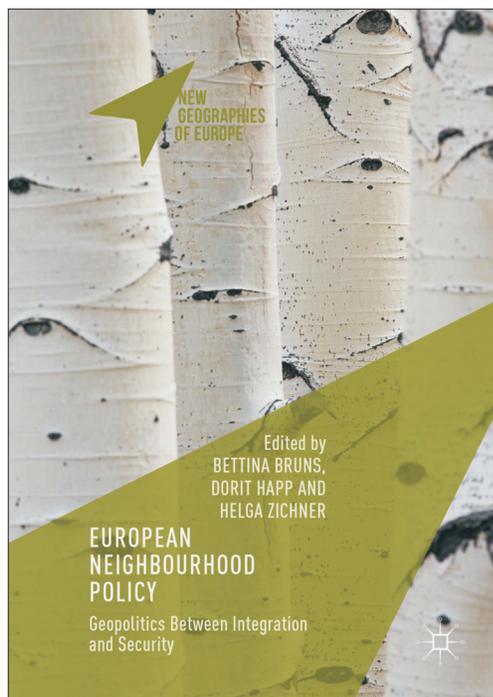


Bruns, B., Happ, D. and Zichner, H. (eds.): European Neighbourhood Policy. Geopolitics Between Integration and Security. London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 242 p.

In the 1990s and 2000s the territory of the European Union showed a remarkable expansion, with its border significantly moving eastwards throughout these decades. It seems as though however, that with the accession of Croatia in 2013 the European Community finished its territorial project. Instead, "the EU acts more and more extraterritorially, claiming to promote prosperity, stability and security not only within the EU but within its direct neighbourhood as well" (ZICHNER, H. and BRUNS, B. 2011, p. 78.). Yet, it is largely unclear what role and importance is attributed by the EU to these non-member neighbour states and how societies in these states are concerned.

In their new volume 'European Neighbourhood Policy: Geopolitics Between Integration and Security' Bettina BRUNS, Dorit HAPP and Helga ZICHNER, all from the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (IfL) in Leipzig, aim as editors to provide profound and comprehensive answers for these questions through the involvement of a series of authors from Central and Eastern Europe. As contribution to the 'New Geographies of Europe' series of Palgrave Macmillan, the book is an outcome of the 'Within a Ring of Secure Third Countries' project, implemented at IfL between 2011 and 2018.



The main objective of the book is to assess the instruments and measures that relevant actors, mostly EU policy and decision makers, gear towards determining the Community's relations with its neighbours in the Western Balkans and Central and Eastern Europe. As an important difference between policies towards the two country groups the willingness to a future enlargement is explicitly expressed in the case of the former group (consisting of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia), whereas the integration of Central and Eastern European neighbouring countries (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine) is expected to be carried out without offering them an EU membership. Considering these territorial foci, the title of the book is somewhat misleading as the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) includes a total of 16 countries, most of which are not subject for the analysis. In contrast, countries in the Western Balkan are not involved in the ENP. In spite of this minor issue, scrutinising these countries is an entirely logical choice in light of the above research aims.

The distinctive nature of the book, already emphasised in the introductory chapter (Chapter 1) by the editors, is attributed to "[t]he shared focus of the contributions ... on the strategies through which the EU tries to influence internal politics in third states, but seen from the perspective of those third states themselves ... complemented by a critical assessment of EU interests lying behind its extra-territorial strategies" (p. 12). A key notion here is the EU's extra-territorial engagement which the authors understand "as a spatial-strategic means to control socio-spatial relations on multiple scales in sovereign states outside the EU" (p. 7) Through such strategies the European Community targets to set up a 'circle of friends', a virtual buffer zone which may provide, first of all, security for the EU against potential unwanted effects from the outside world, such as migration. It has remained largely unknown, however, how these strategies played out from the perspective of countries in this 'circle of friends'.

The label 'European' has been of crucial importance in the classification of EU neighbour countries in the course of the establishment process of this 'circle of friends', as is suggested by Frank MEYER (Chapter 2). The label, regularly used in high-level EU policy discourses, enabled "the demarcation of what belongs to Europe and what does not" (pp. 27–28), that is, who is friend and who is not. In his contribution, MEYER scrutinises the concept of the 'Area of Freedom, Security and Justice', derived from Title V of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European

Union, through a discourse analysis of political speeches held by the respective Commissioners of the Department for Justice and Home Affairs between 1995 and 2014, who addressed the question how the relation of the EU to itself and its neighbours was represented in the political discourse throughout this period. Through reconstructing the AFSJ concept, the author reveals the specific semantic strategies aimed at legitimising the strict border regime, i.e. the upscaling of formerly national responsibilities.

Migration to the EU as one of the most pressing current issues also comes into focus in the study of Lena LAUBE and Andreas MÜLLER (Chapter 3). The authors apply the principal-agent approach to investigate how migration control tasks are delegated by EU Member States to third countries just outside the Community Area. In this sense, neighbouring countries, for example transit states, are required to introduce measures in order to stop illegal migration towards the EU. In return, these countries receive political profits for their cooperation, as in the case of Ukraine (among others), to which the EU granted visa facilitation after the readmission agreement was signed. From the EU perspective, the Community “has achieved its aim of delegation if ‘unwanted’ migrants have already been rejected extra-territorially” (p. 65). The success of delegation is, however, largely dependent on the internal political situation of the respective neighbour.

Chapter 4 by Micha FIEDLSCHUSTER also contributes to the analysis of the EU’s extra-territorial engagement. Focusing on the European Commission’s relationship with CSOs (civil society organisations), the text suggests that these contacts are strained by imbalances in many senses. Though there has been a shift toward putting more emphasis on the ‘bottom-up’ dimension, the ‘top-down’ approach is still more significant. At the same time, the EU’s support to organisations in different spheres is uneven as “some sectors of civil society are more willing and/or capable to adapt to Brussels’ political environment than others, who are, in turn, likely to become marginalized” (p. 77). Ultimately, the Commission was also compelled to rethink its support policy in the wake of the geopolitical crisis between the EU and Russia over Ukraine in 2014, in order to avoid “openly supporting anti-government protestors and pressuring governments through CSOs” (pp. 88–89).

The duality and ambiguity of EU member states’ policies towards Ukraine as a co-host of the 2012 UEFA European Championship is scrutinised by Andrey MAKARYCHEV and Alexandra YATSYK in Chapter 5. The authors discuss the dispute between EU Member States themselves, most notably between Germany and Poland, on the eventual boycott of Ukraine during Euro 2012. While the German side aimed to politically ostracise the Yanukovich regime for its authoritarian nature and the imprison-

ment of the former opposition side Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko through boycotting the events in Ukraine. In contrast, Poland was more willing to maintain the dialogue with Kyiv. This conflict not only shed light on the different notions and interests of the Member States with regard to Eastern relations but also on the “significance of other forms of institutional, economic, societal and cultural inclusion in Europe not necessarily based on the prospects of EU membership” (p. 110).

Particular attention is given to Ukraine in the volume. The country is often portrayed in public media as a natural ally of the EU. Nevertheless, the public attitude of Ukrainians towards the European integration may not be that unambiguous. This is the subject of the study of Tetiana KOSTUCHENKO and Liubov AKULENKO (Chapter 6), who investigate the relation between public attitude towards the European integration and government efforts within the Eastern Partnership (EaP) framework in Ukraine and Georgia. Both countries experienced non-violent ‘coloured revolutions’ in the 2000s (Georgian Rose Revolution in 2003, Ukrainian Orange Revolution in 2004), which have widely been considered as pro-European social and political turns. Still, the population’s attitude remained more nuanced than expected. According to the outcomes of various surveys public opinion has been more favourable towards the European integration in Georgia than in Ukraine in the recent years, what is largely in line with the internal political evolution of the two countries since 2004. Ukraine is further characterised by significant regional imbalances as “[t]he picture is more optimistic for the border regions where the visa regime is less strict and residents cross the border on an almost daily basis” (p. 125) than in more distant areas where personal experience of visiting EU states is largely absent.

The questions of migration and the extra-territorialisation of EU migration policy are discussed in the paper of Bettina BRUNS and Dorit HAPP (Chapter 7). Adopted from Bernard RYAN (2010), the term ‘extra-territorialisation’ is used for “immigration control within a legal area situated beyond a certain national and legal territory” (p. 141). The EU implements extra-territorialisation under the aegis of ‘security’, nevertheless, the authors point at the importance of not to confuse the term ‘security’ with ‘safety’. With reference to DELCOUR, they argue that the two notions are not equivalent, but the former has a subjective nature and is socially constructed. When talking about security “there is no danger per se, but a perception of danger which differs across time and space and among policy actors” (DELCOUR, L. 2010, p. 536). Ultimately, the authors summarise that the European Neighbourhood Policy lacks an equal partnership between the EU and its eastern neighbours.

Neighbour countries are not only influenced by migration as transit states but also as source countries.

Helga ZICHNER and Vladislav SARAN discuss outgoing migration in Chapter 8 as a challenge on the example of Moldova. The introduction of the exchange scheme Erasmus Mundus in 2004 was supposed to help academics from Moldova to conduct research and benefit from networking in the European Union, and also to make the EU more attractive for the country's society, substantially divided between pro-European and pro-Russian subgroups. Education thus represents a resource for creating 'soft power', through which one "can shape the preferences of others" (NYE, J. 2004, p. 5). On the basis of mainly qualitative research, however, the authors suggest that many of the students and researchers participating in the exchange did not return to Moldova but settled down in one of the Member States instead. This ultimately resulted in an unfortunate brain-drain from the EU side, whilst Moldova lost significant numbers of its (mostly pro-European) intellectuals. The authors consider this as an eventual lose-lose situation by suggesting that "the EU risks the loss of potential multipliers of its own values and ideas – exactly those who might also contribute to diminishing those very dividing lines" (p. 178).

Security issues are in the focus again in the paper of Stefanie DREIACK (Chapter 9), who analyses the EU's involvement in the regional cooperation of Western Balkan states. DREIACK takes the view that the EU proved to be inefficient in crisis management at the time of the Yugoslav wars which menaced with the Community's "marginalization as an international actor" (p. 190). It was in this spirit, that the EU developed its own Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and was also interested in initiating cooperation between the Western Balkan states themselves in order to complement the European integration. It seems as though, however, that regional cooperation has been too much pushed from the outside and lacks the real interest of the states concerned, while it is largely reliant on EU support and the own interests of the participating states.

Last but not least, Chapter 10 deals with cultural policies. Iryna MATSEVICH-DUKHAN raises the question whether the Belarusian cultural space, and thus Belarusian cultural actors, may appear as integrative part of the EU's notion of a 'creative Europe', or not. On the political level, Belarus shows little attention for EU relations and seeks for tighter partnership with Russia instead. Culture could, nevertheless, be an important linkage toward the EU. Yet, as the author suggests, Belarus seems to be neglected in sense of creativity as the language constructed by EU political programmes on creative industries is not compatible with how the term is interpreted in the Belarusian context.

All in the book and the whole project behind can hardly be more actual, than in these days. Besides the ongoing armed conflicts in Eastern Ukraine and the non-violent but vexing intra-state political tensions

in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo or Moldova, for instance, that are important indicators of the internal difficulties these countries face, far less has been known about the challenges these countries need to tackle due to their peripheral location in the European geographical and political space.

The EU's external neighbours usually appear in the media as scenes of conflict situations, but far less public attention is given to their difficulties resulting from the fact that they are located at the edge of the Community but outside of it. In this sense, they are affected by many problems that are generated by the EU (e.g. illegal migration, black economy, brain drain, etc.), while they have very little chance to benefit from the positive side effects, first and foremost the membership status. In this respect, the book is an invaluable contribution. From the point of view of integration and security, both so much emphasised in this volume, European Neighbourhood Policy has seemingly brought along few tangible positive outcomes for the neighbours, but rather created new forms and spaces of exclusion. In light of this and the ongoing resistance against illegal migration on the one hand, and the Russian power struggle on the other hand, EU needs to rethink its strategy and may develop a more inclusive neighbourhood policy.

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