoting good governance (van Hüllen 2010), so the EU's role is at best weak. The effect of the ENP on democratization in Ukraine and Georgia is equally weak and indirect. The democratization process in the Ukraine is endogenously driven. However, membership aspirations of pro-Western governments have made the EU an anchor for democratic reforms (Youngs 2009), at least until Viktor Yanukovich took office in 2010, which has resulted in a democratic relapse. Neither the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2003 nor the Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2004 have led to a democratic breakthrough and the EU has not succeeded in reinforcing or stabilizing the democratic momentum of the colour revolutions.

5. Conclusion

Despite its normative aspirations, the EU has sought to export security, stability and economic prosperity rather than democracy to its Southern and Eastern neighbours (Youngs 2001; Schimmelfennig and Scholtz 2009; Börzel 2010). The ENP can be considered a success in this regards, at least until recently. With a few exceptions, the ENC have increased the effectiveness of their governance institutions. The stalling or recess of their democratic quality certainly contradicts the EU's goal of democracy promotion, but might be an unintended consequence of prioritizing stability. In any case, the changes that go against this regional trend have been largely unrelated to the EU's good governance promotion. Thus, if the ENP has a domestic impact, it appears to stabilize rather than transform existing governance institutions (Youngs 2001; Börzel 2010). While in the case of the CEEC, the EU has stabilized democracy, it has consolidated autocracy in the ENC. The recent break downs of the authoritarian regimes in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya happened less because but rather despite the EU's attempts to prevent political instability producing negative externalities, such as uncontrolled migration or energy insecurity.

It is far too early to tell whether the recent developments will reverse the regional trend in the Southern neighbourhood leading to more democracy; it certainly means less stability, at least in the short run. The current democratic uprisings stand in stark contrast to the regional trend towards consolidating authoritarian states in the European neighbourhood. Despite great hopes for political transformation after the end of the Cold War, the Eastern ENC got stuck in transition and recently experience a back sliding in democratic standards – not only in Belarus, but also in Ukraine and Georgia after the colour revolutions. It remains to be seen whether the break down of authoritarian regimes results in substantial and lasting democratic transitions ending the persistence of authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa. In any event, the ENP has little to do with the current changes in the Arab World. The refusal of the EU to impose sanction

on Libya amid the massive violence by which Gaddafi seeks to suppress the pro-democracy upheavals against his regime once again demonstrates the EU's priority for stability over democracy. So does the attempt of the EU to come up with a coordinated response to the democratic changes in North Africa and the Middle East. While EU assistance shall focus on "deep democracy building", including electoral reform, support for civil society, construction of an independent judiciary and a free press and media, and the fight against corruption, the preparations for Tunisia seem to indicate that the EU is most likely to concentrate on effective rather than democratic governance, particularly in the area of economic development and border control (Phillips 2011).

6. Literature

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