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The Political and Economic Capability of European Union's  
Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy in Contested Post-Conflict  
Societies

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## **Foreword**

This master thesis could not have been written without the continued institutional support from the International Cooperation department of the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Sarajevo, namely Mr. Foric Samir and Mr. Karcic Hamza who have supported me in my endeavours of studying abroad. Having the opportunity to expand my intellectual interest at three different universities, develop new sets of skills and expand my network has genuinely increased my competences allowing me to produce this work. My academic mentor at the Faculty of Political Science, Ms. Nedzma Dzananovic-Mirascija has helped me greatly to articulate the research interest and despite my absence in Sarajevo, continued to guide me, for which I am truly thankful. The unreserved assistance and backing by prof. Kapidzic was of utmost importance for my interest in foreign policy issues and democratization processes, culminating in his support to many of my applications. I want to express my gratitude to the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina and my supervisor, Mr. Krassimir Nikolov, with whom I gained first-hand experience of the European Union's foreign policy and diplomatic work. It is there, where I first conceived the idea and possibility to construct this research. Finally, I am forever grateful to my parents, for providing me with great moral and financial support. They have been crucial to my development, both as a student and as a person.

## Introduction

“Understanding requires theory; theory requires abstraction; and abstraction requires the simplification and ordering of reality”<sup>1</sup>

The goal of this master thesis, is to answer a broad research question by unravelling the European Union’s Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy vis-à-vis Bosnia and Herzegovina, relating to the enlargement perspective and respectively Georgia to the wider neighbourhood strategy. Due to current upheavals in the European Union itself, ongoing internal challenges and external pressures, it is necessary to understand the hard, soft and “smart” power capabilities of this global power actor. My academic stay in the countries of the EU and internship opportunities both in the EU and in the proposed case study countries have led my interest to examine these issues more theoretically. These post-conflict states, also characterized as “small states” and arguably so as “quasi” states have many similar concerns. Bosnia having experienced a bloody, civil inter-state war, followed by a political stalemate today, while Georgia being a subject to a shorter violent conflict on her territories, but still not escaping the frozen conflict status due to occupied territories. According to reports and opinions of the EU, bad economic trends, lack of rule of law, corruption, conservative and discriminatory societal traits and general post-conflict peculiarities are unfortunately common negative aspects of these two countries. After all the EU, itself is a resolute conflict brought to the best light possible. Nathalie Tocci, a long-time adviser to Federica Mogherini, observes in her work that, “the EU in fact represents (unfinished) product of one of the greatest and most successful conflict resolutions worldwide. It is the outcome of an idea securing peace in post-World War Western Europe, through integration and the ensuing creation of dependable expectations that interstate disputes would be settled in peaceful ways”<sup>2</sup>.

To better understand the relations between states, but also their close ties with international organizations, integration mechanisms and political endeavours, theoretical assumptions of International Relations and EU Integration will be put forth in the first part of the work, but also echoed throughout arguments and thoughts. Following on that, a contrasting chapter of Georgia and later BiH, will be subjected to testing the proposed hypotheses. After in-depth

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, Harvard University Press, 1957, p.55

<sup>2</sup> Nathalie Tocci *The European Union and Conflict Resolution*, Routledge, 2007, p.16

examination and clarification, a concluding chapter will be put forth, that will try to summarize the arguments, postulations and assumptions discussed in the two chapters. Indeed, the EU as a global power actor and the key aspects of success, possible ways forward shall be outlined. Throughout this thesis, I do argue that the EU is primarily the most viable and capable player in both regions, concretely countries analysed, having managed to significantly ameliorate the political and economic capacity of the states and further their development. However, distinctive strength of the Union's external capability must bear in mind the complex nature of all three players concerned, especially in regards to effectiveness of the Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy. Paradoxically, all three represent an unfinished project, mutually supportive and causally intertwined. Paramount to all of this, for a cause-effect explanation to be successful, strong and viable outline of key challenges and unresolved problems need to be elucidated. Additionally, the European Union External Action Service within the wider Common Foreign and security Policy is an inter-governmental, post-national diplomatic extension of the EU. As such, it represents a post-Westphalian system, and such political concept requires more focus on issues as plurality of states needs to take account of the behaviour of ethnic groups, nationalism and 'the peoples' sense of community and territoriality. Finally, the structure of every system obstructs the development. According to Irina Busygina, this "Post-Westphalian system – the EU is not a status quo power – it is a territorially open project in a sense that the ultimate borders of these entities are unclear, they could gain more territory or lose parts, a fragile system, internally heterogeneous and at risk of failure or disintegration"<sup>3</sup>, which only complicates the difficulty of understanding these evolutions.

## **I. Theoretical background of thesis work**

As this thesis is a part of concluding the International Relations master degree, it cannot but put a strong emphasis on the main theories and assumptions of this study course. However, since the topic of research is also a part of the wider EU studies, it is appropriate to broaden the theoretical background by the main postulations and hypothesis related to European Union integration and extend them to the foreign policy service. BiH and Georgia respectively, are both weak states, with limited sovereignty, structural developmental issues, also characterized as poor countries and a frozen conflict examples. Remarks of recent democratic backsliding

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<sup>3</sup> Irina Busygina, *Russia–EU Relations and the Common Neighborhood, Coercion vs. Authority*, Routledge, 2017, p.45

and illiberal democratic conditions of state and economic capture<sup>4</sup>. As Florian Bieber, a leading scholar on the Western Balkans writes, Bosnia falls into a category of a weak minimalist state, explaining that “a minimalist state is thus a state with limited legitimacy and a weak scope and strength of the state”<sup>5</sup>. Whenever outlining and describing the various positive or negative events occurring in the country, it is important to examine the historical background and the characteristics mentioned above, as they hold meaning in understanding the issues. Another young scholar, Jasmin Imamovic has recently published a book on the current crisis of democracy in the Balkans, where one of his arguments is that the ‘historical authoritarian elasticity’ of the regimes in the Balkans, serves as the explanation of social cleavages and ongoing struggles to become a strong free market democracy. Moreover, Joseph Nye’s concept of “smart power” as outlined in his book, “The Future of Power” can explain the EU’s capability as a foreign policy power. Additionally, since Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia are both characterized as contested states, due to their intersection on various actor’s agendas, I relax the types of power relationship, not only by referring to hard and soft, but also to the principle of authority and coercion. Coercion and authority are both hierarchical orders, of a domination-subordination dichotomy<sup>6</sup>. This helps to define not only the EU’s approach, but also other key players such as of the Russian Federation, United States of America and the newly engaged People’s Republic of China. Furthermore, throughout the writing, since Bosnia emerged as a fully independent state only after the collapse of the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, and Georgia secured its independence after the break-up of the Soviet Union, theories of democratization as well as economic theories of development and transition to a free market economy are vital to this debate. Finally, the EEAS as the driving force of the EU’s external affairs, that “clearly operates on ontologically different principles from those of national diplomatic services”<sup>7</sup>, and as such the “external affairs” and especially “enlargement” present this “ontological shift as a key characteristic of the EU’s nature as a post-Westphalian entity in world affairs”<sup>8</sup>. This philosophical supposition will be held throughout the work, trying to account for peculiar innovations on the field.

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<sup>4</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, 2016 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy

<sup>5</sup> Florian Bieber (2011) Building Impossible States? State-Building Strategies and EU Membership in the Western Balkans, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:10, 1783-1802, p.5

<sup>6</sup> Irina Busygina, *Russia–EU Relations and the Common Neighborhood, Coercion vs. Authority*, Routledge, 2017, p.34

<sup>7</sup> Bátor Jozef and Spence David, 2015, Introduction: The EEAS as a Catalyst of Diplomatic Innovation, p.10

<sup>8</sup> Bátor, J. and Hynek, N. (2014): *Fringe Players and the Diplomatic Order: The ‘New’ Heteronomy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Cited in “The European External Action Service European Diplomacy Post-Westphalia”

## II. Research question: Topic/Subject of research

To what extent does the European Union have the capacity of using its external policy mechanisms to advance the political integration and socio-economic development in contested post-conflict societies. Firstly, to answer this question, along various lines of argumentation, it is necessary to clarify and to elucidate why the chosen case study of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia are termed as ‘contested’. Secondly, without entering in the vicious circle of internationalized EU state-building, labelling the chosen states as post-conflict will account for the various issues and barriers that work against a successful and effective story of EU mediation and for some of the structural issues that are not to be forgotten through the understanding of this topic. Various domestic push and pull factors are necessary to be comprehended, in order to grasp the wider structural problems of external interference. To measure success, qualitative clarifications along with quantitative indicators will be set out to test the EU’s external power. However, the research goal will be divided in two hypotheses (H1 and H2), due to the distinctive political and geopolitical goal and policy differentiation of EU’s Foreign Policy engagement vis-à-vis Georgia and Bosnia respectively.

### *1. Scientific goal (academic) social usefulness (cultural, normative, political)*

Believing in the importance of social sciences as a serious, thoughtful and critical necessity, examination, explanation and understanding of contemporary issues, I find that in developing, weak states, the political science and international relations subsequently, sometimes have negative connotation and the inclination of losing their prestige, significance. The academia per se, is not conceived as a place to find solutions and legitimacy, rationalise good governance, influence the policy makers and serve as the link between citizenry and the government. The scientific goal of this thesis, is not only to rationally present the cause-effect mechanisms, strengthened with theory, but also to clearly define the key challenges, outcomes and the possible way forward. Stephen Walt, one of the most prominent thinkers of International Relations, stresses that, “by providing us with a picture of the central forces that determine real-world behaviour, theories invariably simplify reality in order to render it comprehensible”<sup>9</sup>. In order to simplify the reality, we need to master it. What this thesis sets to

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<sup>9</sup> M. Walt Stephen, The Relationship Between Theory and Policy in International Relations, in Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci. 2005. 8:23–48, p.26



emphasize, is “the level and forms of international cooperation (e.g., alliances, regimes, openness to trade and investment); the spread of ideas, norms, and institutions; and the transformation of particular international systems, among other topics”<sup>10</sup>. This is where EU holds reputation. Unfortunately, there is not enough interaction between young scholars on the one side and the civil service, policy makers on the other side.

Continuing on this trajectory, if the university serves as a progressive place for the emancipation of the youth, creation of ideas and pursuing them, then I cannot but find a better place to put my international academic and trained experience to exertion. A variety of reasons stand behind the usefulness of this work. It seems, that in the everyday news in any of the Western Balkans or South Caucasian to a smaller or greater extent, the European Union is a central point of interest. Unfortunately, young social science university graduates, do not produce enough work to justify and strengthen their studies, link the academia with politics or non-governmental sector, mobilize peers and return the position and prestige of the political scientists. In a society that is divided, it is upon the rational and educated university graduates to prove that social science scholars are crucial for finding and explaining socio-cultural conditions of their own country. For instance, the normative agenda of European values, norms and beliefs cannot be superimposed on the population without a target sample, a transmitting channel for the successful transfer. Education as a leading force of change, without its acceptance for different opinion, critical thinking and recommendation, will not fulfil any goal envisioned. The specific cultural arrangement of both countries is historically different than from the EU member states, but recent increased trends of study abroad trips, exchanges, seminars and co-working projects, networking opportunities all create better understanding of what ought to be in the West and the know-how in spheres out of IT and social sciences. The key is, to mobilize and transfer this know-how from the minds of the few, to the wider population, in a practical and useful way. Thus, I believe this thesis, can emphasize the current issues from a critical standpoint, and give the audience a complex but crucial comprehension of the political deadlock currently present in both countries targeted. Ideally and hopefully, a momentum of a thought-process can be achieved, creating an incentive for other great young people to follow on.

### *1.1. Specific hypotheses*

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p.26

As far as the distinction according to the two hypotheses presented and tested here, they examine a different policy goal, within the same structure of the European Union's diplomatic service, namely the EEAS. Hypothesis number one (H1), tries to test the extent EU's Enlargement Policy successfulness at improving the incremental development of the Western Balkan countries, specifically focusing on the case study of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I argue that this has been partially successful, due to both structural challenges and inappropriate approach. I further relax that the status of the aspirant country, does not axiomatically mean their unresolved commitment to domestic change. The enlargement perspective per se, pace and achievement of the reforms that are to lead to a successful integration in the European Union and the position in negotiations don't account for a definite accomplishment. Insofar, it will be another goal, to compare enlargement policy with the neighbourhood policy. Hypothesis number two (H2), maintains to test and propose that the Neighbourhood Policy without the enlargement perspective is not less capable of producing desirable reforms, and paradoxically in this case study comparison lives up to its commitments. However, without the legal status of the prospective membership, there will be geopolitical issues to be considered when answering and testing this hypothesis. Moreover, this second hypothesis is bound to answer the first hypothesis, insofar as it will prove the point of the EU's failed state-building and subsequent membership perspective accounting for a dysfunctional integration process. Additionally, the Neighbourhood policy, without the enlargement perspective is more open and comprehensive to the citizens and fulfils its duty more openly and clearly. Finally, finding an answer, the arguments propose better understanding and distinction between the Enlargement and Neighbourhood policy. It will allow to produce comparative concluding remarks on the strategies adopted and tactics used as well as set key recommendations out.

### *1.2. Research methodology*

The methodology for this thesis is mainly qualitative, in that it will not be exclusively bound on any kind of quantitative production research methods such as, say multi-variate quantitative linear regressions or STATA variable analysis. It will however, take in account, the quantitative data produced by the EU, OECD and World Bank that strengthen qualitative explanations. This thesis is a comparative study of two cases as well. Main methods used to support this thesis is content analysis of books, articles, report, op-eds, journals, text analysis and comparative analysis of case studies and historical examination. Having had the

opportunity to produce on field research in Georgia, interviews, personal observations and conclusions are also a crucial part of the methodology. In-depth analysis of documents by the European Commission in forms of country report, opinions, and communiques are a part of the texts used to support the hypothesis.

### *1.3. Scientific/academic & societal justification/validity of research*

As already outlined in the previous sections, I believe in the importance of the social science influence to alter the rational reality by simplifying and producing solid arguments. The mere fact that even the universities in both Bosnia and Georgia do not have enough courses related to European Union studies, especially since it is the most pressing issue, is a bad scenario if universities are to train young minds to become the leading social and political actors. If young political scientists are not familiar with the ongoing processes, how can we expect the wider population to know about the effects and the constant news about the EU integration or support, and how the local civic engagement can help to understand it. Being very much engaged in social interaction with people from a wide range of occupations and spheres, I can argue that the politicians and the elites driving the country do expand their terms and power also to the extent on ensuing on the ignorance of the wider masses.

### *1.4. Framework and context of research*

Presenting this research includes two specific case studies and the overall external foreign policy of the EU. Accordingly, EU's engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be mainly examined from the end of the war in 1995. Modern Georgia is an independent country since 1991, and this period together with 2008 war is examined solely for the purpose of setting the context to focus its inclusion in European Neighbourhood Policy. Context of the research focuses specifically on the procedures, practices and developments that have been undergoing in the respective cases, through examining both the external and internal events, policies and key actors.

## **III. First Part**

## *2.Theoretical Introduction*

### *2.1.Perspectives of main EU Integration theories and their implication on the Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy*

Case study countries serving this thesis, are both small countries, with a lot of attributes defining the condition of such states. However, as I am examining both of them in a context of European Union integration or association, and acknowledging that international law and multilateral organizations are most important to small states, this assumption will be held throughout the work. This fact, if realized by domestic politicians would very much lessen for example the intra-state and regional Western Balkan animosities, as they stand no chance in improving democratic consolidation, economic power and societal development alone, as an individual player. In order to theorise and analyse the enlargement of the European Union, I first decompose necessary theories that try to explain and de-construct integration within the Union itself. However, it is logically necessary to first understand domestic preferences and policy process to be able to talk about the external motivations and abilities. In this short outline, a centrality of ideas regarding the external capability, post-Westphalian state nature and complex inter-governmental interdependence will be posited.

The first decades of European Union have been marked by the general thematic dominance by functionalist theorists, accentuating the self-sustainment of the economic integration and the spillover effect, which posits that an integration step in one sectoral area is to be followed by further economic and political co-operation in other areas of policy. Following, neo-functionalism has revived the core assumptions while fighting the dominant narrative with liberal-intergovernmentalism. Simply put, neo-functionalism describes the process of integration in the words of early scholars such as Haas and Rosamond, “integration is an incremental process which is driven by the demands of interest groups for market integration and supranational institutions responding to these demands following the functional logic which characterizes highly interdependent economies and linkages between different policy areas”<sup>11</sup>. In theory, the spillover effect, meant to describe the necessary links in one sectoral integration, to be followed and transmitted by a set of further viable functional-rational integration and closer political action. This complex interdependence, already discussed by Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane had strong implications on the neo-functionalist view of EU integration,

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<sup>11</sup> Ramūnas Vilpišauskas (2013) Eurozone Crisis and European Integration: Functional Spillover, Political Spillback? *Journal of European Integration*, 35:3, 361-373, p.5

especially for the supranational problem-solving processes at the Brussels institutions. Moving further, with the acceptance of new members throughout the Cold War and the big East European expansion, (liberal)inter-governmentalism became a dominant lens to look at the logic and tempo of integration mainly due to its empirical and utility explanation power, advocated firstly by Andrew Moravcsik and Frank Schimmelfenning. As the name already implies, it has to synthesize inter-state cooperation and preferences as well as a range of social actors and leaders. Liberal inter-governmentalism assumes to take into account the national preferences, institutional set-up and bargaining in multi-level governance to make predictions and hold a solid theoretical ground. Basically, two postulations lay at the bottom of this approach, that states are the actors and that they are rational. Firstly, as Moravcsik maintains: “states achieve their goals through intergovernmental negotiation and bargaining, rather than through a centralized authority making and enforcing political decisions”<sup>12</sup>, where the national leaders still enjoy the decision making and steer the way in which this international regime will function. Secondly, the rationality of individuals or agency level, means that “agreement to cooperate, or to establish international institutions, is explained as a collective outcome of interdependent (strategic) rational state choices and intergovernmental negotiations”<sup>13</sup>. Finally, inter-governmentalism is distinguishable from (neo)-realism because of its recognition of both the significance of institutions in international politics and the impact of domestic politics upon governmental preferences. In order to stress the historical institutionalist reasoning, the European Union has been in fact created thanks to the post-World War II consensus to bind the six initial countries in institutional bodies, governing set-up to ease the way of doing business but also a more philosophical idea to strengthen the relationship between them. The tragedies and horrors of the preceding wars have been a strong enough incentive for leaders, brave and intelligent individuals like De Gaulle, Adenauer, Schuman, Monet and Spinelli to find support and willingness to cooperate and work together, albeit on a new, post-Westphalian state system. This would follow to live on as a successful story, marking the first 70-year peace on European soil that must not be forgotten. Collective supranational negotiations and reduction of transactional cost, the common agricultural policy, free market and customs union as well as a borderless union are great achievements, but also a complicated organization to maintain. Discussion about sovereignty and self-centred institutions have long been debated, due to its innovative working mechanisms. For example, “by transferring sovereignty to international institutions, governments effectively remove issues from the varying influence of domestic

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<sup>12</sup> Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez, *European Integration Theory*, Oxford University Press, 2009 p.82

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p.82

politics and decentralized intergovernmental control, which might build up pressure for non-compliance if costs for powerful domestic actors are high”<sup>14</sup>. The most densely institutionalized international organization in the world, the EU is a perfect spot for new institutionalism to test its hypotheses. As argued by Pollack, “institutions are ‘sticky’, or resistant to change, both because of the uncertainty associated with institutional design, and because national constitutions and international treaties can create significant transaction costs and set high institutional thresholds (such as a supermajority or unanimous agreement) to later reforms”<sup>15</sup>. Since the central problem of this work is the external role of EU vis-à-vis the bordering countries, I will briefly follow on the new institutionalism, constructivist and discursive approaches in regards to the enlargement challenge as well as the relations with close neighbourhood areas.

The issues regarding enlargement are numerous and the academic works produced voluminous, but institutional alignment and the idea behind accepting new countries in the already large decision-making procedures is an interesting concept. Despite financial costs that would break the rationalist choice or the strength of historical institutionalism, it is the “acceptance of common norms and common standards of legitimacy, according to which the Union cannot reject pleas for membership from neighbouring countries that credibly invoke ‘European’ values such as democracy and free markets”<sup>16</sup>. Furthermore, that creates enough vacuum for new members along with security issues on the borders, specifically the Western Balkans as a *finalite* of the European project. Moreover, rationalist choice theory establishes the presumption for the conditionality mechanism, which provides rational incentives for domestic actors to undertake reforms in anticipation of the credible perspective of EU membership. Relating to this debate, normative theorists and constructivist have a say, in the invented rather than operational processes of the EU enlargement. Collective socially constructed identity of the EU is a liberal project, a community of shared values, beliefs, norms and life. Western states including EU members had committed themselves during the Cold War to welcome a free and democratic eastern Europe into the western community, which would be followed by the same pattern in the South East European region of Western Balkans. However, when it comes to paying a price for one's collective identity in terms of offering beneficial conditions to new members, the EU looks more like an “exclusive club dictating the terms of accession to new

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<sup>14</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe - Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, 1998 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), p.73

<sup>15</sup> POLLACK, M. A., *The New Institutionalism and EC Governance: The Promise and Limits of Institutional Analysis*. *Governance*, 9(4), 429–458, (1996)

<sup>16</sup> Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez, *European Integration Theory*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p.139

members. In sum, the EU's collective identity, which explains the 'if and when' of EU Eastern enlargement, appears to be largely decoupled from the EU's behaviour in the actual negotiations"<sup>17</sup>. The discursive approach acknowledges the units of discourse, between Europe at large, national discursive space (competition between members) state or supranational where there is a transnational tendency to occupy the same space and create a shared discourse. Consequentially, the question of enlargement is very provocative to followers of this approach since the levels of analysis offer many responses. To expand on the BiH case of enlargement, "discourse analysis ought to be applied also to the nature of the enlargement process, especially its relative technocratization"<sup>18</sup>.

Finally, European Union in the words of International Relation theorists, is a liberal project, where Moravcsik again points out "societal ideas, interests and institutions influence state behaviour by shaping state preferences, that is the fundamental social purposes underlying the strategic calculations of governments"<sup>19</sup>. But it is a fantasy to believe that the domestic preferences are realistically taken into account within the Brussel technocracy and the 28(-1) heads of states. Liberalism within the EU posits the purported altruism, idealism, legalism and moralism as a founding principle of progression. Comparing it to realism and institutionalism, "liberal theory is analytically prior to both since it defines the condition under which their assumptions hold"<sup>20</sup>, so at least the narrative and pro-European party leaders wish for it to commence in the future. In his work 'Taking preferences seriously: a liberal theory of international politics', Moravcsik observes that the state is only an actor insofar, actually a representative institution constantly subject to capture and recapture, construction and reconstruction by coalitions of social actors. Nevertheless, how realistic is it to approve the EU to be such an organization, including and echoing the views of so many diverse social actors. Indeed, constructivists and post-structuralists have generally been more optimistic when it comes to EU's ability to shape the world around it. Long ago, the debate about the democratic deficit has begun, with the latest 2019 EU elections, where the President of the Commission has been appointed selectively by the European Council, abandoning the spitzenkandidat process, invented to legitimize the voters' decisions. Acting on world stage, to our interest is

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<sup>17</sup> Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez, *European Integration Theory*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p.157

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p.178

<sup>19</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, *Taking Preferences Seriously: a Liberal Theory of International Politics*, *International Organization*, 51(4), 513–553, (1997), p.1

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, *Taking Preferences Seriously: a Liberal Theory of International Politics*, *International Organization*, 51(4), 513–553, (1997), p.4

the ability to speak and act with one single voice. In external authority concept, the EU would ideally like to pressure the representative institutions and alter state practices and preferences.

## **IV. II Part**

### **Georgia and the EU Neighbourhood Policy**

#### *3. Background story of Georgia*

In a relatively favourable geographic position, Georgia is situated in the heart of South Caucasus. In the country itself, locals rather use the name “Sakartvelo”, to refer to their ethnicity derived from the core central Georgian region of Kartli. It also serves, as a national-patriotic sentiment and differentiates the term from the Russian and European designation. This is not the only case, when the local population feel their pride, since the myth that is widely recognized across the country states that they, Georgians, have been given this beautiful piece of land by God himself, as they were drinking in his glory during the times of creation. Except sharing borders with Russia, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan, “Georgia has long served as a strategic transit corridor between East and West, as well as constituting the “cork in the bottle” down the North- South isthmus of land separating the Caspian and Black seas”<sup>21</sup>. Strategic geographic proximity to a very important wealthy region, contested since centuries by empires and monarchies already makes for an attractive case. In whatever moment of the history one sets to examine this country, the political and historical pretext always marks Russia, among the key actors, for better or worse. As an entity, Georgia “entered the USSR at its creation in 1922 as a part of the newly created Transcaucasian Federated Soviet Socialist Republic, or TcFSSR, which also included Armenia and Azerbaijan (and Abkhazia)”<sup>22</sup>, and that is where the relationship with USSR begins in coherent and legal terms. The TcFSSR dissolved in 1936, and the territory remained within the Soviet Union as the Georgian Socialist Soviet Republic. Acknowledging that the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin was from a poor rural area of Gori, in the eastern part of

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<sup>21</sup> Svante E. Cornell & S. Frederick Starr, *The Guns of August 2008 – Russia’s War in Georgia*, M.E. Sharpe, 2009, p.10

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p.13



Georgia, this connection would be yet another element, haunting the relationship between the central government in Moscow and Tbilisi for the century to come. This period of Georgia under the Soviet Union will not be studied here, but rather marks the beginning of Georgia's modern relationship with Russia<sup>23</sup>. Quite coincidentally, the present-day independent Georgia, is only a year older than Bosnia and Herzegovina, due to the March 31 1991 referendum, independence, when ninety percent of the voters, demanded leaving the USSR, even during the same month as its Balkan counterpart state. The continuation of the independence, resulting after the break-up of the Soviet Union, saw Georgia under the construction of their nation-state, in the midst of a war in Abkhazia (August 1992–September 1993). Originating from these events, it becomes clear, that the most pressing issues of that period were: the creation of non-communist political elites and well-functioning political institutions; ethnic minorities and their territorial aspirations vis-à-vis the state and finally the Georgia-Russia affairs. Overview of the presidential position, clearly illuminates state fragility, as no president from 1991 to 2018 has ever completed her mandate. Apropos similarities with Bosnia and Herzegovina on multi-ethnic composition, Matt Overtrup points out it in his comparative study of Voting on Independence and National Issues, that “in addition to referendums in former Soviet and Yugoslav entities, a proliferation of plebiscites were held in sub-national territories such as, for example, Abkhazia in Georgia and Krajina in RS, where minorities sought to win approval for independence from recently declared independent states”<sup>24</sup>. The following decade was a transitional period, but it also served for serious territorial markings and external interference that would later turn out to be decisive in the 2008 War. Even though, the EU's Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IIFFMCG), also known as the Tagliavini Report judged the Saakashvili's decision to go to war as unjustifiable under international law<sup>25</sup>, it cannot be forgotten and undermined that already “by 2002 the Russian leadership had brought about changes in the leadership of South Ossetia which in itself can be said to have made war with Georgia all but inevitable”<sup>26</sup>. The peace-keeping mission, under the name of ‘Joint Control Commission for Georgian–Ossetian Conflict Resolution’ comprised of equal representation by Russia, Georgia, North Ossetia and South Ossetia, was paramount to the successive events of August 2008. In Paul Goble's words, “the strategy of “peacekeeping” in the post-Soviet space

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<sup>23</sup> By this, I focus on events having direct cause on today's problems and conditions.

<sup>24</sup> Matt Overtrup, « Voting on Independence and National Issues: A Historical and Comparative Study of Referendums on Self-Determination and Secession », *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique* [Online], XX-2 | 2015, p.6

<sup>25</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p.19

<sup>26</sup> Svante E. Cornell & S. Frederick Starr, *The Guns of August 2008 – Russia's War in Georgia*, M.E. Sharpe, 2009, p.50

became a neo-Byzantine version of “**piece** keeping”<sup>27</sup>. Concurring evidence, comprised at a later stage, would find these arrangements to be the corner-stone of the theatre operations of the Russo-Georgian war. Assessment of these event, are very well laid by Andrei Illarionov, in his detailed presentation of key actions that “out of 46 actions that are believed to be acts of aggression, 45 were performed first by the Coalition (Russia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia). One action was performed first by Georgia before the Coalition”<sup>28</sup>. Russian aggression on Georgia, cannot be looked as a single event, but has to be understood as a structural response to the pro-Western government of Sakasvhili and its slow but gradient willingness to build ever-closer relations with the liberal institutionalist international order of NATO and the European Union. It remains as a crucial evidence, to remember the NATO Bucharest Summit of 2008, where strong support for Georgia and Ukraine MAP activation was clearly defined, that was due to be reviewed again at the “end of the year”<sup>29</sup>. Convincingly, it is apparent that “the Russia-Georgia war of 2008 that ended in Georgia’s defeat and territorial amputation was also a resounding strategic defeat for the West. The U.S. government, NATO, and the EU proved utterly powerless to do anything constructive on behalf of Georgia even though the war was clearly an act of provocation and ultimately aggression by Russia”<sup>30</sup>. This violent conflict had numerous consequences also for the European Union, which will be further relaxed and discussed, while explaining the rationale behind EU Neighbourhood Policy. The Ukrainian scenario was well developed and tested on Georgia. Years later, after the Crimean annexation, prominent US realist, John Mearsheimer would blame the West for Russia’s response, arguing that NATO along EU, has breached its commitment and stepped too far in Russia’s backyard. Furthering this debate is not possible in the scope and length of this work.

Reviewing the current research on Georgia, it becomes evident that it is a country trapped between a diverse spectre of international actors. It is not a European nor Asian but rather a Eurasian country. It is enough, just to take one short walk, in the centre of Tbilisi to get instantly confused about whether this country is a European Member state or not, owing to the fact of numerous EU flags hanging from the parliament, ministry and even the state security agencies, as well as hotels and private residencies. However, the Russian Federation flag is

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<sup>27</sup> Svante E. Cornell & S. Frederick Starr, *The Guns of August 2008 – Russia’s War in Georgia*, M.E. Sharpe, 2009, p.34, emphasize added!

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, p.77

<sup>29</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7328276.stm>, accessed on 11.06.2019

<sup>30</sup> Svante E. Cornell & S. Frederick Starr, *The Guns of August 2008 – Russia’s War in Georgia*, M.E. Sharpe, 2009, p.104

nowhere to be seen, even though Russian language is heavily used to attract Russian speakers, ergo in the tourist sector. On the main parliament square, there are currently permanent hunger protests by two fathers for their murdered sons, presumably because these homicides are covered up by the government. One family is Muslim, the other Christian, but it doesn't matter for the frustration and disappointment that unites them. This is an unbelievably striking similarity with the protests in Bosnia in Herzegovina, where since 2018 two fathers, also from different entities, hence religions and identity backgrounds are demanding justice. Likewise, the four tents laid out in front of the parliament in Tbilisi on the famous Rustaveli street, where the families reside, are covered with US, NATO, UN and EU flags. Some weeks later, this square would witness fury and anger of the Sakartvelians, the demonstration and clash with police on the 20/21 June 2019, after the incident and provocation of a Russian deputy coming to speak in Parliament. Georgia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in 1992 and the Partnership for Peace programme in 1994. However, the most important external influence has been directly by the US through its financial assistance, European Union and Russia. With time, "the country had become among the leading beneficiaries of U.S. foreign aid per capita globally"<sup>31</sup>. Clearly, after Russian-Georgian war, the vector of Georgia's relations with the West, shifted towards Europe, less than with the US, who have up to that moment have been supporting Georgia's military development and defensive capabilities. EU focused more on institutional capacity building and strengthening the legal system, rule of law. Viewing the current relationship nexus of European Union and Russia, Georgia is a best-case example of a contested state in the common neighbourhood space. As such, their presence and policy, differ extensively in their end-goals and way of doing business. It is principal to understand the "dichotomy of coercion and authority, for the purpose of studying relations between Russia and the EU and the projection of these relations onto the area of the common neighbourhood"<sup>32</sup>. Moscow decided back in the years prior to the 2008 war, to pursue the policy that would destabilize the region, maintain frozen conflict, and secure the status quo of the managed instability. Recent Western literature, agreed on labelling the Russian expansionistic strategy as "hybrid warfare"<sup>33</sup>, culminating with the Crimea annexation in 2014. Establishing relations with the autonomous governments, backing independent regions 'south Ossetia and Abkhazia',

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<sup>31</sup> Svante E. Cornell & S. Frederick Starr, *The Guns of August 2008 – Russia's War in Georgia*, M.E. Sharpe, 2009, p.41

<sup>32</sup> Irina Busygina, *Russia–EU Relations and the Common Neighborhood, Coercion vs. Authority*, Routledge, 2017, p.45

<sup>33</sup> Giegerich, Bastian. "Hybrid Warfare and the Changing Character of Conflict." *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 15, no. 2 (2016): 65-72.

granting citizenships, supporting paramilitary activities and trade product embargos on Georgian products are only some of the examples. The EU on the other side of this dialectical relationship, tries to maintain a good, helping and superordinate relationship, strengthening the EU's security, furthering political cooperation and economic integration. It is genuinely incompatible with Russia's desired future outcome. As Irina Busygina suggest: "Coercion and Authority are both hierarchical orders, domination/subordination dichotomy"<sup>34</sup>, but it is the scale of this bilateral communications that paints the EU's authority mechanism and Russia opting for coercive approaches. She continues, "In shaping its relations with the World (beyond the West) the EU proceeds from the belief that world countries should adapt international political norms to the European standards"<sup>35</sup>. Russia for its side, does not want to adhere to the rules based liberal western world order, dominated by market oriented, human rights democracies. As Alexander Rondeli, a famous Georgian political scientist, said it in his seminal work of 'Small States in International Relations', there is a political culture of mixture between Marxism and democracy in the Georgian citizenry, as well as clichés on the state's role and socio-economic reforms that would lead to development. This evolution leads to challenges and issues also with the European Union's engagement in Georgia, that started already in 1996, with the INOGATE co-operation programme, an international energy framework including the littoral states of the Black and Caspian seas and their neighbouring countries. Prior to the early 2000s, "Action-Plans" have been a part of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) which will be further elaborated in the next section, along the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements. Analysing the case study of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia in the context of the relations between and with European Union, another interesting correlation comes to light. Namely, the "European Union Monitoring Mission"<sup>36</sup> (EUMM), that was established on 15 September, 2008 and whose mission's mandate consisted of "stabilisation, normalisation and confidence building, as well as reporting to the EU in order to inform European policy-making and thus contribute to the future EU engagement in the region"<sup>37</sup>. Interestingly, the roots of this mission lead to 1991, under the name of "European Community Monitor

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<sup>34</sup> Irina Busygina, *Russia–EU Relations and the Common Neighborhood, Coercion vs. Authority*, Routledge, 2017, p.67

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p.67

<sup>36</sup> Official Journal of the European Union, L 248, Volume 51, 17.9.2008, accessed on 20.06.2019.

<sup>37</sup> European External Action Service, EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia, [https://eumm.eu/en/about\\_eumm](https://eumm.eu/en/about_eumm), accessed on 21.06.2019.

Mission”<sup>38</sup>, that was deployed in former Yugoslavia in July 1991, which formally ended even less than a year, on December 31, 2007 since its deployment to Georgia.

As with every post-Soviet country, Georgia is no different in having cumbersome structural economic development and transitional politics intertwined with ideology that hamper development and socio-economic progress. According to Transparency International a serious problem persists over time: “in many post-Soviet countries, checks and balances do not exist that would ordinarily keep powerful private individuals and groups from exerting exceptional influence over government decisions. In these settings, illicit lobbying practices take place and conflicts of interest go undisclosed”<sup>39</sup>. Before going more into overview of the Georgian economics, I want to stress the vivid inequality that is so present in the country. The rapid privatization and elite power contestation, backed up by the broken central government in Russia, in the 1990s, along with serious corruption activities within the country and their links with the near abroad have led to this paradox against the everyday reality. For European standards, one would not notice he is not in a German or Italian capital. Luxurious hotels on every ‘prospect’, numerous super-expensive cars, “haute-couture” fashion stores all certainly prove that there evidently is some demand for it. Unfortunately, this demand is accounted by probably a mere 1-2% per cent of the population. One cannot but notice the unhappy, saddened and depressive facial expression in the everyday life of Tbilisi, “babushka’s” begging for “kopeiki” in front of the numerous 24/7h markets like the Austrian Spar or French Carrefour. Typical post-Soviet inequality is not a stereotype, it is a strong, disappointing reality. However, despite the global financial crisis and conflict with Russia, Georgia’s economy has grown robustly at an average annual rate of “4.5 percent”<sup>40</sup>. Except remittances sent from abroad, this growth and sustainment of the families in the rural areas is however enhanced by “strong foreign direct investment (FDI) and a favourable external economic environment are fuelling growth”<sup>41</sup>. Perhaps, according to the World Bank report, “the expansion of the economy will lead to more employment and income-generating opportunities at the bottom of

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<sup>38</sup> Kingdom of Netherlands, Ministry of Defence, European Community Monitoring Mission - European Union Monitoring Mission (ECMM - EUMM), <https://english.defensie.nl/topics/historical-missions/mission-overview/1991/european-community-monitoring-mission---european-union-monitoring-mission-ecmm---eumm>, accessed on 21.06.2019.

<sup>39</sup> Transparency International, Eastern Europe & Central Asia: Weak Checks And Balances Threaten Anti-Corruption Efforts, [https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/weak\\_checks\\_and\\_balances\\_threaten\\_anti\\_corruption\\_efforts\\_across\\_eastern\\_eu](https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/weak_checks_and_balances_threaten_anti_corruption_efforts_across_eastern_eu), accessed on 21.06.2019.

<sup>40</sup> European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Transition Report 2018-10, Country Assessment Report on Georgia

<sup>41</sup> A document of The World Bank Group, Country Partnership Framework for Georgia for the Period FY19-FY22, April 25, 2018 Report No. 121853-GE

the distribution. Increases in pensions and social assistance in 2019 (also planned for future years) will help reduce poverty”<sup>42</sup>. The geopolitical positioning of Georgia as a transit country cannot be undermined. Complementary, new pipelines in Kutaisi, Gori, Kaspi, Rustavi etc. are under construction, which all help for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. According to the conversations with the locals and international representatives in Georgia I can summarize that the basis of the Georgian economics is in: food industry (including tea, tinned goods, wines; fragrant essences, mineral waters etc.); light industry, mechanical engineering, chemical and petrochemical industry, oil refining, ferrous metallurgy (which are bad functioning and originate from the hard industry central planning of the Soviet times); extraction of manganese ores, coal, ores of nonferrous metals, barite. As it is famous not only for wine and delicious food, agriculture is an important sector where viticulture and pomiculture are the leading industries in eastern Georgia along with cereals production (wheat, corn, barley) and cattle breeding – meat and dairy, sheep, swine and poultry breeding. More than half of the enterprises are located in the cities of Tbilisi, Rustavi (eastern Georgia) and Kutaisi (western Georgia). However, both the industrial and agricultural sector are underdeveloped and many agree that tourism has been the unofficial backbone of the economy. The EU is the main trade partner of Georgia. Around 27% of its trade takes place with the EU, followed by Turkey (13.6%) and Russia (11%). The key EU imports from Georgia include mineral products, agricultural products, base metals and chemical products. The EU imported goods to the value of €653 million from Georgia in 2018.

### *3.1. EU Neighbourhood Policy Instruments and Mechanism to Georgia*

Whether one acknowledges the European Union to be a role model in the South Caucasus or not, its commitment and engagement is a standing fact according to the numerous documents signed, endorsed and ratified since the end of the 1990s between Georgia and the EU. I will argue to prove my hypothesis, that the European Union’s overall capability and capacity to enhance and alleviate a post-conflict transitional country is a moderate success, even when the mechanism of the foreign policy, the Neighbourhood Policy, does not entail the membership perspective. The denial of accession also mitigates the prospects of socialization and social learning. Interests driving this are not only altruistic but contain also self-centred

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<sup>42</sup> The World Bank in Georgia Country Snapshot, An overview of the World Bank’s work in Georgia, April 2019

notions. While there are various definitions, the official explanation by the European Commission is: “The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) governs the EU's relations with 16 of the EU's closest Eastern and Southern Neighbours... to the South... and to the East: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, *Georgia*, Moldova and Ukraine”<sup>43</sup>.

Comparing this case study, to Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially due to a considerably different policy goals and mechanisms enacted, turns out to be a mutually supportive and causal explanation. Due to this difference, I will pursue following arguments that also remove the burden of criticism from the European Union’s shoulder. “The European Union does not regard Georgia as belonging to Europe, but rather as part of a region bridging Europe and Asia”<sup>44</sup>, is probably not a statement that anyone would say out loud, but is a harsh reality. Admittedly, it is in the EU’s interest to promote two kinds of security in the region: “internal security, which is threatened by political tensions and separatist conflicts; and external security, which is influenced by geopolitical rivalries and strained relations among regional actors”<sup>45</sup>. This goal at first seem as a very simple one, to have secure, stable and prosperous neighbour on the outer borders of the Union. This is especially emphasized at the creation of the ENP, expressing that “the ENP has been launched in 2003 and developed throughout 2004, with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours and instead strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all”<sup>46</sup>. Moreover, the official strategy paper for ENP in 2004 outlines, “the objective of the ENP is to share the benefits of the EU’s 2004 enlargement with neighbouring countries in strengthening stability, security and well-being for all concerned”<sup>47</sup>. Still, there is an abundant material of scholarly work that will be useful when discussing and assessing the role of the European Union in the current international system, on which I will also focus while trying to test and answer the proposed hypothesis. Following on my idea to paint the EU as a post-Westphalian smart power in formation, on the international scene, I relate again to Irina Buygina, and her concept characterization of the post-Westphalian nation, whereby “the EU is not a status quo power – it is a territorially open project in the sense that the ultimate borders of these entities are unclear, they could gain more territory or lose, a fragile system, internally heterogeneous and at risk of

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<sup>43</sup> European Commission, DG NEAR, European Neighbourhood Policy, [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/overview\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/overview_en), accessed on 24.06.2019

<sup>44</sup> Svante E. Cornell & S. Frederick Starr, *The Guns of August 2008 – Russia’s War in Georgia*, M.E. Sharpe, 2009, p.41

<sup>45</sup> Elkhan Nuriyev, Center for European Policy studies, *EU Policy in the South Caucasus, A view from Azerbaijan*, CEPS Working Document No. 272/July 2007, p.2

<sup>26</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission, European Neighbourhood Policy, Strategy Paper, Brussels, 12.5.2004 COM (2004) 373 final, p.3

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p.3

failure or disintegration”<sup>48</sup>. Additionally, the European External Action Service is the diplomatic corps of the Union, tasked with numerous missions, that are distinct from the traditional bilateral or multilateral diplomacy.

It is worth noting that prior to inclusion of Georgia to the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004, there was another form of communication channel between the parties concerned. Namely, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, encompassing not only Georgia, but also Republic of Armenia and Azerbaijan, which entered in force on 22 June 1999, four years after the initial signing in Luxembourg, in 1996. Looking from a realist perspective of international relations theory, an outsider can question if the European Union owes anything more than just a bilateral communication with a post-conflict country such as Georgia. The answer is at first point no, but if we raise the assumption such as interest in security terms of a stable border, then a different set of policy goals can emerge. According to Mearsheimer, one of offensive realism assumptions is “that great powers are rational actors. They are aware of their external environment and they think strategically about how to survive in it. In particular, they consider the preferences of other states and how their own behaviour is likely to affect the behaviour of those other states, and how the behaviour of those other states is likely to affect their own strategy for survival. Moreover, states pay attention to the long term as well as the immediate consequences of their actions”<sup>49</sup>.

I claim that the EU’s action is complementary to their own interest but also follows on a moral pattern of previous engagement and credible great power role in the international system. When it comes to forms of power, summarizing shortly that both the EU’s enlargement and neighbourhood policy rest on an authority based concept. This is simply articulated in the following statement, “In political authority according to standard conceptions, A commands B to alter his or her actions, where “command” *implies that A has the right to issue such orders*. This right, in turn, implies that A has the right to issue such orders. This right, in turn, implies a correlative obligation or duty by B to comply, if possible, with A’s order. B’s obligation, finally, implies a further right by A to enforce her commands in the event of B’s non-compliance”<sup>50</sup>. The extent to which obligation and compliance alter the future relations and successfulness are exactly the point of difference and utility instrumentalization that I try to unravel in this thesis. Now, that the ideas about the potential reasons for EU’s engagement in

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<sup>48</sup> Irina Busygina, *Russia–EU Relations and the Common Neighborhood, Coercion vs. Authority*, Routledge, 2017, p.14

<sup>49</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, W. W. Norton & Company, 2001, p.31

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, p.66, italics added.



the neighbourhood area have been laid out, it is time to support it with the mechanisms and strategies employed by official instruments and binding documents. Firstly, the Partnership for Cooperation agreement (PCAs) has probably very much set the bar, according to which the level of commitment is to be measured, and also legitimacy and credibility to be preserved. “In Eastern Europe, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements provide the basis for contractual relations”<sup>51</sup>. The initial goal is to, “strengthen our mutual links on the basis of common values, principles and objectives”... and to “facilitate the gradual rapprochement of the South Caucasus Republics to a wider area of cooperation in Europe and neighbouring regions”<sup>52</sup>. Besides, part of this ‘gradual rapprochement’ is prepared and communicated via legal approximation, and “the external action of the European Union is based on a belief that the export of the norms and values that shaped its internal legal order is crucial to safeguard the prosperity, security and stability in Europe and in the world at large. This is emphasized in Articles 3 (5) and 21 (1) TEU”<sup>53</sup>. Moreover, not to make any confusion about the fictional way forward, this relationship is further specified as a development of a far-reaching partnership. Relating to my argument within a realist point of perspective, it is strongly supported in the same document where considerable weight is given to regional cooperation, post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction, and the attraction of investment to former conflict zones. These measures to be undertaken, all help to improve the stability and security for the democratisation path of Georgia. In a faintly wider geopolitical explanation, the argument stays valid, as the EU’s vision follows the same logic, evident in the next statement. “We consider that secure export routes for Caspian oil and gas will be crucial to the future prosperity of the region, to the foreign companies investing in exploitation of those reserves, and to international markets”<sup>54</sup>, and as such promotes the EU’s rationale in supporting pipeline projects as a secure and booming region that will serve to the diversification policy and good neighbourhood relations of EU. Every move that is taken, must go through a cost-benefit assessment. And this logic is very much favoured not only by rational leaders, but the Brussel technocrats and bureaucrats<sup>55</sup>. “The latter follows a ‘logic of appropriateness’ based on an internalisation of norms, whereas obligations and incentives (including sanctions) rely on a ‘logic of consequentialism’ resulting

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<sup>51</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission, European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper, Brussels, 12.05.2005, p.7

<sup>52</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission European Neighbourhood Policy, Strategy Paper, Brussels, 12.5.2004 COM (2004) 373 final, p.1

<sup>53</sup> Roman Petrov and Peter van Elsuwege, *Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union*, Routledge, 2014, p. 1

<sup>54</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission European Neighbourhood Policy, Strategy Paper, Brussels, 12.5.2004 COM (2004) 373 final, p.2

<sup>55</sup> Personal Communication, EU Delegation to BiH, DG NEAR official

from rational cost-benefit calculations”<sup>56</sup>. However, this relationship was on a low intensity programme and did not include more detailed packets of assistance. In March 2003, the Commission presented its Communication, Wider Europe –Neighbourhood: A new Framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours, which was later endorsed by the European Council, and amenable looked forward for the Council and the Commission to further develop the analysis on substance and procedure related to this initiative. At this point, Georgia’s path becomes set in stone. “The European Commission, in consultation with the High Representative and taking account of the proposals of the EU Special Representative as well as the view expressed by the European Parliament, recommends that a decision be taken by the Council to include Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the European Neighbourhood Policy.”<sup>57</sup> This new Policy approach stressed the importance of bilateral tailor made approach, resonating a defined set of approaches to focus on: economic development for stabilisation; the security dimension; migration and mobility. Not to repeat the already mentioned priorities, I will name those that are of new importance according to the ENP Strategy Paper of 2004. Following priorities “will be incorporated in jointly agreed Action Plans, covering a number of key areas for specific action: political dialogue and reform; trade and measures preparing partners for gradually obtaining a stake in the EU’s Internal Market; justice and home affairs; energy, transport, information society, environment and research and innovation; and social policy and people-to-people contacts”<sup>58</sup>. Again, a strong reiteration has been given to the privileged neighbouring relations and the comprehensive Actions Plans that are to be envisioned accordingly to specific countries. The reason behind this new approach, can be traced in the ‘added value’ section of the strategy. There, points listed are a sign of intense market integration in the EU’s internal market, economic social development through for example removal of trade barriers, opening up of certain cultural community programmes (Erasmus+, Horizon 2020), providing support by including technical assistance and twinning for partners that wish to meet EU norms and standards, and most importantly introduction of a new financial instrument, the European Neighbourhood Instrument in 2007. This framework of revised Commission plans “implies the ambition to conclude a new generation of comprehensive and ambitious free-trade agreements, including far-reaching liberalisation of services and investment and the abolition

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<sup>56</sup> Roman Petrov and Peter van Elsuwege, *Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union*, Routledge, 2014, p.101

<sup>57</sup> European Commission, *Communication from the Commission European Neighbourhood Policy, Strategy Paper*, Brussels, 12.5.2004 COM (2004) 373 final, p.10

<sup>58</sup> European Commission, *Communication from the Commission European Neighbourhood Policy, Strategy Paper*, Brussels, 12.5.2004 COM (2004) 373 final, p.3

of non-tariff barriers through regulatory convergence with regard to issues such as the protection of intellectual property rights, competition law, rules of origin, labour standards and environmental protection”<sup>59</sup>.

Subsequently, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) was expanded and reinvented at later stages. This has been put to action in the Commission’s proposal for 2007-2013, choosing among different proposed mechanism and options, that would be “creating a single new regulation to govern a Neighbourhood Instrument to fund activities both inside and outside the Union; proposing to use a single budget chapter, drawing from the cohesion and external policies headings of the proposed new Financial Perspectives for the full amount of the instrument. At the end of 2006, when the Commission announced its aim to negotiate “Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs) with the EU’s neighbours including ‘substantially all trade in goods and services’ and ‘strong legally-binding provisions on trade and economic regulatory issues’”<sup>60</sup>. There are many agencies and sectors included in the transfer of finances, and various communication channels that I will not pursue explaining here, due to space and since the goal is to draw conclusion of the general strategies envisioned that will support the presented hypothesis. Before turning to presenting a different but mutually supportive mechanism I find it important to critically evaluate the ENP role, goal and success. Firstly, not to confuse the ENP’s goal, it is not a path that leads to full membership, ergo integration. It is even described on the FAQ on the website of European Policy webpage of the EC later established, that the ENP is not about membership of the EU. That set aside, I turn to the more theoretical intentions and arguments in favour for the EU’s soft power mechanism sketched throughout the ENP. Since its creation, it has pushed for a more codified approach leading to intentional and unintentional norm diffusion, an institutionalized way of a dependency and way of doing business, transference (exchange of benefits between the EU and third parties), physical presence of the EU in third states and the cultural filter (cultural diffusion and political learning in third party states). Evidently, these represent a perfect example of soft power, which is “the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes”<sup>61</sup>. Complementary, at its borders, the EU has a zone of states that are much weaker economically and structurally. By assisting their transformation according to the pattern of Europeanization,

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<sup>59</sup> Roman Petrov and Peter van Elsuwege, *Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union*, Routledge, 2014, p.4

<sup>60</sup> European Commission, ‘Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy’, COM (2006) 726 final, 4 December 2006, p. 4

<sup>61</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr. *The Future of Power*, PublicAffairs, 2011, p.333

the union deepens and reinvents its *raison d'être*. ENP functions via the rational logic of using the external means of aid policy and cooperation, trade concession, diplomatic assistance, by ensuring good governance and strengthening democratic institutions, fundamentally securing both partners interest through a long-term institutionalist commitment. What is widely debated, in a more holistic approach, is the vision and the finalite behind EU's goals. Contribution to the research of the ENP and EaP respectively, such as by Borzel Tanja and D. Panke, argue that there is a paradox of EU's assistance to these low capacity economies. They argue, the commission proposes strengthening economic stability, but in its activities of conditionality they promote reforms which in turn lead to increasing short or medium-term instability. This being true, I would however add that period of macro-economic instability, market liberalization and deregulation is a long-term process that eventually leads to a better performing economy. These measures have been proven to work and explained in the scholarly work of the great economist Jeffrey Sachs following on his shock therapy and work in post-Soviet countries (Poland) as well as in Venezuela<sup>62</sup>. Supplementary, the EU provides over €120 million to Georgia annually in grant assistance, and supports the country via funds in line with the goals of the Association Agreement/DCFTA. EU support is funded through the "European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) for the period 2014-2020. It replaces the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) of 2007-2013"<sup>63</sup>.

Having tried to carefully scrutinize the ENP engagement rationale, its advantages and disadvantages, I will now follow on introducing the complementary framework, namely the Eastern Partnership and its implied meaning. This joint policy initiative was established as a specific Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy, complementing it and supplementing by additional valuable instruments and mechanisms. Its geographical scope consists of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, upon its conception in 2009. The declaratory document by the Council of European Union held in Prague, on 7 May 2009, envisioned the following priorities within bi-lateral and multi-lateral commitment:

"the significant strengthening of the Eastern Partnership could help to develop closer ties among the partner countries themselves, New Association Agreements, beyond existing opportunities for trade and investment... regulatory approximation leading to convergence with EU laws and standards. Supporting mobility of citizens and visa liberalisation in a secure

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<sup>62</sup> The New York Times Magazine, <https://www.nytimes.com/1993/06/27/magazine/dr-jeffrey-sachs-shock-therapist.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>, accessed on 27.06.2019

<sup>63</sup> European Commission, DG NEAR, [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/georgia\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/georgia_en), accessed on 28.06.2019

environment is another important aspect of the Eastern Partnership, together with comprehensive Institution-Building...steps towards transition, reform and modernisation and give the EU an additional instrument to accompany these processes, presentation and explanation by the European Union of EU legislation and standards, as well as its comparison with national policy and legislation”<sup>64</sup>. Enough said about the re-invented priorities and additional segments, analytical evaluation is to follow. Firstly, I argue that the policy to reconcile the idealist high moral ground of creating a ring of friends around Europe together with the realist security assumption to protect the external borders and improve the environment of the neighbouring weak democracies is a mutually binding and supportive mechanism. Secondly, the policy of a novel dual-track approach in the bi-lateral and multi-lateral dimension is adding to the idea of “a more ambitious partnership”, which is mutually beneficial. Thirdly, “the policy also ambitiously outlines four thematic platforms of political, economic, energy security and civic reforms to be embedded through new Association Agreements”<sup>65</sup>. Finally, it is true that the material costs of such partnership are not reciprocal but that only adds to the strength of the European Union’s external commitment rather than their failure as is argued by pessimistic viewers of the ENP/EaP such as for example Korosteleva Elena<sup>66</sup>. Summing up, the ultimate aim of the EaP is to support political and socio-economic reforms in the partner countries through “a process of far-reaching legislative approximation with EU standards and norms, leading progressively to economic integration in the EU internal market, and therefore to the creation of an EU–Eastern Partnership economic area in the long term”<sup>67</sup>.

Mainly due to this, I wouldn’t succumb to refer to conditionality as cynicism. Having regards for the weak institutional capacity, transitional nature of the EaP member countries, elite entrenchment and intriguing corruption levels, conditionality mechanism is justified, even under the ambiguous ‘partnership framework’. A stick of the “carrot and stick” method must remain. Those on the other spectrum of this argument would trust the voluntarism and equality of partnership, but it is not a realistic viewpoint for anyone closely acquainted with the regions involved. Additionally, and unequivocally the EU’s commitment is “about injecting our values into the neighbourhood”; after all, ‘it is about them aligning with us, rather than vice versa’<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> Council of the European Union, EN, Brussels, 7 May 2009, 8435/09 (Presse 78), Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit, Prague, 7 May 2009

<sup>65</sup> Elena A. Korosteleva, *Change or Continuity: Is the Eastern Partnership an Adequate Tool for the European Neighbourhood?* International Relations, 25(2), p. 244, 2011, p.244

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p.246

<sup>67</sup> Council of the European Union, ‘Joint Declaration of the Warsaw Eastern Partnership Summit’, 30 September 2011, doc. 14983/11, para. 1.

<sup>68</sup> Elena A. Korosteleva, *Change or Continuity: Is the Eastern Partnership an Adequate Tool for the European Neighbourhood?* International Relations, 25(2), p. 244, 2011, p.248

My point exactly is that, after all, the EaP countries have, themselves decided to be a part of this relationship, and a dialectical presumption was evident from the beginning. Finding a middle ground between the various advantages and disadvantages of the new ENI's forum, the EaP, I would support it also with an institutionalist perspective. Believing in the benefit of institutional path-dependency together with the learning by doing approach, the additional forums and communication channels such as sub-committee meetings and high-level panels along with exchange of knowledge and close co-operation of young educated civil servants ensure the process of Europeanization. Asymmetrical negotiations and conditionality are favouring the EU, according to Bechev's and Nicolaidis's debate of hegemony vs partnership or conditionality vs ownership. I do acknowledge the arguments that stress the importance of integration without accession. But, "the emerging criticism of the EU's unilateralism and asymmetry in relations with candidate countries, premised on their mandatory adoption of the *acquis communautaire* as the basis of the accession process"<sup>69</sup>, cannot and should not be expanded for the ENP/EaP structure. Nonetheless, this is probably the most complex issue in the whole nature of the ENP/EaP debate and framework, to which there will be some word at the end of this chapter.

Latest event encapsulating the whole of the described processes on furthering the relationship between Georgia and EU is the Association Agreement (AA) that was signed on June 2014, and entered into force on July 1 2016. This, along with the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) Agreement, builds a foundation for far-reaching Georgian political and economic integration with the EU. The free trade area (DCFTA) was set up as part of the Association Agreement between the EU and Georgia and aims to gradually integrate Georgia's economy with the European economy. It envisions far-reaching approximation of Georgian law to the EU *acquis*, increased EU–Georgia sectoral cooperation, cross-border cooperation in the field of external and security policy. The path to closer integration includes more trade and investment but the key is the reform of Georgia's economy. The AA institutional framework establishes bodies such as the Association Council to oversee its application, with the Association Agenda defining priorities necessary for its implementation.

### *3.2. Country approximation with the EU*

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p.245

Firstly, it is important to note that the multi-layered approximation, convergence, harmonisation and unification of the legislative acts and laws between, defines the success and effectiveness of the integration without accession process. This form of voluntary harmonisation presumes that third countries aiming at closer integration with the EU do their best to change their national legislation in line with the EU acquis. Börzel and Risse have throughout their extensive research found that logically and expectedly “the more democratic and effective the institutions of a country the more direct is the influence of the EU”<sup>70</sup>. Since, law approximation is a part of a merit based approach, “the Georgian legislature and executive have been pursuing a process of gradual regulatory convergence of Georgian legislation with the EU acquis in order to stimulate the access of Georgian goods, companies and services to the EU internal market”<sup>71</sup>. To add one example to this strategy, state government has guaranteed to endorse a “Comprehensive Strategy on legislative approximation in the field of food safety and on 8 May 2012 the Code on Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection that was adopted as part of the reforms necessary for the preparations for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) with the EU”<sup>72</sup>. Under the free trade agreement, the EU and Georgia have removed all their import duties on agricultural products. Exports of some Georgian products doubled or even tripled in the first six months of DCFTA, for example hazelnuts, copper, petroleum oils. It is noteworthy that the frequent power change in Georgia, is always in favour of Euro-integration, yet another similarity with politics of BiH. The notion of partnership with the EU has gained substance, and the Association Agreement reflects also Georgia’s priorities and preferences in terms of its political and economic development. According to the “Association Implementation Report on Georgia”<sup>73</sup>, the overall implementation pace and progress stemming from the AA and the DCFTA is fitting the time schedule and expectations are being met. Various education, economic, governance and business reforms are contributing to the trade with the EU, on which the conclusion will reflect. However, as in similar transitional countries, especially Bosnia, “Georgia has made modest progress in reforming the justice sector and important challenges still remain to consolidate the progress achieved and safeguard the rule of law”<sup>74</sup>. The European Union remains committed to financially support Georgia in the

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<sup>70</sup> Tanja A. Börzel & Thomas Risse (2012): When Europeanisation Meets Diffusion: Exploring New Territory, *West European Politics*, 35:1, 192-207

<sup>71</sup> Roman Petrov and Peter van Elsuwege, *Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union*, Routledge, 2014, p.183

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p.185

<sup>73</sup> European Commission, Joint Staff Working Document, Association Implementation Report on Georgia, Brussels, 30.1.2019 SWD (2019), 16. final

<sup>74</sup> European Commission, Joint Staff Working Document, Association Implementation Report on Georgia, Brussels, 30.1.2019 SWD (2019), 16. Final, p.2

foreseeable future, through the Single Support Framework as well as the numerous assistance programmes worth around EUR130 million.

### *3.3. Conclusion*

One needs to understand the holistic approach of the European Neighbourhood Policy and its success or failure, so we will present some facts and figures that are complementary to the evolution of this relationship throughout the past commitments and new dimensions achieved. Secondly, as another aim of this work is to propose the way forward through an analytical framework for rethinking and/or refining the EU's approach to the debate about the idea of Neighbourhood Policy with regards to integration without accession and the appropriate balancing. To tackle this challenge, capacity of both sides needs to be taken in account, and positive and negative impact critically evaluated. Assistance packages and judiciary reform are important, but the material benefits arising from the business reform allow for the citizens to feel the contribution and engagement of the EU. The conditionality paradigm is also a very complex feature of the EU's external affairs approach, mutually to both Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, which I believe "as it has been suggested, this neighbourhood security nexus makes conditionality partly inappropriate. The EU cannot passively sit on the fence and wait for the states in its vicinity to fulfil the political and economic norms it advocates before engaging with the countries concerned, not if its own security interests are at stake"<sup>75</sup>. To begin with facts and figure, evidence in the economic development of 'Sakartvelo', where the current GDP per capita PPP has almost quadrupled (2600\$ to 10000\$<sup>76</sup>), even though not only and exclusively owing to EU's policies. Plus, the EU is Georgia's biggest trading partner accounting for 27% of its trade. Since 2009, around 40,000 SMEs, microenterprises and farmers have benefited from loans. In addition, a total of €130 million in loans have been made available for innovative SMEs and small companies under Horizon 2020<sup>77</sup>. In numbers, this trade exports grew by 11.5% and reached \$730.3 million while imports grew by 19.5% and reached \$2.62

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<sup>75</sup> Roman Petrov and Peter van Elsuwege, *Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union*, Routledge, 2014, p.18

<sup>76</sup> World Bank, International Comparison Program database, [https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD?locations=GE-AM-AZ-RU&name\\_desc=true](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD?locations=GE-AM-AZ-RU&name_desc=true), accessed on 30.06.2019

<sup>77</sup> Fact and Figures about EU-Georgia Relationship, Eastern Partnership



billion<sup>78</sup>. Latest numbers tell that trade turnover between Georgia and EU increased by 17.7% in comparison to 2017 and reached \$3.35 billion in 2018, much in part thanks to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) agreement with the EU.

Beyond promoting economic and sectoral integration via the DCFTA, EU assistance has been especially effective in restoring macro-financial stability<sup>79</sup>. Under the DCFTA, Georgian business are finally allowed to “open subsidiaries or offices in the EU and benefit from direct presence and access to customers in the EU, in almost any manufacturing or services sector. Georgian service providers can access the EU market for services as never before”<sup>80</sup>. Trailing on the footsteps of the world financial organizations works in the Balkans and elsewhere in weak developing countries, Georgia will benefit from a special facility for small and medium-sized businesses. It will provide help for local banks and make it easier for small and medium-sized businesses to get funding from local banks to modernise their business. The facility is a joint initiative of the European Commission, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

What is crucial to understand, in a state with weak institutional capacity and where political party elites still have a strong say in the state affairs, is “although many sectors remain far from achieving approximation, the main emphasis for the EU is implementation”<sup>81</sup>. Furthermore, the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to the European Parliament, has a positive intonation on the implementation of the AA, and “praises the cross-party consensus on the European agenda”<sup>82</sup>. Moving next to the topic of human rights and minority rights, in respect to fundamental freedoms, the report calls on Georgia to do more to protect the freedoms of vulnerable groups such as LGBTQI+ and Roma people, and recommends enhancing protection for children's rights, including prevention of violence. Having the opportunity to talk to members of the LGBTQI+ community, while living in Tbilisi, and witnessing the everyday life, I could observe that there is a very significant number of vocal people from that community and they are constantly trying to find a middle ground with the Orthodox Church and the far right, neo-Nazi like groups.

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<sup>78</sup> DCFTA benefits: Georgia-EU trade turnover up 17.7% in 2018, <http://agenda.ge/en/news/2019/994>, accessed on 30.06.2019

<sup>79</sup> European Parliament, Directorate General for External Policies, European parliament, The state of implementation of the associations and free trade agreements with Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova with a particular focus on Ukraine and systemic analysis of key sectors, 2017, p.77

<sup>80</sup> European Commission, EU-Georgia trade, DCFTA, Reforms that benefit people and business - FACTSHEET

<sup>81</sup> European Parliament, Directorate General for External Policies, European parliament, The state of implementation of the associations and free trade agreements with Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova with a particular focus on Ukraine and systemic analysis of key sectors, 2017, p.78

<sup>82</sup> European Commission, Joint Staff Working Document, Association Implementation Report on Georgia, Brussels, 30.1.2019 SWD (2019), 16. final, p.10

Currently, Georgia is bound by the AA, DFCTA and Eastern Partnership within a wider framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, with a future goal to create a European Economic Partnership/Community for the countries in the neighbourhood are. “The Eastern Partnership, launched in 2009, also envisages that the EU and its partners may reflect on a broader regional trade approach establishing a Neighbourhood Economic Community, taking inspiration from the European Economic Area where appropriate”<sup>83</sup>. Focusing our attention on the more theoretical and political implications of these mechanism and structures established has given way to explain a gradual rapprochement of Georgia to the European Union. Some would argue to blame the EU to not have enough willingness, motivation and hard power to mark and define Georgia as a key priority. Conducting internship through the summer, I have witnessed one of the most furious protest in the past decade. It is partly due to Russian occupation, but closer examination sheds light on the power contestation between the incumbent party and the opposition. Unfortunately, there is a lot of instrumentalization, both of Russian foreign policy, the Orthodox church and the contestation of domestic power consolidation that all make up for a very complex case. Nowadays, the European Union faces many internal challenges, and I find it important to stress the words by French president Macron. As Macron said in the European parliament that the EU can either ‘export stability or import instability’. It is true that no scenario can buy the right balance, but as Slavoj Žižek, a contemporary post-modern Slovenian philosopher expresses, borrowing from Samuel Beckett “we can at least fail, and then fail better”. Perhaps, contextualizing the two pillars of EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood policy can be reduced to a simplistic dichotomy of accession process versus association model. The ENP now, with its mechanism and agreements such as AA, EaP and DCFTA indeed represent a special partnership modality. It is a robust external anchor, even though it is still EU centric, favouring the approximation with EU, and satisfying the needs of EU. “These reflect the tension between the ENP as incremental policy approach and the larger, institutional or even polity-building inherent in the discourse of special approach”<sup>84</sup>. Politically sensitive topics, such as the frozen conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia are unfortunately the constraining factors influencing both Georgia’s full sovereignty and EU’s configuration of external policy. Probably, the clearest distinction in comparison to the EU’s Enlargement Policy, very clearly assumed by Nicolaidis and Kalypso in their research

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<sup>83</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, ‘Eastern Partnership’, COM (2008) 823/4, Brussels, 3 December 2008, p.10

<sup>84</sup> BECHEV, D., & NICOLAÏDIS, K. (2010). From Policy to Polity: Can the EU’s Special Relations with its “Neighbourhood” be Decentred? *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 48(3), 475–500, p.477

articles is that the “linear progression from socio-economic access to access to the decision-making which affects the environment is at the heart of the tensions associated with the neighbourhood challenge”<sup>85</sup>. And exactly here, on this spectrum of the previously mentioned dichotomy of association and accession is where the level of convergences moving from pure aid and trade to more inclusiveness to single market and EU’s institutions that will shape the future ‘special relationship’. It would further mean that, “the difference that matter is the perennial level of inclusion in to the Union’s decision-making process”<sup>86</sup>. But let us not forget that the law approximation and the accession without integration and membership is fluid and related to the political willingness and balance of powers inside the European Union. After all, no theory can replace the European Council meeting, every single’s individual operational code and the domestic constituency. Already in 2010, Kalpyso and Bechev have introduced the idea of decentred dimension of governance and new method to incorporate in the ‘special relationship’. They have advocated for special partnership or co-development which may accommodate both parties’ interests and shared strategic goals. The visa free regime and DCFTA reflect this most vividly, fortunately already implemented. The complexity of the European Union institutions and the ‘Brussels maze’, a very centralized, ‘hegemonic’ outreach and projection to the neighbourhood, who want to be titled partners. Suffice to say, a great extent of satisfying the needs of the governed, that would further please Eastern countries has been achieved with the Eastern partnership and AA’s, which established greater symmetry in the relationship, for example summits held in an yearly rotary style, “while embedding such initiatives into a single normative framework: namely unilateral initiatives (e.g. ENP, ENPI), bilateral (e.g. association, partnership agreements), multilateral comprehensive and multilateral sectoral (e.g. energy and transport communities)”<sup>87</sup>. One cannot forget that the EU acts in a two-fold manner, being a large market with regulatory capacity and competing economic interest but also the sole place where normative objectives are created, contextualized and pursued in a way that they shape the external soft power projections. However, this ambiguous debate should be particular wary of the economic nature of the European Union, and never forget its historical meaning as institutionalizing security in Europe and creating an exclusive economic Union. After all, it is about abolishing tariffs, duties and quotas, customs union,

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid, p. 485

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p.486

<sup>87</sup> Roman Petrov and Peter van Elsuwege, *Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union*, Routledge, 2014, p.19

creating common agriculture policy, macroeconomic regulatory policies and finally a free market.

Reflecting on the post-Westphalian nature of the EU, it is high time to also take into account that the “EU is not a Christian club, if geographic boundaries are thick, fuzzy and constructed and if historical legacies ought to be about transcending rather than reproducing past conflicts, then there is no deciding a priori what are to be the EU’s borders”<sup>88</sup>. Variable membership prospective are still far from realization, but these Eurocentric circles can produce a form of Neighbourhood Economic Countries between the South Caucasian Countries in general, although having their individual merit based progress taken into account. In sum, differentiated integration among the partners of an NEC East is an option to the extent that it would take the form of a multi-speed or variable geometry community contributing to the legal approximation process”<sup>89</sup>. I owe this thought to the author Sieglinde Gstohl, as she claims and advises that “the long-term objective of an NEC contributes to the legislative approximation process through its implicit general goal of achieving some market homogeneity, through the open question of an EU membership perspective for the EaP countries, and through several instruments such as Action Plans, bilateral agreements and regional cooperation. This does not mean, however, that all partner countries move at the same pace towards ‘a stake’ in the EU’s internal market”<sup>90</sup>. Both in past and future and step-by-step policy are undoubtedly producing palpable results.

Summing up, it is mandatory for the EU to remain engaged in the area, for security and trade reason as a most fundamental reason. Whatever the nature of this relationship will be, it will not create negative political or economic trends. The neighbourhood nature of Georgia will remain crucial for understanding if some policies would cross the red line, vis-à-vis Russian interest in their post-Soviet sphere of influence. More holistically and ideologically, it is important to find ways and channels for negotiations concerning the separatist sub-national regions and move the country from status quo. Nevertheless, there are still structural issues in regards to institutional capacity, awkward identification of parties on the left-right spectrum backed by populist tribal party politics, weak civil society, democratic deficit, etc. Rule of law, which is unsatisfactorily developed, independence of judiciary and justice together with

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<sup>88</sup> BECHEV, D., & NICOLAÏDIS, K. (2010). From Policy to Polity: Can the EU’s Special Relations with its “Neighbourhood” be Decentred? *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 48(3), 475–500, p.495

<sup>89</sup> Roman Petrov and Peter van Elsuwege, *Legislative Approximation and Application of EU Law in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union*, Routledge, 2014, p.101

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, p.97

corruption still remain key challenges to overcome. According to the interview with Ms. Kapanadze, working as a Program Director in one of the leading NGO's in Georgia, "Georgian Democracy initiative": the corruption levels have been high throughout recent years and reforms lowered, especially on the local level, even though elite corruption among a small circle of rulers tied to the unofficial ruler of Georgia, Ivanishvili, still exist". Moreover, she continues to identify the need of educational reform to kick-start the economic development and tellingly favours the EU's approach, by pointing out the poll's positive ratings on EU. These characteristics unfortunately are common to Bosnia and Herzegovina as well, as for example there are no all-encompassing social movements, independent student organisations, strong trade unions and an independent judiciary. Rendering the reports of Freedom House, Bosnia and Georgia respectively both fall in the same category of transitional government or hybrid regime, with Georgia having a slight advantage of a 4.68<sup>91</sup> score over Bosnia's' 4.64<sup>92</sup>. Understanding the process of Europeanization, which reflects EU norms and is all about setting up a coherent and strong capacity institutions is crucial for success, it also has to be taken in account that exactly these "institutions constrain or enable certain actions of rational actors by rendering some options costlier than others. From this perspective, Europeanization is largely conceived as an emerging political opportunity structure which offers some actors additional resources to exert influence, while severely constraining the ability of others to pursue their goals"<sup>93</sup>. As to this issue, it is not only the adoption of the *acquis communautaire* that is under slow progress or the institutional coherence hindered by the entrenched political elites who have no interest whatsoever in progress, but there is also a deficiency of accepting and redefining new norms, beliefs and social values by non-governmental actors and the epistemic community. "Finally, governing elites have impaired the emergence of civil society organizations and interest groups by co-opting societal and economic actors into their clientelistic networks"<sup>94</sup>. But, at least, as there is no foreseeable future of membership perspective, I claim that the citizens do not have a conflicting misunderstanding with their statesmen and party leaders in a sense that they are not delivering a goal of coming closer to the EU. Similarly, to the BiH population and overlapping with the scholarly work produced so far on the popular opinion in Georgia, Ms. Kapanadze of Georgian Democracy Initiative, describes the public perception of

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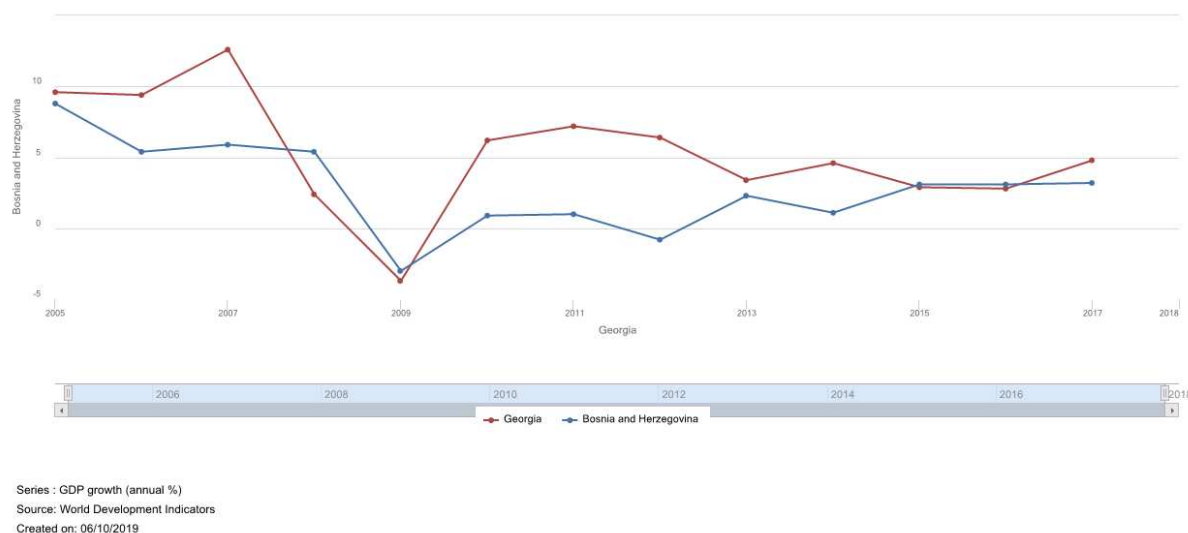
<sup>91</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in World in 2018, Georgia, Profile, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/georgia>, accessed on 1.07.2019

<sup>92</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in World in 2018, Bosnia, Profile, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/bosnia-and-herzegovina>, accessed on 1.07.2019

<sup>93</sup> Börzel, T. A. (2011). When Europe hits ... beyond its borders: Europeanization and the near abroad. *Comparative European Politics*, 9(4-5), 394–413, p.3

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, p.12

the European officials, as too diplomatic when it comes to sanctioning or condemning the actions of local stakeholder and elites. I comment on this, vis-à-vis the Bosnian case, where this lack of EU integration, with an even higher incentive is seriously undermined by the ethnic constituencies within the government. Summing up the EU's conditionality mechanism and incentive tactics, it can be concluded that the lack of membership perspective genuinely limits the capacity and power of the EU to operate and influence the rationalization of the cost-benefit utility of neighbourhood countries whose cost of adjustment and modification are even higher than for their counterparts in the Western Balkan potential candidate and candidate countries, due to their lower efficiency and democratic quality. The work now turns to the other case study in help to analyse, contextualize and examine European Union's Enlargement Policy, to extended on my general research question, test the second hypothesis and offer a different story.



Graph 1.0 – World Bank, Comparison of BiH and Georgia GP Growth

## V. Third Part

### BiH and the EU Enlargement Policy

#### 4. Background story of the country

Whenever citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina travel abroad, or encounter foreigners, they all receive complex questions about their country. It is usually referred to the war and what the name of the country embodies; is it a unitary state, is it two states or why do some forget to

mention Herzegovina when being asked where they come from. As much as it is irritating to always deconstruct the post-conflict ethno-national landscape of this hybrid regime, it is also a thought-provoking, mental challenge to find a simple, yet strong explanatory answer. A deeper discussion, would demand to carve out why this country is so often described as the most complex political system in the world, a text-book example of consociational multi-ethnic democracy<sup>95</sup>. Indeed, the reason behind BiH's status quo goes back to the late 1980's, which I will present briefly, but hopefully coherently. To comprehend the voluminous body of literature of the end of Yugoslavia, is not the goal here, but to outline it shortly for the sake of understanding Bosnia and Herzegovina's bloody civil inter-state war is fundamental. To frame it as a civil war or an international war or both is a decade-long debate (which is, at the same time, a dispute about terminology<sup>96</sup>), but in the scholarly work contributed so far, I will stick to the definition in the sentence above, pointing out that "it seems clear enough that the war was both an international war and a civil war, with elements of each"<sup>97</sup>. Tracing the sparkle of the events, brings us to Slobodan Milosevic's rise to power in 1987 and the famous Gazimestan speech on 28 June 1989, where first melodies of ethno-national conflicts started entering the ears of the crowds. A more formal approach, has marked the year of 1990, specifically the 14<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Congress in January, that has set the exclusive rights for the autonomous Socialist Republics to secede, so eagerly awaited by Slovenia and Croatia as the economic forerunners of Yugoslavia, the example of economy and development. As argued by A. Little, Jasmin Mujanovic and Josip Glaurdic, by 1989 Milosevic held directly four of the five votes needed to seize control of the eight-member state presidency, sealing his grip on the power hold. It would become obvious for other Republics, small states, to fear for their survival. Other notable leaders include communist dissident Franjo Tudjman, who was instrumental in Croatia and their ethnic resemblance in Bosnia, the leaders of para-military structures of Republika Srpska Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic as well as Alija Izetbegovic as the first president of the independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. So, not willing to embark on a dangerous path on attributing the guilt and fault to different players, it was their interconnectedness that shaped the causality of events preceding the formal break-up, and actions in each of these republics, echoing their way mutually. For as it cannot be underestimated, the representatives of the UN, EC (EU), NATO and OSCE were present, forming their dialogues, approaches and plans,

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<sup>95</sup> Roberto Belloni post-doctoral research fellow (2004) Peacebuilding and consociational electoral engineering in Bosnia and Herzegovina, *International Peacekeeping*, 11:2, 334-353

<sup>96</sup> Florian Bieber, Armina Galijas and Rory Archer, *Debating the end of Yugoslavia*, Ashgate Publishing, 2014

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, p.42

strategies and units, tactics and operation, headquarters along the progression of the horrors of these wars. I will provide just two examples of the hardships and failures of the international response to the decade long violent conflict. These account for implementation, more than about the political decisions of intervening and problem-solving. Firstly, impartiality, that “in this rendition, was the idea that peacekeepers should avoid forcing a solution because that would probably affect the local balance of power”<sup>98</sup>, is a bedrock principle of the holy trinity of peace-keeping and peace-building. And as such their consequences and inability to act will remain living in the everyday lives of the ordinary citizens locked in the BiH entropy and those not among us anymore. Secondly, a distressingly mismanagement problem, alongside the complexity of finding the proper solution was carefully transferred to me, during conversations with UNPROFOR Commander General Sir Rupert Smith during my stay at SciencesPo. I can summarize his noteworthy and insightful explanation as follows: “The particularly staunching unsuccessfulness of the peace-keeping units to implement the UNPROFOR mission owes to the undoubtedly complex mandate (later framed as robust/enforcement mission in the academic literature) since the invention of such, along with the incredibly mixed composition of ground contingent soldiers of different nationalities. The general commander had to control the intrinsic web of instructions from the national HQ’s, ever-coming disputed IO’s resolutions and national policies as well as military-political progressions on the ground”.

The roles of at the time European Community, and the P5 were crucial, although the most arguable peace deal in modern history, the Dayton Peace Accords with the intention to serve as a ceasefire *finalite* has been carved out by the tedious work by United States of America’s negotiators, concretely Richard Holbrooke the chief negotiator and Frank McCloskey, “a relatively unknown congressman”<sup>99</sup> culminating and marked by “the McCloskey amendment of 1994”<sup>100</sup>. The years to follow have been those of state-building, reconstruction but also a mismanaged instalment of autocratic warlords who successfully, presented themselves as the fresh faces of new post-war era. Strongly believing in the necessity of the European Union’s presence and active engagement in the region, not only due to geopolitical contestation, does not mean that the EU has per se been a success. In order to evaluate the success of the Union’s approach vis-à-vis BiH, it is fundamental to explain the reasons behind its contracted progress, and it is in there where we find the answer to as how and why, post state-building period has

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<sup>98</sup> Yamashita, Hikaru(2008)“Impartial’ Use of Force in United Nations Peacekeeping’, International Peacekeeping,15:5,615 — 630, p.2

<sup>99</sup> Hamza Karčić (2016): An unlikely hawk: Congressman Frank McCloskey and the Bosnian war, Journal of Transatlantic Studies, p.2

<sup>100</sup> Ibid p.20



stirred down the road, and if how to balance the guilt appropriately. Integration, a membership perspective for Bosnia and Herzegovina has never been challenged by any Bosnian politicians, but the path has been severely endangered. Noticing the engagement of different players externally and internally, and the multi-faceted structural problems, the coded contestation of this issue will be three-fold. Focus on the external state building/member state building, explaining the regime entropy as a result of local elites' state capture and economic institutional entrenchment and last but not least the ethnically fragile, passive and insentient citizenry that has not yet transitioned in an elevated political commune. Nonetheless, the goal of this thesis is the analysis of the European Union's Enlargement Policy, success and/or failure in BiH, and this part will be to some extent more explanatory of internal and domestic problems, than the counterpart on Georgia. In the externally EU led state-building process, the immediate aftermath of the most violent conflict on European soil, is crucial to understand this complicated relationship, and is also a starting point for our comprehension of the limbo state of Bosnia. Scaffolding immense literature that contributes to understanding of this case study will be helpful insofar that it traces the most important mechanism, key actors, the structure-agency debate as well as the theoretical assumptions of the EU's Enlargement strategy. My predicament claims of EU's success, also in vivid contrast to the other case study of EU's foreign policy, under the roof of external policy but with different vision and goal under the Neighbourhood Policy, has paradoxically but truly been more successful in Georgia than in BiH, with more arguments to follow in conclusion. Having had produced time-line graphs as part of my engagement in the EU Delegation, as well as functional organigrams will serve to simply present key milestones which will allow for more theoretical argumentation of the EU-BiH relationship nature. Now, let's turn to theorizing the issue of external state building with implications on the political system, elite' perverse contestation and the very nature of the historic authoritarian elasticity combined with the citizenry's disengagement. Plus, outlining the economic potential of the country and future trends will also serve as a powerful tool to show how subnational entities preserve their authority and supremacy vis-à-vis their ethno-national blue collar workers, the other ethne and the superstructure state. The potential for economic development is also causally related to the international led understanding of free market and the local exploitation of the same. I will try to disseminate the most up to date literature and the general scholarly literature that influence and clarify my argumentation lines.

#### *4.1. Theorising the Bosnian Political System*

To begin with, I find that few thoughts on consociational democratic regime type should be sketched to understand the broader complexity of BiH regime type. It is true, that the Dayton Peace Accords, the Annex IV which is informally referred to as the Constitution of BiH, is also the seed of the problems, but it would be cynical not to state that it is also an instrumentalization for the blame-complaint narrative, that the Bosnian politicians have so favouringly acquired. The national parties, resembling their territorial ethno-national constituencies, have “taken full advantage of the consociational structure of the political system and have exploited the short-term approaches of international agencies”<sup>101</sup>. The very nature of the BiH as a unitary state has been and remains challenged, as it symbolises in the words of Bellony:

“an impossible compromise between Bosnian Croats and Serbs, most of whom wanted to be united with their 'ethnic' (in fact, religious) brethren in contiguous states, and Muslims or 'Bosniacs' who wanted a single, unified state”<sup>102</sup>.

Consociationalism, characterized by ethnic quotas, vital national interest backed by veto power, grand coalition and proportional representation<sup>103</sup>, does not further cooperation in long term, post-conflict cooperation and reconciliation agenda, especially if the territory is divided and the people distressed by a miserable socio-economic progression. I do not want to suggest that it was not necessary at the time, and a serious cease-fire necessity. However, in the case of BiH, it has produced the most outrageous, absurd and paradoxical political conditions of dysfunctionality, however it was utilized throughout the post-war period. Even though, the transfer of technical election from international to local administration of 2002 elections has been a success, the substance of the latter has been a bench-mark position for the kleptocratic oligarchic elites, still visible on the 2019 everyday political theatre stage. Instant elections without good governance, have been debated as too soon to have any substantial meaning. What is more, in the end produced same nationalist elite leaders with no aspiration and worry for parliamentary democratic checks and balances – typical for the post-1990s countries. The key parties benefiting from this political arrangement, are the pre-dominantly Muslim Bosniak SDA in the FBiH, the exclusively Catholic HDZ for the Croat population of FBiH and the SNSD's<sup>104</sup> orthodox Serb electorate in the other BiH entity, Republika Srpska. Stressing the need for

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<sup>101</sup> Roberto Belloni post-doctoral research fellow (2004) Peacebuilding and consociational electoral engineering in Bosnia and Herzegovina, *International Peacekeeping*, 11:2, 334-353, p.4

<sup>102</sup> Christopher Bellamy (1998): Reflections on the civil war in Bosnia and foreign intervention 1992–98, *Civil Wars*, 1:2, 1-25, p.24

<sup>103</sup> Arendt Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977

<sup>104</sup> Previously used to be SDS

change, even in the beginning of the new decade after the war, there have been considerate voices stressing various problems. One of these was the outcry to stop the international interference in the local partisan appointment decisions, which has to the best or worst come to realization by 2008. Adding on that, already in 2004, a noteworthy contribution by post-doctoral research fellow Roberto Belloni, pointed that “BiH needs to move beyond its current consociational structures that perpetuate ethnic division and political fragmentation”<sup>105</sup>. And it is clear, that already in a single decade preceding the war, the bar has been raised in a way to allow for the new elites to entrench themselves, what would years later be described as state capture. Elected officials, became rulers, their accountability and deliverables to the citizens, unfortunately set on a minimum threshold. What I argue here, is that since the EU has been so closely engaged in BiH, their dual approach of state-building and EU integration has not been delivered on time, and abandoned to soon. Elaborating further I want to point out why this argument is especially interesting to examine in the current days. In 2018 pre-election period, despite the fact that the Republika Srpska National Day referendum was deemed unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina deeming it discriminatory against non-Serbs in the entity, and, has marked serious breaches of the constitutional law, echoed by populist war rhetoric and absurd political games. Due to this, the citizens of BiH, probably in bigger number in the FBiH and the Bosniak parties as well as the citizen favouring ‘civic’ parties (Nasa Stranka, DF) have been raising their voices for the High Representative to act on behalf of the ‘Bonn Powers’ (“Bonn Powers” came only in 1997 when the Americans and Europeans begrudgingly realized the lack of credible enforcement mechanisms in the original text<sup>106</sup>), and disqualify officials by directly interfering in the politics of BiH.

However, this has not happened, since the approach of the divided international decision makers controlling EU vision, influencing the Security Council resolutions and complementary the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) decisions, does not favour this direct interference approach since 2006. There are, two main reasons why state building has shifted from direct intervention to conditionality, namely “the incompatibility of direct imposition with democratic governance and the rule of law”<sup>107</sup>. Logically, the EU also support this view, since the

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<sup>105</sup> Roberto Belloni post-doctoral research fellow (2004) Peacebuilding and consociational electoral engineering in bosnia and herzegovina, *International Peacekeeping*, 11:2, 334-353, p.19

<sup>106</sup> Mujanović, Jasmin, “Elections and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina”, open- Democracy, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/jasmin-mujanovi%C4%87/elections-and-ethnic-cleansing-in-bosniaherzegovina>

<sup>107</sup> Florian Bieber (2011) Building Impossible States? State-Building Strategies and EU Membership in the Western Balkans, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:10, 1783-1802, p.10

integration process assumes the country to be self-sufficient and functioning, not a puppet of international decision makers. This however, turns to my argument, that if the externally led state building process was finished before transfer of elections having people respecting the rule of law, and had performed more realistically, pushing strongly for reforms along with sanctions in the past, would not have allowed for such crippled power sharing system, and ineffective institutional structures to withstand the limits of time. Now, both the citizens and the international representative are facing their own faults. So, the issue here, is that the EU has centred its methodology on conditionality very early, as a tool of state-building, but whereby the other on the co-operative channel had to be recognized and was expected to deliver. But, as Florian Bieber stresses, “the conditionality approach has been largely ineffective in regard to state building, in part due to the lack of commitment of political elites to EU integration and the persistence of status issues on the policy agenda”<sup>108</sup>. There are many characterization of the ill-nature of BiH situation, as a failed, weak, hybrid regime or a transitional government<sup>109</sup>. To illustrate and cement the hypothetical premise that I follow, I emphasize the nature of the minimalist state classification, leading from the work of Florian Bieber, one of the most acclaimed scholars on Eastern Europe, specifically the Western Balkans. The tensions since the post-war period have been stretching from post-conflict state building, enduring minimalist institutional structures and creation of a future EU member state. Considering the criteria of a minimalist state, the legitimacy of the state, the scope of the institutions of the state and the strength or capacity of state institution, “a minimalist state is thus a state with limited legitimacy and a weak scope and strength of the state”<sup>110</sup>, and how it is possible to expect this institutional set-up, combined with the combination of oligarchy, clientelism, nationalism and criminality – a central feature of the region’s general historical development – as ‘elastic authoritarianism’ (“the process of persistent ideological mutation contrasted with static political and economic patterns, through which local elites have deliberately stunted social transformation processes in the Balkans since the nineteenth century”<sup>111</sup>), to function? Limited security structures, a clear dominance of the sub-state entities, weak judicial enforcement of decisions, have resulted with state institutions often unable to enforce decisions and a current status of a paralysed organism. For instance, “education is one of the many prerogatives decentralised to the sub-state level,

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<sup>108</sup> Florian Bieber (2011) Building Impossible States? State-Building Strategies and EU Membership in the Western Balkans, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:10, 1783-1802, p.2

<sup>109</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/bosnia-and-herzegovina>

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>111</sup> Jasmin Mujanovic, *Hunger and Fury – the Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p.2

the entity government in the case of the RS and the cantonal authorities in the case of the Federation”<sup>112</sup>. Another supporting fact of the failure to give a united answer on education sector between the entities, came to prominence when the authorities in 2019 could not agree to deliver timely on the European Union Questionnaire.

Furthermore, it is not the inability that has become the only problem, it is also the unwillingness. Why should the family based elites who contest the state, and who clearly find enough benefits in perpetuating the status quo, opt out for wider state building and transfer of power to either state level or more capable opponents. This contestation by sub-states, or the ineffective institutional set-up can be seen in a symbolic sense, as for example, the national anthem had no consensus over lyrics and thus still remains without an accompanying text or the fact that the flag has been externally imposed.

#### *4.2. Tracing the Root of Problems and the European Union Conditionality Approach*

EU’s offer of membership perspective has been on the table within the SAA process and the Thessaloniki summit in 2003, and as a consequence, the EU has become the main international organisation in terms of assistance and conditionality more broadly, becoming an area of EU state-building through accession in the form of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)”<sup>113</sup>. The peace-keeping task, was transferred to EU by the new millennium. In parallel, “the European Union has been taking over peace-building tasks in BiH, beginning with the EU Police Mission (EUPM), which replaced the UN-led International Police Task Force (IPTF) in 2003, and followed by operation EUFOR Althea, replacing the NATO-led SFOR (Stabilisation Force) mission in 2004”<sup>114</sup>. This logic of state building, extends beyond institution building, and has to incorporate good governance, but more importantly it has to include the conceptual understanding of the state and one single nation. Such EU’s proposed state-building conditionality problematizing is twofold: “first, the EU lacks rules in the sphere of state building and has struggled to impose these and other conditions clearly and second, the EU remains divided in regard to state building between different Unions’ institutions and

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<sup>112</sup> Roberto Belloni & Jasmin Ramović (2019): Elite and Everyday Social Contracts in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Pathways to Forging a National Social Contract? Journal of Intervention and State-building, p.10

<sup>113</sup> Florian Bieber (2011) Building Impossible States? State-Building Strategies and EU Membership in the Western Balkans, Europe-Asia Studies, 63:10, 1783-1802, p.10

<sup>114</sup> Gülnur Aybet & Florian Bieber (2011): From Dayton to Brussels: The Impact of EU and NATO Conditionality on State Building in Bosnia & Hercegovina, Europe-Asia Studies, 63:10, 1911-1937, p.10

member states”<sup>115</sup>. Moreover, the division of roles, and the inability to merge the approach is another issue, that undermined a single voiced approach to state building, noting “in addition to the EU state-building agenda, the Office of the High Representative (OHR) pursued its own state-building project contained in the Mission Implementation Plan (MIP) and the OHR work plan”<sup>116</sup>. However, one has to take into consideration, that the nature of this process was and still is “externally driven and the crisis in the Bosnian state-building project since the failure of the constitutional reform in 2006 suggests that the centripetal process is not the result of the functioning of the institutions themselves, but rather it is externally imposed”.<sup>117</sup> This also resulted with “the success of two diametrically opposed political visions for the country in general elections the same year”<sup>118</sup>.

Even the summit of Heads of EU member states in 2008, reiterated the problems of state contestation, and the necessity to “increase inefficiency of the Parliamentary Assembly, institutionalise coordination mechanisms between the state and the entities, and change to the constitution and electoral system to ensure that members of the presidency and of the House of People do not have to originate from the three constituent peoples only”<sup>119</sup>. The issues of the EU process that I follow on, and remain loyal in my further argumentation is best concurred in Bieber’s conclusion where he states: “A profound dilemma in the enlargement of the European Union remains: how to define standards for a potential EU member state in terms of state capacity and values and which give the states the capacity to achieve membership without losing the state along the way”<sup>120</sup>. Even though the arguments here proposed stand, the conditionality logic will be further relaxed along the extension of this work.

Nevertheless, understanding this problematizing of state-building is not sufficient, as another, apparently obvious difficulty not included in the policy of the decision makers and technocrats in Brussels in comparison the other WB countries exists. Bosnia and Herzegovina, also a post-communist country, has not relived its democratic existence after a people led revolution, be it at the eve of the 1989, or in the early 2000s as for example the ‘Otpor’ revolution in Serbia. As

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<sup>115</sup> Noucheva, G. (2007) Fake, Partial and Imposed Compliance. The Limits of the EU’s Normative Power in the Western Balkans, CEPS Working Document, 274, July, p.9

<sup>116</sup> Florian Bieber (2011) Building Impossible States? State-Building Strategies and EU Membership in the Western Balkans, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:10, 1783-1802, p.13

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, p.21

<sup>118</sup> Gülnur Aybet & Florian Bieber (2011): From Dayton to Brussels: The Impact of EU and NATO Conditionality on State Building in Bosnia & Hercegovina, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:10, 1911-1937, p.5

<sup>119</sup> Council of the EU (2008) ‘Council Decision of 18 February 2008 on the Principles, Priorities and Conditions Contained in the European Partnership with BiH and Repealing Decision 2006/55/ EC’, 2008/211/EC, Official Journal of the EU, L80, 19 March

<sup>120</sup> Florian Bieber (2011) Building Impossible States? State-Building Strategies and EU Membership in the Western Balkans, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:10, 1783-1802, p.19

far as this problem is concerned, Jasmin Mujanovic in his inspiring work of identifying the current patterns in democracy crisis on the Balkans, stresses the regime change as “initial collapse of one-party rule in the former Yugoslavia did not occur through the efforts of civil society, but that in the decades since, civil society has remained largely stunted and marginalized”<sup>121</sup>. The turn to a quasi-free market democracy was just a complicated effect of the post-war rebuilding efforts, that did not come neither from the citizens, nor the elites. “Because the actual networks and structures of power in the Balkans have remained informal, patrimonial, and clannish (and, most importantly, non-ideological in their fundamental conception of political and social order), they have persisted through otherwise seismic historical transformations”<sup>122</sup>. Where reform is a part of a democratization process that account for citizens demands, in BiH it is all but a disincentive for the existing patrimonial state elites. Here I find the EU’s neoliberal approach, and misunderstanding of the local logic of doing business most vivid. The very same “externally assisted transition programmes have an economic reform package based around neoliberal economic precepts of deregulation, liberalization and privatization as the key to the establishment of a market-based economy”<sup>123</sup>. The presumption that privatisation leads to the capitalist, a cost-benefit risking individual managing the company, firm or corporation better than the state, maximizing his/her own profit and developing the business is not the rationale behind the privatization schemes of the clientelist, quid-pro-quo oriented elites of BiH.

This rationale is also clearly mutual to the FBiH and RS ruling establishment, and it is here where the confrontation should be understood by both the EU and the citizens. It is absolutely not the ethnicity based confrontation. And as a sad result, “the privatization process became an embrace not of free-market competition but of patrimonial redistribution by self-dealing militias turned political parties. In effect, the oligarchic concert that had characterized the late-Yugoslav period persisted into the post-war settlement, only now it was further legitimized by the presence of the international community”<sup>124</sup>.

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<sup>121</sup> Jasmin Mujanovic, *Hunger and Fury – the Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p.100

<sup>122</sup> Jasmin Mujanovic, *Hunger and Fury – the Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p.103

<sup>123</sup> Denisa Kostovicova & Vesna Bojicic-Dželilovic’ (2006) *Europeanizing the Balkans: Rethinking the Post-communist and Post-Conflict Transition*, *Ethnopolitics*, 5:3, 223-241, p.9

<sup>124</sup> Jasmin Mujanovic, *Hunger and Fury – the Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p.91

Moreover, Roberto Belloni and Jasmin Ramovic, propose in their research two types of social contract vis-à-vis the state, 'elite social contract' and 'everyday social contract'. Of course, more influential is the first one which:

“encompasses political elites from the three main ethnic groups, along with the international community, business elite, judiciary, and some segments of civil society. For this contract, ethnic tensions are instrumental in preserving the power of the political and economic elite. This is an elite whose members, despite the occasional use of inflammatory rhetoric, are able to others accommodate each interest across ethnic lines”<sup>125</sup>.

The latter, remains in a desperate struggle, often described as eagerly awaiting pay check on every first day of the coming month. They remain also bound on “informal networks to meet their needs, and to access services and opportunities... cultivating their relationships, views, and expectations within a context dominated by the nationalist-driven, status quo-oriented elite social contract”<sup>126</sup>. For example, despite the fact that a person can use 'štela' to acquire possessions he/she is not entitled to, Bosnian citizens have relied on these connections mainly to fill the void that was created by the failure of public institutions' transition to democracy, especially in terms of service provision and employment opportunities”<sup>127</sup>. Narrative of bribery, corruption, in-group loyalty, party patronage, informal nepotism has created a vicious circle. Everyone, while against it, is in one or another way inside the labyrinth. Escaping it means losing the ill-gotten benefits.

What I borrow from this idea, is that once the Dayton Peace Accord has been cemented, it was easy do exploit it, giving it a storyline. As it is already reflected by Michael Pugh<sup>128</sup>, the political priorities of the ethno-nationalists who negotiated it, was and remained an elite settlement that guaranteed the immediate interests of each group and their leadership. What this concept sets to emphasize is a set of unspoken rules on how political leaders would maintain their grip on power, exercise control over their constituencies, and (mis)-manage economic resources often in close collaboration with criminal actors who emerged as a new group of politically connected entrepreneurs in the post-war period. A legal example, to my arguments is the case brought by Sejdic-Finci against BiH to the European Court of Human Rights in 2009, which they won against the state (first of many to follow). Obviously, the court acknowledged that minorities do not possess the same citizenship rights required to run for office and stressed to the BiH

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<sup>125</sup> Roberto Belloni & Jasmin Ramović (2019): Elite and Everyday Social Contracts in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Pathways to Forging a National Social Contract? *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, p.3

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, p.3

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, p.11

<sup>128</sup> Pugh, M. 2017. “Oligarchy and Economic Legacy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.” *Peacebuilding* 5 (3):223–238.



politicians to implement this decision. After several years of endless negotiations, this has been marked as a lost case, because the ruling nationalist wouldn't weaken their dominance over the electoral system. Linking this issue as part of the EU conditionality, has been in place until 2014, the eruption of protest and realization that this issue is producing a stable deadlock, Brussels opted out for a set of socio-economic reforms that would change the focal point of development. I claim, the successful seizure of both BiH state and its structure has been flagged by this red line, so easily traversed. From then on, full retrogression is on the way, with indicators such as emigration and unemployment being the objective measurement. Moreover, if focus remained on the Sejdic-Finci ruling, along with constitutional reform, a momentum for a sense of national social contract could have been created. Another related problem replicated on every political sphere of state governance and "in addition to being inefficient, because of administrative divisions based around identity belonging, services are provided on the basis of ethnic criteria, thus perpetuating societal divisions"<sup>129</sup>.

Having had outlined the main arguments, capitulating however it may be for the EU's approach, I turn to describing and exploring the concept of integration through accession conditionality. In its basic meaning, conditionality means setting a set of criteria which in this framework can broadly be named as the Copenhagen criteria<sup>130</sup>, later exponentially diffused accordingly to necessary reforms and challenges, for a return in aid, investment, diplomatic advising, trade and integration progression. Scholar have also referred to is as, "a specific tool from the EU's enlargement toolbox, that was widely used on the applicant countries in Central and Eastern European enlargement, in pursuit of promotion of human rights, democratization, and good governance"<sup>131</sup>. This conditionality, has with time transformed as Valery Perry argues into negotiable conditionality, and lost its genuine credibility<sup>132</sup>. Obviously, the processes that take place, are rationalization and socialization. Rationalization implies the cost-benefit calculation by the existing elites, politicians, local- and state-level civil servants. The latter refers to, "internalisation of the institution's norms by local elites; in a way, the external norms become 'their' norms" ... "grafted' onto existing local norms and what results is local 'ownership' of these norms"<sup>133</sup>. Both of these mechanism, have been easily kidnaped by the domestic

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<sup>129</sup> Roberto Belloni & Jasmin Ramović (2019): Elite and Everyday Social Contracts in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Pathways to Forging a National Social Contract? *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, p.10

<sup>130</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/accession-criteria\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/accession-criteria_en)

<sup>131</sup> Jasmin Hasic and Dzenita Karabegovic, *Bosnia and Herzegovina's Foreign Policy Since Independence*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, p.87

<sup>132</sup> Valery Perry, Wpodrow Willson International Center for Scholars, Working Paper: The Working Group on the Western Balkans

<sup>133</sup> Gülnur Aybet & Florian Bieber (2011): From Dayton to Brussels: The Impact of EU and NATO Conditionality on State Building in Bosnia & Hercegovina, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:10, 1911-1937, p.2

counterpart on negotiations, crafted to their specific needs. Gülnur Aybet and Florian Bieber have looked in the conditionality approach more closely, identifying how the police reform accompanying wider state building failed to succeed as such. Back to the conditionality mechanism, the process of socialisation occurs through a ‘learning process’ whereby external norms are internalised by local elites, there has to be a degree of rationalisation to initiate that process of social learning, where I would also add that they have been very capable of extrapolating the exact reforms suitable to them according to the political time-frame tied with their mandate. Another intertwined problem, are the weak state structures that are based on ‘DPA’ and inability by the civil servants to implement the necessary conditions. Since the process of state-building has not been completed on time, and has over time emulated in integration which is a discursive and normative process. The EU conditionality has now to deal not with state structure, but the existence of the unique entity levels of engagement which render state institutions and norms either non-existent or weak. Therefore, when international institutions ‘engage’ local elites over the acceptance of norms, they encounter ethnic norms rather than state-level norms”<sup>134</sup>. One such example is the inability of EU to instigate police reform on a state level. It is the failure of the conditionality mechanism already in the past, for which the EU lacked commitment, clear standards and technical know-how, that seriously harmed the reliability of EU conditionality more roughly in BiH. The goal of that process was to link the entity police structures under a single political oversight of a ministry or ministries in the Council of Ministers. As it became the competence of EU, linking it to integration and the SAA, “from 2005 to 2008, BiH’s EU integration process would remain primarily conditioned and thus delayed by police reform”<sup>135</sup>. When in 2008, after numerous exchange and debates between RS, OHR and EU, a consensus on deal was finally brokered, it did nothing more than as symbolic overseeing body, that would only assume powers after changing the constitution. However, this lowered the EU’s credibility and “also erected an additional obstacle for concluding constitutional reforms by establishing a disincentive for the RS to engage in constitutional changes”<sup>136</sup>. Yet another example of the elites winning over the international approach of conditionality. Concurring this, it is to be stressed that after tedious work, failing negotiations and stalled discussions, maybe it is high time to change the diplomatic scheme of this process. In every diplomatic encounter or a confrontation of goals,

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid, p.8

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, p.14

<sup>136</sup> Gülnur Aybet & Florian Bieber (2011): From Dayton to Brussels: The Impact of EU and NATO Conditionality on State Building in Bosnia & Hercegovina, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:10, 1911-1937, p.19

there is a thesis and an antithesis. If put on a left-right spectre, these viewpoints need to meet in the middle. However, debating the communication and progress, resonates that no convergence of standpoints occurs, because the negotiating counterparts are not on the same spectre, and ill-willingly produce status quo. From personal communication during 2018, at the EU Delegation to BiH, much has been said about the conditionality, especially about giving ‘low hanging fruits’, as a momentum for elites to catch and capitalize. But, even though this is meant to speed up the process, it also counterproductively makes the local ruling class also very comfortable with awaiting new conditionality’s, that could be easier to implement.

#### *4.3. EU Enlargement Toolbox*

Bearing in mind the post-Westphalian nature of the EU, its foreign policy is multifaceted, fluid and ever changing. The idea of expanding the Union is present since the Schuman declaration and open to the participation of the other countries of Europe. However, with more than half a century of accepting new members, for both geopolitical and economic reason, a time for reconsideration of the issue has come. On paper, the EU Enlargement is sound and vivid, in reality it is crippling and sick. With every political project, fatigue comes with time, and it is probably high time that everyone realises that, Macron already being the open contender of the enlargement project<sup>137</sup>. Moreover, enlargement also triggers new “policy demands on the Union, alters its institutional functioning, and affects its legal corpus... it sets in motion the application of a specific and evolving body of EU rules that govern the entire process through which a third state becomes a Member State of the Union”<sup>138</sup>. Most recently, in the ‘Council conclusions on enlargement and stabilisation and association process’, an overview on the Western Balkans countries Commission’s assessment has reiterated the unequivocal and continued support to the enlargement path. Bosnia and Herzegovina unfortunately receives the least attention, stressing the importance of government formation, continuation with reforms and receive opinion later this year<sup>139</sup> due to lack of success.

Sketching out the EU’s Enlargement longitudinal time-lapse with BiH is not overly complicated since there have not been that many milestone achievements. Unfortunately, comparison with

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<sup>137</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-enlargement/size-matters-france-deflates-eu-enlargement-aspirations-idUSKCN1TX2AA>

<sup>138</sup> Paul Craig and Gráinne de Búrca, *The Evolution of EU Law*, Oxford University Press, 2011, p.187

<sup>139</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/18/council-conclusions-on-enlargement-and-stabilisation-and-association-process/>

neighbouring, WB countries, further depresses the BiH trajectory. The WB designation<sup>140</sup>, has been in use by the European Commission to describe potential candidate and candidate countries respectively. At the end of 1990s, the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) was inaugurated, offering a clear EU accession perspective for BiH. This commitment was backed up by concluding the Stability Pact, a political document whose key strategic goal is stabilizing Southeast Europe by bringing the countries in the region closer to Euro- Atlantic integration and strengthening regional cooperation. Later on, in March 2004, the Council of the European Union adopted the first European Partnership with BiH<sup>141</sup>, while negotiations on the SAA started in Sarajevo in November 2005. The technical parts of negotiations on the SAA were finalized in November 2007, while the Agreement was signed a year later, entering into force almost seven years later, in June 2015<sup>142</sup>. Since 2007, BiH participates in the Central European Free Trade Agreement, the abolition of trade barriers between the countries of the region, which provides chances for economic development. Basically, the goal of the “the implementation of CEFTA and the creation of a unified economic area is supposed to fulfil two external functions: the creation of a larger, more stable market with a greater purchasing power, and further gradual integration of this new structure with the European Union”<sup>143</sup>. Currently, the most recent publication of the Opinion<sup>144</sup> on BiH application does not offer candidate status, nor a perspective of opening the negotiations, but repeats the set of conditions.



Graph 1.1 – Longitudinal graph of BiH accession timeline<sup>145</sup>

<sup>140</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/western-balkans/>

<sup>141</sup> [http://www.dei.gov.ba/dei/bih\\_eu/default.aspx?id=9808&langTag=en-US](http://www.dei.gov.ba/dei/bih_eu/default.aspx?id=9808&langTag=en-US)

<sup>142</sup> Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the other part, L 164/2, Official Journal of the European Union, 30.6.2015

<sup>143</sup> <https://financialobserver.eu/cse-and-cis/serbia/cefta-gives-the-balkans-more-than-they-think/>

<sup>144</sup> Communication from the Commission to The European Parliament and the Council Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s application for membership of the European Union {SWD (2019) 222 final}

<sup>145</sup> Year 2004 has been chosen as the starting point, since that is the moment when, then FYR Macedonia submitted the membership application as the first WB country. (see table in appendix).

So far, in 2019 it can be said that during the process of enlargement EU, the European Union established a mechanism to develop institutions and to support transition process in the EU, through financial help, for potential candidates and candidate countries"<sup>146</sup>. The total pre-accession funding for the period 2007-2013 was € 11.5 billion. It is important to note that the IPA funds allocated from 2007 to 2013 were separated into different areas of financial help; as there was a difference between the potential candidate countries and candidate countries as respective beneficiaries<sup>147</sup>. IPA II has been introduced, for the period 2014 to 2020, in allocations to Bosnia for the period 2014-2017 amount to €237.2 million, whereas for the period 2018-2020, an indicative allocation of € 314.9 million has been earmarked<sup>148</sup>. The most important novelty of IPA II is its strategic focus. Country Strategy Papers are the specific strategic planning documents made for each beneficiary for the 7-year period<sup>149</sup>. Another modification is also that there is no more difference in funds allocated between potential candidate countries and candidate countries.<sup>150</sup> In regards to the Economic Reform Programme the same applies to potential candidate and candidate countries. The turn to becoming a candidate country in material significance is also related to the countries credibility as a serious and secure partner for foreign investments<sup>151</sup>.

Briefly reflecting on the economic impact by the European Union, it is clear that the EU represents the biggest contributor of FDI's and is the first trade partner of BiH in numbers currently standing at EU exporting Euro 6.1 billion, and importing Euro 4.1 billion<sup>152</sup>.

As outlined in the general overview of BiH's key economic challenge, it is the imbalance of its economic model: "public policies and incentives are skewed toward the public rather than the private sector, consumption rather than investment, and imports rather than exports"<sup>153</sup>. Main concentrating points should incentivize and focus on "private investment that supports both vibrant small and medium-sized enterprises and the growth of larger companies, facilitates export performance and productivity improvements, and generates much-needed private sector

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<sup>146</sup> Mirjana Kranjac\*, Rado Maksimović, Uroš Sikimić a Model of using IPA Funds for Project Realization in pre-accession Countries: the Case of Serbia, University of Novi Sad, Serbia

<sup>147</sup> Personal Communication, DG NEAR Official

<sup>148</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en)

<sup>149</sup> Wolfgang Koeth, European Institute of Public Administration Institut européen d'administration publique The New Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II): Less Accession, More Assistance?, working paper 2014/W/01

<sup>150</sup> Davide Denti, Did EU candidacy differentiation impact on the performance of pre-accession funds? A quantitative analysis of Western Balkan cases

<sup>151</sup> Personal Communication, DG NEAR Official

<sup>152</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en)

<sup>153</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/bosniaandherzegovina/overview>

employment”<sup>154</sup>. Reasons for economic debilitation are multi-fold, but challenges will keep arising to the lack of will to resolve, political fragmentation, institutional deficiency, dependency on international aid, lack of creation for economic revival. Providentially, Nikolaos Tsifakis & Charalambos Tsardanidis sum it well up: “the bleak picture of Bosnia’s public economics has been created by large accumulated arrears, incremental deficits, bloated expenditures and a fragmented and inefficient tax system”<sup>155</sup>.

Current state of play of the European Union’s Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy vis-à-vis BiH, is and will be based on the official Opinion on BiH. I propose, to analyse in a two-fold manner. Identifying the key priority goals as politically negotiable deals, which necessitate discussions, trade-offs between elites, ethnic sub-state rulers and secondly the necessity to reinvent the constitutional set-up. These do not resonate a positive development given the current constellation of parties in BiH. Opposing, the more bureaucratic mechanism, not so suitable to rhetoric about any kind of collective ethnic interest which would produce tensions and hardships in implementation, will stumble upon the institutional weakness and democratic deficit. Important to note, the idea about the candidate status, that was utilized by the governing elites, in the pre-election campaign and post-election mania, was never a realistic expectation. One ought to look the pathways of neighbouring countries that have been progressing along the same integration pathway as BiH is now, for example Albania and Montenegro, to understand that the candidate status and opening of negotiations occur after the key priorities defined in the Commission Opinion have been fulfilled. In May 2019, the Commission clearly outlined in the case of BiH that, “the Commission considers that negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened with Bosnia and Herzegovina once the country has achieved the necessary degree of compliance... will need to fundamentally improve its legislative and institutional framework to ensure it meets the following key priorities”<sup>156</sup>.

Constant calls for the EU to acknowledge, the unexciting progress made by BiH, to mask the time lost, has been very bluntly disapproved in both Hahn’s and Mogherini’s statements along the publication of the Opinion and Analytical report<sup>157</sup> in May 2019. Before analysing the key priorities recommendation, it’s necessary to reflect on the so eagerly awaited and appraised,

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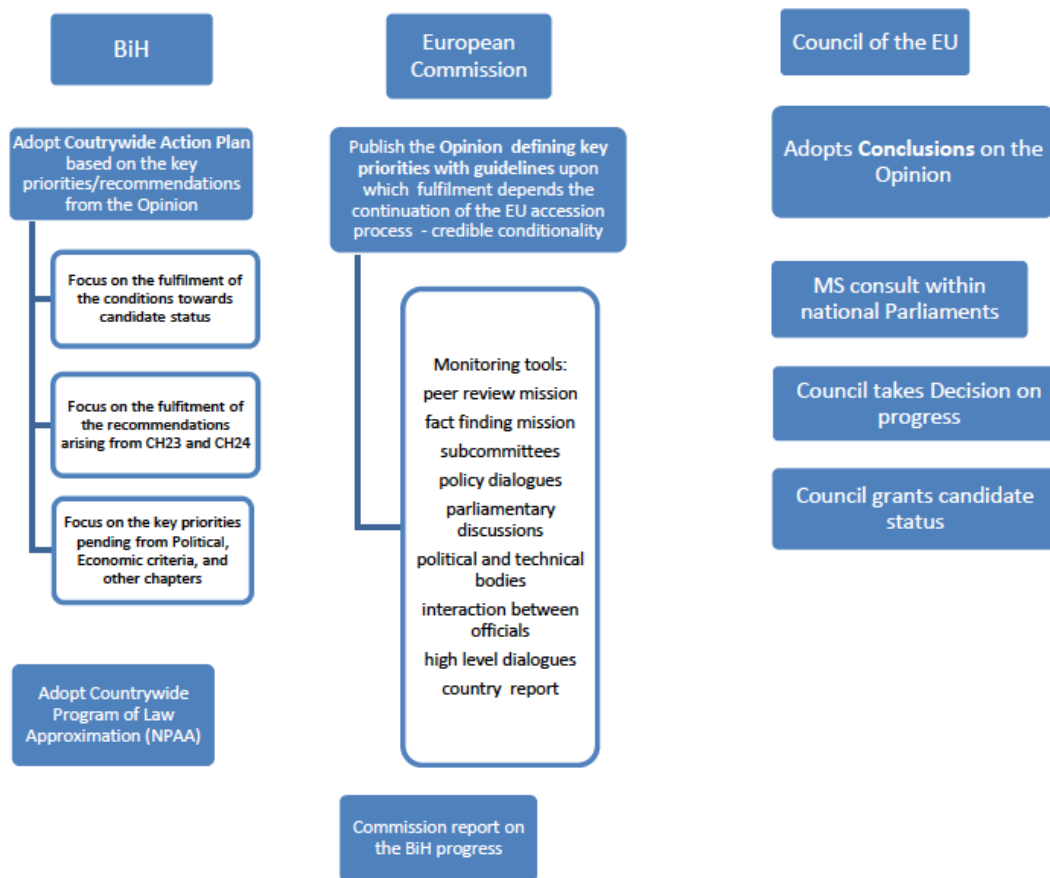
<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Marc Weller, Stefan Wolff, *International State-Building after Violent Conflict – Bosnia Ten Years after Dayton*, Routledge, 2016, p.55

<sup>156</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s application for membership of the European Union {SWD (2019) 222 final}, p.15

<sup>157</sup> Commission Staff Working Document Analytical Report Accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s application for membership of the European Union {COM (2019) 261 final}

BiH expectation of the 'Candidate' status, for which there is not even a legal *acquis communautaire* status. However, as it has been so far argued, the domestic constituencies do not grasp the meaning and implication of this, small step in the accession mechanism. Achieving the candidate status is the next step for a country's progress in aligning with European standards and the Copenhagen criteria. It is a stick in the 'carrot and stick' approach by the member states not only at the level of Council of the European Union, but also the European Council which is seen by some as playing the "predominant political role". Nevertheless, it marks the beginning of the accession procedure, during which the Commission publishes annual progress reports. The EP's Foreign Affairs Committee discusses these annual reports and prepares resolutions for plenary on each candidate country. Every step towards membership requires the unanimous approval of the Member States. Diagram 1.3 explains the pathways, and necessary steps. The regional European Integration sets out Serbia, Montenegro and Albania as frontrunners, candidate countries currently given a "best-case scenario" accession date. However, in the Western Balkans region, the candidate status does have a symbolic importance, especially when only two out of the six countries have yet not attained that status. For the regional political atmosphere, it is of high importance, specifically when it comes to regional cooperation and ensuring that the relations are at a neighbouring friendly level. The transition from potential candidate to candidate status is a significant political and symbolic change, towards an ensured path, also vis-à-vis other international players, mainly of an authoritarian character who are eager to interfere. The enlargement is a slow process that has to be managed accordingly to the criteria set forth, but it also has to be taken in account that there will be no rewards without clear progress made. The candidate status does bring a change with itself, but more on the political level rather than directly to the state bank account levels. For a country facing different crises and a lack of national consensus, the status of a candidate country is, in principle an implicit recognition that its overall policy stance and political governance is on track. It is however high time, that the political elites of the countries that have not yet become candidates, understand that there is no time to waste, and that the benefits don't have to be solely financial, but can rather have a larger political and symbolic meaning. In the end, for the (potential) candidates it boils down to a cost-benefit analysis of the integration process and pace.



Graph 1.3 – BiH accession steps towards acquiring candidate status

#### 4.4. Conclusion of EU's Engagement in BiH

Having had reflected on the current status of BiH I briefly explore the current political atmosphere and offer concluding remarks on the state of play and set a prognosis of necessary reform and possible outcomes. The legacy of the pseudo communist regime, in that it is a milder and different version of the Soviet style Communism, leading to a bloody break-up in the 1990s has made the transition period much harder, than for instance in East European countries of antecedent enlargement. To correctly analyse the outcome of past events in BiH and its direct effects today, it is mandatory to understand the multi-faceted nature of state capacity, which concentrates on the “configuration of power relations across the boundary of the state, society, and the market... relations between state and non-state actors in order to explain the challenge



of Europeanisation in post-conflict Bosnia–Herzegovina”<sup>158</sup>. Tanja A. Börzel presupposes the hardship and limited power of Europeanisation stumbling on the challenge of decoupling the formal and informal institutions in the WB<sup>159</sup>. Furthermore, the post-conflict legacy problems, that are presented in BiH, have resulted with contested statehood, ethnic tensions and disputed borders. But, perhaps what is fundamental to state, is the fragmented locus of power. In the neo-Weberian conceptualization of state capacity, institutions can no longer be considered as a rational centralization and administration of power and decision making. As Kostovicova and Bojicic-Dzelilovic argue, states and their administrative capacity should be conceived as relationships both inside and outside of the state, locating power as products of social and political balance of interest private and public sector. What many today acknowledge, is the problem of the European Union to successfully tackle low capacity and the lack of willingness by the elites to act in the interest of the population and according to their accountable mandates. Specifically, it means “the lack of political will and inadequate administrative capacity are interlinked, since they both derive from the way in which political and economic power is organised domestically as a consequence of conflict”<sup>160</sup>. Unfortunately, the regime in BiH is starting to receive academic attention not in the light of its democratic progress, but rather as a case study of competitive authoritarianism, to which I find it necessary to admit two more interlinked conflicts: inter-ethnic conflict (instrumental utilization supported by various state and sub-state mechanism of control) and the existent but not yet fully conceived conflict between the exploiting elite and the disappearing middle class together with the poor rural population. This competitive authoritarianism as emphasized by Bieber, is characterized with “(1) institutional weakness that provides insufficient democratic safeguards, and (2) authoritarian political actors who utilise these weaknesses to attain and retain power”<sup>161</sup>. The narrative discourse of past and contemporary BiH politicians has been stressed on providing the survival of the DPA and Bosnian statehood as well as the support to Euro-Atlantic integrations. The external intervention by EU and NATO has been incremental in depressing this further, by allowing this to persist over time. This nexus between “competitive authoritarian regime and strategic external support and the legitimacy this generates has been termed

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<sup>158</sup> Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic & Denisa Kostovicova (2013) Europeanisation and conflict networks: private sector development in post-conflict Bosnia–Herzegovina, *East European Politics*, 29:1, 19-35, p.4

<sup>159</sup> Börzel, Tanja A. 2011: When Europeanization Hits Limited Statehood. *The Western Balkans as a Test Case for the Transformative Power of Europe*, KFG Working Paper Series, No. 30, September 2011, Kolleg-Forschergruppe (KFG) “The Transformative Power of Europe“, Freie Universität Berlin.

<sup>160</sup> Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic & Denisa Kostovicova (2013) Europeanisation and conflict networks: private sector development in post-conflict Bosnia–Herzegovina, *East European Politics*, 29:1, 19-35, p.8

<sup>161</sup> Florian Bieber (2018) Patterns of competitive authoritarianism in the Western Balkans, *East European Politics*, 34:3, 337-354, p.3

‘stabilitocracy’”<sup>162</sup>. The intended consolidation of democracy has not taken the right form, but rather a spillover to elite stabilitocracy. Arguing that the EU’s approach has not so far been fundamentally successful, is firstly exactly due to the emergence of this semi-authoritarian, competitive weak state regime, which has been accommodated domestically. As Bieber and Kmezcic argue, “maintaining external support by largely Western actors, the EU, its member states and the United States, while ensuring authoritarian control domestically”<sup>163</sup> has become a way to go. These regimes exercise control informally rather than through constitutional and legal change, taking control of the media and the state institutions.<sup>164</sup> Finally, this climaxes since the 2018 elections, with the invention of crises, both legal and informal. For instance, the PIC and the EU have failed to address Republika Srpska defying the Constitutional Court regarding the 9<sup>th</sup> of February RS statehood day, which was continued by Milorad Dodik openly disapproving the BiH state while running for presidency. The public and institutional erosion of the rule of law enforcement together with rejection of the Constitutional Court is a crucial challenge not addressed by anyone, externally and internally. The internationally led member-state building should know better, that setting a low bar threshold, creates a dangerous precedent. Climax of such an ineffective and ignorant behaviour has created limbo status quo of BiH in 2019. Current stall on Euro-Atlantic integration is causally binding because in the case of NATO and the EU, as both organisation have interchangeably played roles of peace builder and state builder. Now, with three ethnic party conditionality, it has finally backlashed. Government formation suffers due to the unwillingness of Dodik’s SNSD party to respect the previous presidential decree on fulfilling conditions related to NATO membership. Since this requires the Bosnian government to send the Annual National Programme, the Bosniak parties, mainly SDA has been blocking the appointment of the Council of Minister (since on a rotary basis, this 4-year term belongs to a member of Bosnian Serbs’ population), due to their willingness, and rightfully so to cement the security integration of BiH in NATO, but more principally to safeguard the rule of law, by respecting previous decisions. Evidently, the allegiance to kin-states, is more important than a functioning and accountable government. With both sides in deadlock, the latent victim is the population. Moreover, all levels of state administration have been successfully penetrated, securing and strengthening informal connections between by loyal party members. Even the European Commission acknowledged

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<sup>162</sup> Florian Bieber (2018) Patterns of competitive authoritarianism in the Western Balkans, *East European Politics*, 34:3, 337-354, p.3

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid*, p.5

<sup>164</sup> Florian Bieber and Marko Kmezcic, *Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group Media Freedom in the Western Balkans*

this in the assessment report “A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans”<sup>165</sup>. Furthermore, the main challenge “is to determine the dividing line between clientelism and largescale corruption that is a feature of many societies and state capture... and checks and balances which are severely curtailed”<sup>166</sup>. The detailed presentation of countless problems has been carefully presented as the key priorities in the latest Commission Opinion<sup>167</sup> on BiH application. Democratic functionality, rule of law, fundamental rights, and public administration reform have been identified as the obstacles to overcome, in order to proceed to obtaining the candidate status and opening of negotiations. However, what is missing here is the real-politik approach, an innovative vision of methods and tactics to change the status quo. Also, issues such as addressing the economy and targeting the civil society is totally missing. Is it not a central point of EU, a competitive economy, from which it follows that the “the role of the state in supporting a market based private sector is defined in terms of providing a stable legal and regulatory framework, effective and impartial enforcement of rules and regulations, and universal public goods provision in alignment with EU member state practice”<sup>168</sup>. When scholars whose literary contribution I have exhausted in my thesis, try to identify the impediments and hurdles against progression, it seems to be that they forget some vital factors. The functioning of a liberal democracy, lays on a core pillar of separation of powers and their independent control of each other, between the legislative, executive and judiciary, taking into account their balance of power. In BiH, this separation of power, has transformed itself along party separation of power, by which I deduce that it is not the checks and balances between independent institutions who claim authority and governance, but rather the informal but all-powerful negotiations and deals coming from patrimonial ethno-nationalist elites, in informal settings. Shadow state and grey economy, are elucidated in the following paragraph:

“The essence in which this form of political authority differs from a conventional notion of (functioning) state is that real power resides in the informal structures that are built around

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<sup>165</sup> EC (European Commission). 2018. “A Credible Enlargement Perspective for and Enhanced EU Engagement with the Western Balkans.” Strasbourg, February 6. <https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/>

<sup>166</sup> Florian Bieber (2018) Patterns of competitive authoritarianism in the Western Balkans, *East European Politics*, 34:3, 337-354, p.13

<sup>167</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s application for membership of the European Union {SWD (2019) 222 final}

<sup>168</sup> Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic & Denisa Kostovicova (2013) Europeanisation and conflict networks: private sector development in post-conflict Bosnia–Herzegovina, *East European Politics*, 29:1, 19-35, p.7

(and through) the formal institutions of the state, and that do not have their economic power base in regular economic activity”<sup>169</sup>.

The neo-liberal agenda of economic liberalization against the dreadful background of post-conflict legacy, has had the unintended effect of perpetuating and nurturing the very exact type of transnational links (inter-entity or inter kin-state relations), that have contributed to the destabilization of the region. Finally, as Belloni and Ramovic successfully identify in regards to the urban and rural civil society, “only if the international community focuses its assistance on the needs of these groups, which represent the majority of local voices but are silenced by the dynamics of the elite social contract, will it be able to avoid being entangled in the country for another 22 years”<sup>170</sup>. Terminating communication with the elites is impossible, but creating new, bottom up approaches is possible. Realizing that the problem lies, in the inability to differentiate the peace-building concentrating the target group of citizens rather than empowering the contested levels of state capacity. As Ana E. Juncos argues in her research about the EU’s contradictions in intervention and conditionality, she concludes that “general contradiction between member state-building and the requirements of peacebuilding, has undermined the EU’s state-building efforts in the country”, she goes further to state that “perhaps one might even conclude, rather pessimistically, that the EU’s transformative power will never accomplish what it did in the Central and Eastern Europe, unless the EU focuses on peacebuilding before member state-building”<sup>171</sup>. Considering the dearth of studies, researchers and scholarly contribution, I claim there are ideas and possibilities to consider when revising the next Enlargement strategy, to come in 2020 by the newly elected European Commission. A lot of debate is currently going on about the influence of Russia and other semi-authoritarian illiberal regimes such as Turkey, United Arab Emirates and China. It is true that the financial, diplomatic and cultural connections are present and rising in importance, but it is the prospect of a credible relationship culminating in an alliance, association, integration that is missing with those potential players. They do not offer long term, binding, institutional connections, neither do they openly advocate or promise to be the stabilizing force which would create a prosperous, stable and secure environment. This belief and hypothetical claim of mine, is very well resembled, by Bieber, “what emerges is that some actors are primarily important in the field of

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<sup>169</sup> Denisa Kostovicova & Vesna Bojicic-Dželilovic’ (2006) *Europeanizing the Balkans: Rethinking the Post-communist and Post-Conflict Transition*, *Ethnopolitics*, 5:3, 223-241, p.13

<sup>170</sup> Roberto Belloni post-doctoral research fellow (2004) *Peacebuilding and consociational electoral engineering in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, *International Peacekeeping*, 11:2, 334-353, p.15

<sup>171</sup> Ana E. Juncos (2012) *Member state-building versus peacebuilding: the contradictions of EU state-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, *East European Politics*, 28:1, 58-75, p.19

economic relations, such as China or the UAE, but without matching political or societal ties. Others, such as Russia and Turkey, often develop greater political or societal linkages, but maintain more limited economic ties. Thus, no single actor is deeply engaged with the Western Balkans in all dimensions”<sup>172</sup>. Logically, the EU is the only politico-economic player, offering institutional alliance.

## **VI. General Conclusion**

In this general conclusion of the thesis, time has come to reflect on the main points and arguments situated in the preceding chapters on Georgia and Bosnia and Herzegovina respectively. Following the addressed issues, key milestones and challenges throughout this writing, my goal was to offer a credible synthetically extrapolated answer to the two hypotheses, owing to a general analysis and understanding of the EU’s Foreign Policy actorness. While aware that there are arguments and theories that are missing, or perceptions and perspectives that have a strong theoretical argument, perhaps even diametrically opposed to the ones presented here, but I nevertheless strongly believe that the approaches and analytics used here, hold a solid ground. However, only after spending the necessary time on research and writing, have I derived the answers and postulations that will follow. I firstly outline the answer to the postulated hypothesis, as well as main arguments. Subsequently, I try to show the similarities and dissimilarities between Georgia and BiH per se, but also the EU’s Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy. Culminating, these will account for an answer on the problem question. Ending the thesis, I suggest a short, clear and coherent way forward for both sides, pointing on misperceptions on both sides of the continuum.

The core idea of the proposed hypothesis number one, targeting European Union’s success in addressing the development, progress, well-being and issues of Georgia, is inextricably linked to the question of whether the EU can significantly influence thirds states to whom it does not offer membership perspective, having regards that in this scenario, Georgia is a contested, frozen state with internal disputes and conflicts. I offer a paradoxical answer to what at first might seem as a clear answer. By not offering the membership perspective, ergo the integration in the Union is not on the table, thus meaning that the European Union has realistically and

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<sup>172</sup> The Western Balkans as a Geopolitical Chessboard? Myths, Realities and Policy Options  
By Florian Bieber and Nikolaos Tzifakis

objectively lowered the bar related to its commitment and Georgia's expectations. This has translated, into numerous relationship types between the two, that are clear to both sides, but especially to the citizens who are not bombarded with false promises and then failures. So, paradoxically, is that this differentiated integration without accession, is exactly the string that actually sets the objective, business like but friendly relationship between the Georgian state, the citizenry and the EU. Due to low expectations, every important advancement, as the EaP, DCFTA and the latest Association Agreement, marks high satisfaction and belief in the EU. Besides, this official partnerships and closer-cooperation mechanism the economic advancement of Georgia and three further points regarding the rationale of this relationship are important to bear in mind. Firstly, protecting the external borders and improving the environment of the neighbouring weak democracies is a mutually binding and supportive mechanism which is continuing and bettering. The dual-track approach in the bi-lateral and multi-lateral dimension is adding to the idea of "a more ambitious partnership. Finally, the thematic platforms of political, economic, energy security and civic reforms all validate the Union's unreserved support and commitment to this individual country but also the region. Simply, realist expectations lead to good results. For an end to be achieved, the way and the means need to be reconciled and calculated together, and it looks like the promised visa free regime, inclusion in the DCFTA and the Association Agreement followed and reported closely on a yearly basis form exactly an end met with proper means. The amical relationship between an expert power and neighbouring country is to remain in this framework, until/if the inter-governmental Union, decides it is in their best interest to pursue greater integration, specifically targeting free market, customs union or combined common and foreign security policies. Until that moment, echoing the liberal characteristics of this regime, realist perspective of self-sustained units remains pertinent.

My second hypothetical presumption is set around BiH's apparent membership perspective in the EU, dating since after the war or more specifically the 2003 Thessaloniki summit and the subsequent Enlargement Policy. This thesis approached this problem question, to examine and analyse this issue, by focusing on the structural and historical pretext of BiH and the consequent EU approach from the early post-war years that account for today's limbo of this country. Along with many examples, based on theoretical perspectives and practical examples of moral indecency, inability and unwillingness by the local politicians, the work also differentiates the failure and negative consequential status quo to three distinctive levels; the external EU-led institutional consolidation and coherence together with rule of law, the entrenched ethno-nationalist elites succumbing to the ethno-religious, tribal quid-pro-quo relations and kin states

preferences and the passive, controlled and manipulated masses of BiH, however differently they are labelled. However, these factors have not stopped EU's engagement, but rather altered the rate of success and resulting framework of relationship. Indeed, the intensity of these factors are not the same if the same level analysis was to be applied to Georgia, but I believe it is extant, although the intensity and structural challenges are somewhat different. In essence, what I argue is that since the EU has been the main external actor in BiH, their dual approach of state-building and EU member state integration has not been functional nor delivered on time, and abandoned to soon. Throughout arguments, it was stated that in the externally EU led state-building process tied with membership building, the immediate aftermath of the most violent conflict on European soil holds the locus of problems. In the case of BiH, it produced the most outrageous, absurd and paradoxical political circumstances, where all the piled-up problems seem to go to light in recent years. The very nature of the BiH as a one, single state as a whole has been, and is currently disputed. The consociational democratic regime, particularly important to have strong grounds in rule of law and moral idealism is dishonestly captured by dysfunctional organizational parties and rulers. Domination of sub-state entities, a problem not addressed on time, together with severe lack of trust in rule of law produced a chaos, that even the experts of the Brussel technocracy cannot resolve. As it is common on the everyday political scene in BiH, the blame-game persisted over time, and every meaningful reform or debate starts and ends with someone being guilty for the debilitating status. Unfortunately, the enormous funds of aid and trade poured in the country, have not been utilized. It is impossible to transfer finances into a transmitting barrel, which has holes controlled by private networks and informal linkages. This paralysed state system, is wrongly attributed only solely to officials and elected representatives. Domestic preferences and votes come from the people, even though the turnout is depressingly small it is the citizenry that has to start reinventing their ideological and philosophical ideas about the country they want. I tried to explain the EU successfulness throughout showing that its intervention toolbox has not managed to tackle pressing issues in the state-building, resulting today with a minimalist state, fragmentation of parties and infected, paralyzed separation of powers and weak rule of law as mutually causal problems. The social contract between the citizens themselves is non-existent, in contrast to elite contract that is functional and of an exploitative character. Socio-economic foundations along with education have not been laid down. Quasi-free market democracy was just a complicated effect of the post-war rebuilding efforts, that did not come neither from the citizens, nor the elites. European Union conditionality, has with time transformed as Valery Perry argues into negotiable

conditionality, and lost its genuine credibility<sup>173</sup>. EU conditionality has now to deal not with state structure, but the existence of the unique entity levels of engagement which render state institutions and norms either non-existent or weak. Economically, as Tzifakis and Tsardanidis have argued, huge amount of economic assistance has intended to facilitate political reconciliation the nature of the political structure established according to Dayton constitution has in turn hindered economic recovery because it has, so far, prevented the creation of a unified economic space in the country. However, at least it is clear that the EU represents the biggest contributor of FDI's and is the first trade partner of BiH. The lack of political will and inadequate administrative capacity are interlinked, since they both derive from the way in which political and economic power is organised domestically as an inter-ethnic conflict, and a conflict between the exploiting elite and the disappearing middle class (together with the poor rural population). To this end, James Scott argues compellingly that "most revolutions are not the work of revolutionary parties but the precipitate of spontaneous and improvised action ... the great emancipatory gains for human freedom have not been the result of orderly, institutional procedures but of disorderly, unpredictable, spontaneous action cracking open the social order from below"<sup>174</sup>. Concluding with these, mismanaged root problems in the early 2000s, the most pressing issues that currently mark the state failure of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been indicated.

I now turn to, briefly comparing Georgia and BiH, in regards to their shared problems on political and social levels. In both countries, Europe is being labelled as weak due to the rhetoric of the establishment who have unrealistic expectations and create a confusing situation of understanding how the process of association or accession evolves. On the other hand, European Union official's statements, declaratory reports of expressions of concern and dissatisfaction with the political elite ('sheshpotebis gamotkma' in Georgian, 'zabrinutost', 'zaljenje' in Bosnian) represent for the ordinary people nothing but cynicism. In the social discourse of both countries, many have come to react to those statements with sarcasm or mockery. Moreover, both states, face internal sovereignty contestation, which depresses a functional government. Alternatively, everyday news revolves around European Union, there is a serious lack of awareness of the EU per se, and the conditions and mechanism necessary to implement. Another serious impediment for an effective state apparatus is the public

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<sup>173</sup> Valery Perry, Wpodrow Willson International Center for Scholars, Working Paper: The Working Group on the Western Balkans

<sup>174</sup> Jasmin Mujanovic, *Hunger and Fury – the Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p.183



administration, in which citizens of both countries do not believe, and try to accomplish whatever they need via informal links. For example, “evidence on entrepreneurs in Southeast Europe suggests that businesspeople will engage intensively in bribery and the instrumental exchange of gifts and favours to the degree that they understand these activities as being necessary for the conduct of their business, but that when predictable and efficient legal resolutions become easily available, the volume of informal transactions declines”<sup>175</sup>. Same is valid and evident across South Caucasian countries. Furthermore, minority issues are common, and significant judiciary reform of human rights are essential. Matters such as legislation, economic and jurisdictions are politicised, even a simple bureaucratic reform as ‘public administration reform’ which is vital to remove the burden of BiH’s budgetary expenditure, remains unresolved for a decade. In both countries, civil society is still seen as a path for personal benefits from international grant projects, and the philosophical idea behind civic engagement is missing in both countries. Although, in Georgia the student unions have been remarkably successful in their organizational strength, unity and clarity, they have many times stood against the party and fought for the independence of universities. In BiH, student mobilization is impossible and unions and associations are penetrated by youth party puppets. Identity remains a core problem, although more in BiH, since nationality, ethnicity and belonging are only a tool of instrumental manipulation. However, this identity crisis, cannot be resolved by top-down approach, but only by bottom up, citizen led initiatives and social movements.

With all of this expressed, I remain loyal to my arguments that set to define the answers on the hypothesis and the general research question. European Union has a limited success in both countries, economic, political and societal developments have been marked in BiH as unreasonably low and in Georgia as present and objective due to the fact of realistic expectations.

What remains is only, to lay out a short political speculation on the way forward, for all sides concerning this two-fold dialectical relationship. Since international relations are at the core of these three actors, be it intra every unit or between them, it is necessary to examine the political conditions of the international structure of the system. Neo-realist and neo-liberal theories still dominate the discourse about how to look and approach the 21<sup>st</sup> century world, but it is clear that problems such as multiple crisis within the EU (most pressing Brexit and abandonment of

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<sup>175</sup> Eric Gordy, Adnan Efendic, 2019, Peter Lang, Meaningful Reform in The Western Balkans Between Formal Institutions and Informal Practices

spitzenkandidat<sup>176</sup>), climate change, the Iran deal, migration crisis, diplomatic leaks, rise of far-right parties all remain at the spotlight of politics and governance. With China rising, USA playing a more isolationist role but engaging in trade wars, Russia stepping up to its historical role of an imperial hard power and EU in a process of resolving its internal challenges, and the recent European Parliament elections, the Western Balkan region is not the focal point of interest. Unfortunately, abandoning and misinterpreting the Balkan chessboard can have serious negative consequences for great power contestation games and suffering of the domestic constituencies. Tensions are rising, and problems piling, a coherent and a reinvented codified approach is crucial. Returning the ‘small’ state theorizing, “the improvements in communication and transportation as well as the liberalization of the movement of goods services capital and even persons and public procurement, rendered borders less meaningful to the benefit of small states”<sup>177</sup>. This is ‘a la carte’ opportunity not seized. In international security context, Koeheane argues, “a small power is a state which recognizes that it cannot obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities, and that it must rely fundamentally on the aid of other states, institutions, processes, or developments to do so, the Small Power’s belief in its inability to rely on its own means must also be recognized by other states involved in international politics”<sup>178</sup>.

Concluding, every relationship through a dialectic prism, extracting the core, fundamental factors and presenting them as clear and coherent as possible was the goal of this master project. One of such scenarios, could be following: In Bosnia and Herzegovina, on one side of the dialectics, lack of rule of law created chaos, Dayton Peace Accords as a Constitution is essentially a law, necessary to reform. On the other side, it is ‘the people’, who need to change their philosophy of the state and for the state. In European Union, this two-sided lens, is between being open or closed, offering a more substantial approach or realistically acknowledging a hold in external state-building and great power capabilities. In Georgia, this spectrum ranges from resolving the frozen conflict to more coherent institutional alignment with the alliances they want to pursue. Admitting, there are multivariate possibilities of these constellations, my point here is to accentuate the necessity possessing a critical thinking approach for a successful resolution. After all, as John F. Kennedy concluded:

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<sup>176</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/630264/EPRS\\_BRI\(2018\)630264\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/630264/EPRS_BRI(2018)630264_EN.pdf)

<sup>177</sup> *Small States in International Relations* – Edited by Christine Ingebritsen, Iver Neuman, Singlinde Gstohl and Jessica Beyer, University of Washington Press

<sup>178</sup> Robert O. Keohane (1969). *Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics*. International Organization, 23, pp 291-310, p.3

“Our problems are human-made; therefore, they may be solved by men and women accordingly. And a human, can be as big as he wants. No problem of human destiny is beyond human beings”<sup>179</sup>.

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<sup>179</sup> The original quote has been amended in order to distance the initial term of “man”, as a single gender who is hypothetically the problem solver.

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