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When the carrot is not sweet enough

Conditionality versus norms as modes of EU influence on Serbia's foreign policy[1]

Abstract

In the last two decades the EU has exercised significant influence on the whole European continent including countries in transition of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe. The countries of the Western Balkans are among the last countries to join the EU. With every enlargement the EU has shaped and revisited its approach to enlargement and the countries seeking EU membership. While the literature on European enlargement has focused on conditionality and the 'stick and carrot' metaphor, there are authors that stress other modes of influence of the EU on third countries. One of these modes of influence is the normative potential of the EU. This paper will elaborate on how and if norms and conditionality fit together, identify the norms and conditions of the EU in international relations and assess the influence of the EU on countries of Western Balkans and their foreign policy decisions. The paper will focus on regional cooperation, which is both a norm in the relationships between these countries, as well as a de facto condition of EU accession. The paper will present the developments of foreign policy in Serbia, in particular related to regional cooperation and analyze the EU input in Serbia's foreign policy decisions.

The paper concludes with the observation that conditionality as a mode of influence has limited success and is less effective than the power of norms, as illustrated by the position of Serbia towards Kosovo. For conditionality to be successful, the promised reward needs to be greater than the cost of fulfilling the conditions of the reward (the 'carrot' needs to be sweet enough). In the case of Serbia and Kosovo, the current government (and the majority of Serbia's politicians) value preserving Kosovo within Serbia's borders more than EU membership, making any such conditionality ineffective. Norms on the other hand are more subtle and long-lasting due to the passive nature of influence. Proof of the effectiveness of European norms in international relations is the mere fact that Serbia has opted for peaceful regional and international political and legal means of settling the Kosovo dispute.

Introduction

The European Council of June 27th/28th, 2013 decided to give Serbia a conditional date to start accession negotiations with EU countries at the beginning of 2014 as part of Serbia's path to EU membership. After the summit, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, referred to this decision as historic: "This is indeed historic, we very often use the word historic in an abusive manner, but this is historic." (Barroso, 2013) With a vague reference in his speech to the wars in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s and to the Stabilization and Association Agreements, Barroso did not go into detail about the history that he repeatedly mentioned in his speech. This paper does exactly that – the paper clarifies the historic developments of the EU enlargement policy, Serbia's road to EU membership and the impact of the EU on Serbia and particularly on Serbia's foreign policy and diplomacy.

The decision to broaden its membership was irreversibly confirmed in one of the key documents in EU Enlargement Policy, the Conclusions of the Copenhagen European Council of 21st and 22th of June 1993. This document has set out the famous Copenhagen criteria for

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[1] The paper has been initially presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention in April 2013 in San Francisco.

EU membership, which all countries wishing to join the EU need to fulfill. According to the Copenhagen presidency conclusions "Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union." (Copenhagen European Council, 1993, p. 13) These obligations can be categorized as political criteria (rule of law, democracy, protection of human rights and minorities), economic criteria (free market economy, competition) and legal criteria (adherence to the set of laws and treaties of the EU, better known as the *acquis communitaire*, which means 'that which has been agreed to by the community'). In addition to these criteria, the Madrid European Council Presidency Conclusions explained that "While it is important for EU legislation to be transposed into national legislation, it is even more important for the legislation to be implemented and enforced effectively through the appropriate administrative and judicial structures." (Commission/Enlargement)

The chapter of the *acquis* on the common foreign and security policy, on which candidate countries negotiate before joining the EU states that "The common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and the European security and defence policy (ESDP) are based on legal acts, including legally binding international agreements, and on political documents. The acquis consists of political declarations, actions and agreements. Member States must be able to conduct political dialogue in the framework of CFSP, to align with EU statements, to take part in EU actions and to apply agreed sanctions and restrictive measures. Applicant countries are required to progressively align with EU statements, and to apply sanctions and restrictive measures when and where required." (Commission/Negotiations)

One of the standards of the CFSP/ESDP is to promote dialogue and good neighborly relations in third countries. Good neighborly relations and regional cooperation, as it is more commonly and formally used, is also a *de facto* condition for accession to the EU. Although this condition is not explicitly set out in the Copenhagen criteria it is mentioned in the documents of the Pact for Stability in Europe, the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe (later the Regional Cooperation Council) and other working documents within the EU and is inseparable from the rhetoric of the EU on Southeastern enlargement. Starting as a norm of relations between countries, good neighborly relations and regional cooperation have evolved into full-fledged conditions for EU membership.

Being both norm and condition, regional cooperation is analytically appealing for the question of European Union's modes of influence on third countries. This paper will analyze EU's modes of influence on countries in the Western Balkans, and in particular its influence on foreign policy decisions of the Republic of Serbia, which will be the country used in the case study. The first chapter of the paper will present debates within the literature on EU's modes of influence on third countries and will outline a conceptual framework which focuses on the effectiveness of conditionality and norm transfer as modes of influence of the EU on other countries. The second and third chapter will give an extensive overview of what the EU says and does in the context of southeastern enlargement and external relations. The chapters will then describe the development of the rhetoric, norms and conditions that

emerged from the EU's declarations and actions. These chapters will conclude by identifying European conditions and norms of behavior in international relations, in particular in the Western Balkans region. Once the conceptual framework is explained and the norms and conditions of the EU have been identified, the analysis of the case study will be presented in the fourth and last chapter. The fourth chapter will analyze the developments in Serbia's foreign relations and diplomacy and present some limitations of conditionality on influencing Serbia's policy towards Kosovo. The paper will conclude with a summary of conclusions of the individual chapters and present a general conclusion on EU's influence in the Western Balkans, particularly on Serbia and its foreign policy.

1. EU's modes of influence – towards a conceptual framework

The relationships between the EU and non-EU countries that are geographically close to the EU are distinct from the relationship between the EU and the rest of the world. The distinction stems from the proximity of the countries involved, which allows for more efficient and less costly movement of goods, people, capital and services in and out of the EU. A special group of countries that shares its borders with the EU is the group of candidate and potential candidate countries, which fall under the EU's enlargement policy. They are distinct from the other neighbors of the EU, which fall under the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). While it is not necessary for the purpose of this paper to understand the different policies, it can be said that both policies have similar effects on third countries. The common observation is that in both policies, the EU exercises its political and economic power through conditionality, as well as its more passive normative power in relations to third countries. The exercise and use of conditionality and normative power differ across states and policy areas, both resulting in transfer of rules and/or norms, consequentially affecting the decisions and actions of third countries.

Certainly, one important feature of the EU's relation with the candidate and potential candidate countries is predominantly singled out, namely the conditionality feature of these relations. "However, the mere use of conditionality by the EU does not necessarily tell us much about the underlying mode of governance and the conditions under which EU rules are transferred to the CEECs […] Furthermore, there is not necessarily a *causal* link between the presence of EU conditionality and successful rule transfer in particular issue-areas." (Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2004:662) The effectiveness of norm transfer by mere conditionality is not only hard to measure, but it is also many times insufficient and unsound to purely rely on the rational-choice-based argument that countries will import rules and norms for the mere reason of potential membership. The main obvious problem with this assumption is the inefficiency in rule and norm transfer across different sectors or issue-areas, even within the same conditioned country. Insomuch, some countries like Serbia or Turkey have often disregarded some norms and rules of the EU exactly because of a perceived sense of over-conditionality in the respective governments and societies. Another issue with conditionality is the argumentative gap that emerges from the fact that even countries that do not have the prospect of membership embrace EU's norms and standards in some issue-areas. This gap certainly has to be filled with some other reasons for and explanations of rule and norm transfer from the EU to the country in question.

The fact that countries without the prospect of membership transfer EU's norms and standards into national legislation in some issue-areas can be explained by the notion of the EU as a normative power. The whole idea of normativeness and power is best explained by authors such as Duchêne and Manners. Manners defines normative power as the "ability to shape conceptions of 'normal' in international relations." (2002: 239) He also defines normative power as being separate from the two more mutually opposed notions of military power and civilian power. A military power is an international actor which has possession of significant military means and uses them to coerce other actors in acting accordingly to their preferences. Military powers thus have a specific national or international interest in using the 'power' that they possess, and the power-play among one or more of these types of powers fits well into the self-help notion of neorealism. A typically used example of a military power would be the United States of America.

The European Union on the other hand, as described by Duchêne, "represented a 'civilian power' which was 'long on economic power and relatively short on armed force'." (in Manners 2002:236) Manners identifies three key features of a civilian power: "the centrality of economic power to achieve national goals; the primacy of diplomatic co-operation to solve international problems; and the willingness to use legally-binding supranational institutions to achieve international progress." (Manners 2002:236-237) In contrast to military power, civilian powers use diplomacy, co-operation and economic incentives to convey their interests and shape the perceptions and attitudes of other actors towards the civilian power in question. Whether an international actor is considered or perceived as a military power or civilian power depends on what these actors *do* and/or *say*. Manners has moved away from the simpler distinction between military or civilian power, and concluded "that the most important factor shaping the international role of the EU is not what it *does* or what it *says*, but what it *is*." (Manners 2002:252)

Even if taking for granted Manners key assumption that the EU *is* normative due to its *idée force* and heritage, it is still necessary to analyze what it *does* or *says*, because over time what it *says* and/or *does*, determines what the EU *is* or is perceived to be. Conditionality, one of the main features of EU's relations with third countries, described above, does not fit into the notion of normativeness, since conditionality implies the imposition of certain norms and standards, not necessarily the voluntary import of those norms and standards by countries bordering on the EU. In contrast to norm transfer, governing by conditionality is more closely linked to rule transfer. Conditioning one country by offering rewards or sanctions, rules and standards are not reaching the level of norms, because they are not internalized, but merely formally introduced in every-day life. "In many policy areas, rule adoption consists primarily of formal transposition into national legislation, with implementation and effective enforcement in everyday policy-making lagging behind." (Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2004:676)

Conditionality remains predominantly a feature of EU's relations with potential candidate and candidate countries (EU enlargement countries), since the rewards (EU membership and cohesion funds) are greater, but conditionality is also common for EU's relations ENP countries. "In contrast to enlargement, however, the application of conditionality [in ENP countries] is much less straightforward." (Kelley 2006 in Lavenex 2008:944) The mode of influence of the EU in its relations with ENP countries can be more related to external

governance. External governance as a mode of influence can be observed in the EU relations with enlargement countries as well, but it is not as dominant, because of the dominance of conditionality in enlargement policy. In the EU's action towards ENP countries "the weaker regulatory scope of association and the ambiguous relationship to hierarchy and conditionality is complemented by the perspective for organizational participation in sectoral governance structures." (Lavenex 2008:944) One can thus conclude that the EU makes use of both external governance and conditionality in its relations with the enlargement countries and ENP countries, with different levels of prominence of these two modes of influence in each group of countries respectively. The enlargement countries are predominantly conditioned, while the European Neighborhood Policy, although making use of conditionality, "is in principle more open to more horizontal, co-owned governance structures." (Lavenex 2008:944)

External governance should not be understood as an opposite or distinct mode of influence from conditionality. To fully understand the notion of external governance, one should turn to three models of external governance proposed by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier. They have identified a main model which they call the external incentive model and two alternative models: the social learning model and the lesson-drawing model. (Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2004:663-668)

A lower degree of direct conditionality, combined with allowing for enough freedom for the target country to decide on its actions, describe the external incentive model. This particular model of external governance overlaps with some elements of the notion of conditionality. "According to the external incentives model, EU external governance mainly follows a *strategy of conditionality* in which the EU sets its rules as conditions that the [countries] have to fulfill in order to receive EU rewards." (Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2004:663; emphasis mine) The authors elaborate on several hypotheses on rule transfer to the rule adopting country, linking this model with variables like adoption costs, speed and size of reward, clarity of conditions of the reward and others. The external incentives model, closer to the mode of conditionality, is primarily a rationalistic bargaining model. According to this model, "rule adoption requires the authoritative decision of the target government, which seeks to balance EU, domestic, and other international pressures in order to maximize its own political benefits," where the role of the EU is just to present the external incentive to change the status-quo in the target country, by for example empowering different domestic non-governmental actors. (Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2004:664)

The case explained above entails that the EU is willingly pursuing its interest by imposing its rules of the game to the other actor, which than is coerced to some extent to accept the rules for being able to continue the relations with the EU. According to the definition of normative power given by Manners and described above, this model does not represent an appropriate mode of influence by a normative power. The external incentive model further confirms the idea that the EU's normativeness is not necessarily an empirically sound concept. The fact, that "the scope of the outsiders to influence the content of the rules that they import is severely limited," (Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2004:675) only supports this idea. For example, in pre-accession conditionality, the imported norms and values start "from predetermined, non-negotiable formal rules, decided by the [EU] member states alone." (Ibid:675)

The debate on EU's normativeness would be very much one-sided if there were not cases in which "the adoption of EU rules may not have been the product of proactive EU promotion at all but induced by domestic factors [in the target country]." (Ibid:667) In these cases, the EU is not the focus of analysis, but the target country that imports the norms voluntarily, without apparent rational-choice explanations. The models that explain such behavior are the social learning model and the lesson-drawing model. In the social learning model "the actors involved are motivated by internalized identities, values, and norms [… and] whether a non-member state adopts EU rules depends on the degree to which it regards EU rules and its demands for rule adoption as appropriate in light of these collective identity, values, and norms." (Ibid:667) In the social learning model the stress is thus on learning, internalization, and persuasion. Although still remaining in the domain of rationalism, this model is overlapping with social constructivism. The model is also closely linked to the literature on compliance, especially the ideas of persuasion through arguments. For the normative power argument it is noteworthy that "argumentative persuasion is a social process of interaction that involves changing attitudes about cause and effect in the absence of overt coercion." (Checkel, 2001:562) With the absence of overt coercion, the model is closer to Manners' notion of normative power. The absence of both coercion and persuasion is prominent in the lesson-drawing model. "According to the lesson-drawing model, non-member states adopt EU rules without EU incentives or persuasion […] if [they expect] these rules to solve domestic policy problems effectively." (Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2004:668) This model comes closest to Manners' idea of normative power, because in the lesson-drawing model the EU possesses the capability to determine what is 'normal' or appropriate or most effective, without having to *do* or *say* anything, but just by *being* what it is.

The models described above fit into Manners' definition of normative power to different degrees, ranging from direct conditionality (furthest from the definition) to the lesson-drawing model (closest to the definition). For the purpose of this paper the above described modes of influence shall be simplified and merged into two ideal types: modes of influence used actively and the ones used passively by the EU. Actively used modes of influence diverge from Manners' definition of normative power, while passively used ones fit closest to the definition used in this paper. The models that merge into actively used modes of influence are direct conditionality and external incentive model of external governance. For the purpose of clarity, this ideal type mode of influences will be labeled 'power of conditionality' or simply 'conditionality' throughout the paper hereinafter. The social learning and lesson-drawing models belong to the other ideal type of passively used modes of influence. For the same purpose of clarity, this ideal type mode of influence will be labeled 'normative power' and will also be used throughout the paper hereinafter. Identifying the two ideal types is necessary for easier analysis of empirical data in the case study, gathered from news articles, speeches of EU and Serbia officials and official documents. Before proceeding to the case study, it is necessary for the purpose of this paper to understand and identify the conditions and norms shaping the modes of influence described above. In order to do so, one needs to look at what the EU *says* and *does* in its external relations with countries of the Western Balkans.

2. What the EU says – Western Balkans, Enlargement and the development of the Rhetoric

2.1. General Introduction

This section of the paper will look at the literature and primary documents related to the region of the Western Balkans, more particularly Albania, Montenegro, Croatia, Serbia with Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244 and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The rhetoric used in these countries and the relations of the EU with these countries remains essentially similar. Serbia and Croatia have an additional issue in their relation with the EU, concerning the extradition of war criminals to the ICTY in The Hague, where Serbia has more difficulties meeting these conditions than Croatia. The case of Macedonia is specific in a different way, namely it has a dispute about the name of the country with one of the current EU members – Greece. When the EU mentions enlargement in the context of the Western Balkans, it constructs one notion of Eastern enlargement, more related to regional cooperation, state-building and democratization, free trade and transition, notions stemming from the previous enlargements, as well as the Thessaloniki and Zagreb summits. When the EU talks about enlargement in the context of Croatia and Serbia, the EU stresses the necessity of collaborating with the Hague Tribunal, pointing more towards conditionality rather than the usual rhetoric of spreading European norms. This section will analyze the abovementioned issues in order to shed light on EU's stance in *vis-à-vis* the countries of the Western Balkans.

2.2. The beginnings of the rhetoric

The year 2000 marked the beginning of the European Future for the Western Balkans. After a decade of political and economical, and in some countries even military turmoil, the countries of the Western Balkans had finally a period of change in front of them. The successful democratic elections in Croatia, as well as the protests in Serbia that removed Slobodan Milošević (considered to have been one of the last dictators in Europe), were symbolic for the changes the new millennium would bring. The EU has been considerate of the situation in the Western Balkans, and has recognized the more democratic future of the region.

In the Santa Maria da Feira European Council on the 19th and 20th of June 2000, the Presidency has confirmed "that its objective remains the fullest possible integration of the countries of the region into the political and economic mainstream of Europe through the Stabilisation and Association process, political dialogue, liberalisation of trade and cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs. All the countries concerned are potential candidates for EU membership. The Union will support the Stabilisation and Association process through technical and economic assistance." (Feira Presidency Conclusions, 2000) The European Council is the highest political authority in the EU, and it sets the political guidelines, so the Feira Council has set the EU on a supportive path for enlargement in the Western Balkans.

Following that path, the first real commitment of the EU can be observed from the final declaration of the Zagreb Summit on the 24th of November 2000. Announced on the Feira European Council, the Zagreb summit was a meeting of the Heads of State or Government of

the EU member states, Albania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,[2] Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the meeting the EU member states announced that the "European Union confirms its wish to contribute to the consolidation of democracy and to give its resolute support to the process of reconciliation and cooperation between the countries concerned. It reaffirms the European perspective of the countries participating in the stabilisation and association process and their status as potential candidates for membership in accordance with the Feira conclusions." (Zagreb Summit Declaration, 2000) This confirmation was in accordance with the previous statements of the EU member states.

As the established framework of Stabilization and Association Process seemed to be effective in getting the potential candidate countries closer to the EU, the European Councils of December 2002 and March 2003 have reaffirmed the position of the Western Balkan states in the European Union, confirming "the European perspective of the countries of the Western Balkans, as potential candidates, and underlined its determination to support their efforts to move closer to the European Union." The European Council also "reiterated that the future of the Western Balkans is within the European Union and pledged the Union's full support to the endeavours of the countries of the region to consolidate democracy, stability and to promote economic development." (GAERC Conclusions, 2003) The definite enhancement of the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) stems from the Thessaloniki Agenda for the Western Balkans. In this agenda and the conclusions of the 16th of June General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), it is stated that the countries of the SAP are on a good way towards the accession, but still have a long way ahead. The Agenda explicitly recognizes the uniqueness of certain states. The Agenda also stresses that principles of "self merit" and "catch up" will be applied, which means that there is also a great role of the potential candidate countries to play as well in hastening the reforms and meeting the Copenhagen criteria.

Until the Thessaloniki summit, the EU has been very enthusiastic and optimistic about the enlargement of Western Balkan states. However, as time passed by, and the fifth enlargement of the ten Central-Eastern and East-European states was finalized in May 2004, the Western Balkans states proved to have difficulties with catching up. Furthermore, the EU member states, as well as the Commission, have realized that the expected difficulties of the big fifth enlargement were greater than initially projected, especially in terms of public response. "The enlargement of the European Union to ten new member States on 1 May 2004 further strengthened the unity of the European continent and enhanced peace, stability and security. However, one of the lessons that can be drawn from the previous enlargement is that citizens in EU Member States were not sufficiently informed nor prepared." (Commission Communication, 2005)

As the lessons learned became more obvious, it is clear that the rhetoric of the EU has changed from promises and optimism towards a more cautious and slowed down approach to enlargement. The member states and their public, as well as the Commission have realized that the EU is not ready to enlarge too much, and Romania and Bulgaria were the last

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[2] The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia changed its name to State Union Serbia and Montenegro in February 4, 2003, while in May 21, 2006 the country split up into two separate republics – Republic of Montenegro and Republic of Serbia.

countries to be explicitly promised membership at a predetermined date. The Western Balkans remained on the agenda for enlargement but the rhetoric has toned down on promises and moved towards stricter conditionality. The EU did not give up on its beliefs, norms and values it wanted to spread to the Western Balkans, it just realized that conditionality is the best possible way of achieving the goal of spreading European values and norms in the region. The prospect of membership rather than membership itself was believed to be a better motivator for the countries of the Western Balkans to develop.

2.3. Unique cases and rhetoric adaptations

As Andreev notes, "clearly any 'catch up' strategy for individual Balkan countries to get integrated into Europe should take the particular national and regional circumstances into account, as well as the preparedness of the Union to welcome new members." (Andreev, 2006, p.8) As in previous enlargements, there were states that were advancing faster on the way to the EU than others. In the Western Balkans, these countries were Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. After the secession of Montenegro from the State Union with Serbia, Montenegro has been meeting the Copenhagen criteria and the conditionality in steady and relatively fast pace. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania too have had a steady yet slower path towards the EU. Kosovo, under UN Security Council Resolution 1244, is still in the process of state-building, finding it hard to pursue the Copenhagen criteria. Serbia and Montenegro (later Serbia) however has had some different difficulties in meeting political conditions, shared with Croatia, which has had more success in fulfilling these criteria, namely the cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. Croatia has been successful in arresting and extraditing their political and military officials that are accused of war crimes in the Yugoslav Wars of the early 1990s. Ante Gotovina among others has been sent to The Hague and Croatia's obligation towards the Tribunal and the EU has been fulfilled.

Serbia on the other hand for a long time had failed to arrest Ratko Mladić and Goran Hadžić, and only recently fulfilled these political obligations. Another problem Serbia is facing in terms of EU conditionality is the relationship of Serbia with Kosovo. Serbia is expected to build a constructive solution for Kosovo that is supposed to promote stability and progress in the region. Such a demand is delicate considering that the Serbian public is becoming more and more Euro-sceptic and protectionist, strongly wishing for Kosovo to remain an integral part of Serbia. This conditions the Serbian government, preventing it to find a timely and comprehensive solution for Kosovo and especially for the Albanian population living there.

A more successful solution for the Albanian minority living outside of Albania can be observed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This country has also had violent conflicts even after the year 2000, but has fully respected and has been implementing the provisions of the Ohrid Agreement from 13th of August 2001. In spite of constant internal political and party disputes, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has made considerable progress on its way to the EU. There is however another issue in the case of Macedonia that is not so prominent and explicit in the official rhetoric of the EU towards the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, namely the very name of the country. The Former

Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has been recognized under this name after the break-up of former Yugoslavia. The country's public and officials wish for the country to have the name of Republic of Macedonia or simply Macedonia, but Greece strongly objects to this idea, since there is an integral territory which is part of Greece that bares the same name. The name dispute has prevented FYROM to achieve many politically important steps like joining NATO for example, and is a great political issue in the context of pre-accession negotiations.

In the context of individual states described above it is important to analyze the rhetoric of the EU towards the unique cases in the Western Balkans. The taking into account of the uniqueness of certain states can explain how the rhetoric on the Western Balkans overall has adapted over time. The Commission and the European Council are considered the most important agenda setting institutions and the holders of rhetoric on a certain issue. In the press releases, communications, country reports and Presidency conclusions, the situation is no different. The European Commission writes annual country reports describing the developments and achievements of individual states on their way to the EU membership. The Commission also writes regular Communications on different issues and presents them mostly to the Council and the European Parliament. In the Communications on the Western Balkans and the individual country reports, the Commission reiterates the need of continuing with the progress made, but very frequently there is a second part of the message pointing out that 'much more needs to be done.'

In 2006 the Commission reflected on the Stabilization and Association Process and the Thessaloniki Agenda: "The Stabilisation and Association process, as enhanced by the Thessaloniki agenda, has proved an effective policy framework for EU action in the Western Balkans. As part of the enlargement process, it will remain the framework for the European course of these countries all the way to their future accession. However, its implementation in a number of areas needs further work, in the light of recent experience and the challenges ahead."(Commission Communication, 2006) The Commission mentions in the same document that "the commitments undertaken by the EU in the Thessaloniki agenda have mostly been achieved or are well on track. The Western Balkan countries have made considerable progress on their Thessaloniki commitments. Nonetheless further efforts to promote the Thessaloniki agenda are needed." (Ibid.) 'Needs further work' and 'further efforts are needed' are not just prominent in the Commission's Communications and Press releases on the enlargement process in the Western Balkans in general. These constructions are part of a rhetorical pattern that exists also in the individual country reports. The country reports are very detailed and assess all the fields under the Stabilization and Association Process, and therefore cannot be cited at length in this paper due to the limitations of this paper. However, in the cases of Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of the conclusions on individual fields are that progress has been made, but further effort is still needed. This pattern is not hard to identify because in reality over time little significant progress is made overall, explaining the lengthiness of the accession process.

The European Council and the Council of the EU very much depend on the reports of the Commission, and therefore many times have almost the same constructions in their conclusions as in the Commission documents. This is the reason why the European Council also approaches enlargement with a dose of caution. The 2005 European Council Presidency Conclusions corresponded with the Commission's statements of the period that "each

country's progress towards European integration [...] depends on its efforts to comply with the Copenhagen criteria and the conditionality of the stabilisation and association process." (Presidency Conclusions Brussels, 2005) An almost exact sentence is found in the 2006 European Council Presidency Conclusions: "The European Council reaffirms that the future of the Western Balkans lies in the European Union. It reiterates that each country's progress towards the European Union depends on its individual efforts to comply with the Copenhagen criteria and the conditionality of the Stabilisation and Association Process." (Presidency Conclusions Brussels, 2006)

The fact that almost the same sentences appear in the documents of the Commission and the European Council indicate that there is a strong commitment of the EU towards the enlargement towards the Western Balkans, but there is also common awareness of the difficulties these countries are facing on their path to membership. This awareness contributes to the note of caution and need for a steady enlargement in the rhetoric of the EU, hence the aforementioned adaptation of the EU rhetoric of enlargement to the context of the Western Balkans.

2.4. Conclusions: What the EU says

The European Council, the institution most intergovernmental by nature, and the European Commission, the most supranational organization, both agree on and share the rhetoric on the issues relating to the Western Balkans enlargement. This correspondence indicates that the Member States and the Commission have indeed together developed a rhetoric that both gives them leverage and limits them at the same time. The Commission needs to preserve its role as the supranational motor of the EU, while the member states within the Council of Ministers or the European Council need to reiterate their commitment to the cause of the EU and the spreading of European values around the world. The Western Balkans, in spite of their unique countries, have at this point only through the agenda setting and rhetoric already been placed in the family of European states, and the question to be asked is 'when' rather than 'why' these countries will become members of the EU. Although there is a sense of changes in rhetoric, these changes are mere adaptations to the individual problems of some Balkan states, the lessons learned from the fifth enlargement and the pure necessity to slow down the enlargement process. Thus, it can be concluded that the rhetoric of enlargement, described in this section, is an important source of norms in EU's enlargement policy, which conditions both Western Balkan countries, but also the EU. What the EU *says* directly influences the perception on what is normal, and according to the rhetoric on enlargement, it can be perceived as normal that the countries of the Western Balkans are normally to be part of the European Union, but that it is also normal that the road towards the EU needs to also be a commitment of the countries in question, and that their success depends on their efforts towards European integration.

3. What the EU does – contractual agreements and the path from norms and values to explicit conditions
3.1. General introduction

The EU, in its relations with countries of the Western Balkans, certainly does not only operate through the Commission's Communications or Presidency Conclusions and other types of declarations. Through the course of its history, the EU has undertaken concrete steps which substantiate what the EU declares. The materialization of EU's rhetoric in concrete actions has created a set of both norms and conditions that can be identified in concrete contracts, agreements and other documents whose signatories are the Member States of the EU on the one side, and countries of the Western Balkans on the other. These documents go beyond the category of declaration, but actually represent concrete examples of what the EU does, because they require direct involvement of the influenced countries of the Western Balkans. Unlike the great number of Commission Country Reports and Communications, Council and Presidency Conclusions and other types of declarations, the number of documents that represent EU's concrete actions in relation to the Western Balkans is more limited, and this chapter will present some of the main developments in this regard.

3.2. Europe and the OSCE (The Helsinki Final Act, Paris Charter for a New Europe)

EU's first concrete high-end diplomatic relations with countries from the Western Balkans started during the Cold War, as part of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in the early 1970s. Although not an initiative of the European Communities, but the Soviet Union, the conference plays a great role in determining the development of Europe's norms in diplomacy and security. "The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which opened at Helsinki on 3 July 1973 and continued at Geneva from 18 September 1973 to 21 July 1975, was concluded at Helsinki on 1 August 1975 […]" (Helsinki Final Act, 1975, p. 2) Besides the countries that are today member states of the EU, one of the signatories was also Yugoslavia (Socialist Federative Republic of). As part of the non-aligned movement, Tito's Yugoslavia had obvious affinity towards such values as peace, diplomacy, stability and co-operation, which are core values in the general provisions of the Final Act of the conference signed in Helsinki in 1975. The document is not a legal contract, but is politically binding. In the section called "Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States" the document outlines ten principles, making this section of the Final Act famous under the name 'the Decalogue.' The ten principles revolve around the following issues:

I. Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty

II. Refraining from the threat or use of force

III. Inviolability of frontiers

IV. Territorial integrity of States

V. Peaceful settlement of disputes

VI. Non-intervention in internal affairs

VII. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief

VIII. Equal rights and self-determination of peoples

IX. Co-operation among States

X. Fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law

These principles are recalled and the commitment of participating states to these principles are confirmed in the follow-up conferences in Belgrade (4 October 1977 - 8 March 1978), Madrid (11 November 1980 – 9 September 1983) and Vienna (4 November 1986 - 19 January 1989). The follow-up conferences stressed the importance of the first six principles, but gradually increased the focus on the human rights dimension, like described in the seventh and eighth general principle.

After the fall of communism and the end of the Cold War, the hard-core realist undertone of the Helsinki Final Act was replaced with a more liberalist undertone in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe of 1990. The section of this political document concerning security clearly states that "To uphold and promote democracy, peace and unity in Europe, [the participating states] solemnly pledge [their] full commitment to the Ten Principles of the Helsinki Final Act. [They] affirm the continuing validity of the Ten Principles and [their] determination to put them into practice." (Charter of Paris, 1990, p. 5) However, this section and the rest of the document do not go into detail about issues like inviolability of borders, non-intervention, sovereignty and territorial integrity, but instead focus and elaborate on issues like peaceful settlement of disputes, confidence building, cooperation, strengthening of democracy and preservation of human rights and freedoms. This shift of focus towards the human dimension is further evident from the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, held in three sessions in Paris (1989), Copenhagen (1990) and Moscow (1991).

This shift of discourse and type of political commitment is important because it loosens the normative and conceptual boundaries of international law and diplomacy in Europe. This shift loosens the notions of state sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of frontiers, which later allowed for justification of violation of these principles through, for example, the use of force and military intervention in such situations as human rights violations. This freedom of interpretation of these principles should come as no surprise, since the tenth principle of the Helsinki Final Act (also repeated in the Charter of Paris) clearly states that "All the principles set forth above are of primary significance and, accordingly, they will be equally and unreservedly applied, each of them being interpreted taking into account the others." (Final Act, 1975, p. 8) In the case of grave human rights violations in a country, that country shows disregard to its commitment to the Decalogue principles, which enables other countries to do so as well.

While the international law in general and in the OSCE principles outlined in the Helsinki Final Act, and reiterated in follow-up documents in particular, allow for some loopholes and different interpretations, these principles still remain as a set of diplomatic guidelines, and are still valid even today. Proof of their validity and importance is their mentioning at the beginning of any major document and declaration in EU's external relations. Considering that the Helsinki Final Act and its follow-up documents do not envisage an enforcement

mechanism and promise no benefits from committing to the provisions therein, the principles set out in these documents can be considered as a set of norms that are prevalent in EU's external relations even today.

3.3. The Pact on Stability in Europe of 1995

With the signing of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) in Maastricht on the 7th of February, 1992, and the formation of the second pillar, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the EU had solid grounds on pursuing a serious foreign policy agenda. With post-socialist countries expressing their interest in becoming free-market democracies, the EU has took upon itself the task to assist these countries of Central and Eastern (and later Southeastern) Europe in achieving their goal. The growing role of the European Communities and later European Union in achieving peace and stability in Europe was frequently recalled in the OSCE documents. The CSCE Helsinki Document of 1992, subtitled "Challenges of Change", for example, clearly recognizes EU's efforts in helping achieving the goals of the OSCE: "The European Community (EC), fulfilling its important role in the political and economic development of Europe, is moving towards a union and has decided to broaden its membership. It is closely involved in CSCE activities." (Challenges of Change, 1992, p.2)

The role of the EU in securing security in Europe was confirmed with the EU's initiative and finalization of the Pact on Security in Europe. Starting as an initiative of the French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, and accepted as a task of the EU at the Copenhagen European Council of 1993, the 'Balladur Plan' has over the period of two years, through negotiations at several peace conferences resulted with the Pact on Security in Europe. Before the Pact was finalized, at the Brussels European Council of 10th and 11th of December 1993, the Presidency concluded that "the draft Pact on Stability in Europe [was] intended to promote preventive diplomacy and therefore [was] not concerned with countries in conflict [...] The aim of the initiative [was] to contribute to stability by averting tension and potential conflicts in Europe, fostering neighbourly relations and encouraging countries to consolidate their borders and to resolve problems of national minorities." (Brussels Presidency Conclusions, 1993, p. 18) The Pact consisted of a Political Declaration and bilateral treaties and agreements of the Central and Eastern European countries and the EU, as well as between these countries themselves. While the bilateral agreements are numerous and are important in their own way, the Political Declaration is the key part of this pact. The pact itself is not a legally binding, enforceable agreement, but represents a set of norms that has later become a *de facto* condition of accession. The nature of this pact is best described towards the end of the Political Declaration: "The pact thus established becomes for us all an essential political reference for developing relations between the nations of all Europe. We undertake to give it, individually and collectively, our political support." (Pact on Stability in Europe, 1995, quoted in Hill & Smith, 2002, pp. 276)

The Political Declaration thus explicitly requires countries to regulate their borders, respect minorities and implicitly expects from any country to have no border disputes and minority issues unresolved. With the Pact on Stability in Europe **good neighborly relations** have become not just a norm, but a *de facto* condition of accession.

3.4. The Stability Pact of 1999

After the Pact on Stability in Europe and the end of the conflict in ex-Yugoslav countries, came a new Pact. This document is the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe. Although the wars between Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia were over, Serbia under Milošević has not ended its history of violent conflict. After NATO has bombed Serbia to force Milošević's army out of Kosovo, the EU has yet again felt it is time for action towards securing peace and security in Europe – only this time the focus was Southeastern Europe.

The Foreign Ministers of EU's Member States, representatives of the European Commission, the Foreign Ministers of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, the United States of America, the OSCE Chairman and representatives of the Council of Europe as participants and the Foreign Ministers of Canada and Japan, representatives of the United Nations, UNHCR, NATO, OECD, WEU, International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as facilitators, have met on 10 June 1999 in Cologne, as a response to EU's initiative to adopt a Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. The final document that the participants have agreed on constituted the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe. This document recalled previous OSCE and EU documents, as stated in the fifth paragraph: "We solemnly reaffirm our commitment to all the principles and norms enshrined in the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris, the 1990 Copenhagen Document and other OSCE documents, and, as applicable, to the full implementation of relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, the relevant conventions of the Council of Europe and the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a view to promoting good neighbourly relations." (Stability Pact Cologne, 1999) From this paragraph it is evident that the norms and principles that were previously agreed on and applied in practice are also valid for the region of Southeastern Europe. A novelty in this document, in the rhetoric and in terms of norms and principles, is the term 'regional cooperation'.

The term 'regional cooperation' will prove to become the most frequently used term in foreign policy in the region of Southeastern Europe. The term is much more suitable for diplomatic declarations, because it is a very broad term, yet it is much more straightforward as compared to the term 'good neighbourly relations'. As with the 'good neighbourly relations', regional cooperation became both a norm of international relations in Europe and its southeastern region, as well as an indirect and *de facto* condition for joining the EU. In the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, this norm is presented as a future condition in the twentieth paragraph:

> *"The EU will draw the region closer to the perspective of full integration of these countries into its structures. In case of countries which have not yet concluded association agreements with the EU, this will be done through a new kind of contractual relationship taking fully into account the individual situations of each country with the perspective of EU membership, on the basis of the Amsterdam Treaty and once the Copenhagen criteria have been met. We note the European Union's willingness that, while deciding autonomously, it will consider the achievement of the objectives of the Stability Pact, in particular progress in developing regional cooperation, among the important elements in evaluating the merits of such a perspective."* (Stability Pact Cologne, 1999)

The importance of regional cooperation is clear from this paragraph, and certainly becomes explicit with the successor of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe – The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). **Regional cooperation**, both as norm and condition for accession to the EU, is a priority in foreign policy and diplomacy for countries of Southeastern Europe and the EU. As indicated in the abovementioned paragraph, a "new kind of contractual relationship" that was set up by the EU, has continued to stress the importance of regional cooperation. This new contractual relationship is in fact the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), as part of the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP).

3.5. The Stabilization and Association Agreement

The Stabilization and Association Process was a framework established for the countries of Southeastern Europe, similar to the previous European Agreements and Association Agreements used as the contractual basis between the EU and countries wishing to join the EU. With the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament of 26 May 1999 on the Stabilisation and Association Process for countries of Southeastern Europe and the Presidency Conclusions of the Santa Maria da Feira European Council of the 19th and 20th of June 2000, the way for the SAP was well paved. The SAP (as described in the previous chapter of this paper) was reinforced and confirmed as the main framework for assisting countries of Southeastern Europe to advance to a level suitable for EU membership in the Zagreb Summit of 24 November 2000 and enhanced at the Thessaloniki Summit of June 2004. One of the main components of the SAP are the Stabilization and Association Agreements (SAAs). The SAA "represents a far-reaching contractual relationship between the EU and each Western Balkan country, entailing mutual rights and obligations." (Commission/Western Balkans) Although the Stabilisation and Association agreements are "tailored to the circumstances of each country" (Ibid.) each agreement shares the same principles and expects the common outcome for all countries – the full association of these countries with norms and standards of the EU. Accordingly, all agreements have similar if not exactly the same preambles, which 'consider', 'recall' and 'note' previous developments in the EU, including the developments in external relations, foreign policy and diplomacy described in this chapter, namely the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris, the Stability Pact as well as Enlargement Policy related summits in Thessaloniki and Zagreb. The SAA devotes several Articles to certain aspects of regional cooperation and stresses on the importance of regional stabilization, cooperation and good neighbourly relations with other countries. With the SAA as a contractual document, rather than political declarations and pacts, regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations have evolved from norms and principles into real and contractually binding conditions of EU accession.

3.6. Conclusions: What the EU does

What the EU does (EU's actions) creates benchmarks and, together with what the EU says (rhetoric), influences perceptions of what is normal (creates norms). Yet, what the EU does also involves the EU and other actors to play an active role in promoting, applying and

implementing the results of EU's actions. With the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris, the Pact on Stability in Europe, the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe and Stabilisation and Association Agreements, the EU countries and the countries seeking EU membership have agreed to a set of norms and principles, which should (normally and in principle) affect their behavior in foreign policy and diplomacy. Through the practice of these countries and frequent reiteration of these principles and norms in the relations of EU countries with potential EU members, these norms have evolved into implicit or explicit conditions for membership.

The Helsinki Final Act and its follow-up documents have stressed on the importance of ten principles in foreign relations of European countries, including sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty, inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention in internal affairs, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and cooperation among states. However the Final Act clearly stated that these principles should be interpreted with respect of each other, which means that by failing to respect one or more of these principles, one country allows other countries to disregard these principles in their relations with this country.

With economical, political and security changes in Europe, the norms and principles adapted accordingly. With the predominantly realist view of international relations during the Cold War slowly fading, a more liberalist view of international relations moved the spotlight from such norms as inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity, non-intervention in internal affairs towards the principles of respect for human rights, protection of minority rights, peaceful settlement of disputes, cooperation. Hence, the EU actions and initiatives, in form of the Pact on Stability in Europe and the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, put forward the norms of **good neighbourly relations** and **regional cooperation**. These two norms in external relations of European countries has been frequently used in European diplomacy, since they encompass the abovementioned principles related to protection of human rights and more particular minority rights, peaceful settlement of disputes, etc.

With further developments within the EU and several waves of enlargement, the EU has realized that norms and principles alone are not enough to move other countries of Europe, namely the countries of the Western Balkans. As a result, the EU today relies on conditionality, embodied in Stabilisation and Association Agreements, to enable countries to reach EU standards and prepare them for EU membership. While some conditions set out in the Copenhagen criteria and much more detailed in the Stabilisation and Association Agreements are very technical in nature, especially those related to economic and judicial issues, the conditions of the EU in relation to foreign policy and diplomacy are very loose. The differentiation between norms and conditionality in foreign policy is unclear. This fact should come as no surprise, because the conditions created in relations of one actor with another are influenced and drawn up from the existing norms in international relations. Accordingly, the fact that, for example, good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation in the case of EU enlargement are both a norm and a condition should also not come as a surprise.

4. Analysis of EU's influence on Serbia's foreign policy

4.1. Serbia – historical background

Serbia's relation with the European Communities and later the European Union dates back to the period of the Cold War and the Iron Curtain. At that time Serbia was one of the six republics of Tito's Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). History documents several multilateral signed treaties between Yugoslavia, the European Community and other countries, including conventions on typical Cold War issues like the Convention on Assistance in the case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (1980), Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (1986), and the Convention on the physical protection of nuclear material (1986).

During the breakup of Yugoslavia the European Union played a significant role in the process, both having an impact on and being itself impacted by the war and post-war period. One interesting fact is worth mentioning, that in spite of the political turmoil, Milošević's Yugoslavia has signed a multilateral treaty with the European Community and other parties involved: the International Plant Protection Convention - New revised text approved by Resolution 12/97 of the 29th Session of the FAO Conference in November 1997. In this period however, Yugoslavia was left out of the major political and diplomatic (EU and OSCE) agreements and meetings.

After the fall of Milošević's regime in October 2000, the new democratic government has signed many multilateral agreements with the European Community and has started the integration process into the EU. Since then Serbia has, besides many multilateral agreements, also successfully signed several bilateral agreements with the European Community: the Interim Agreement on trade and trade-related matters between the European Community, of the one part, and the Republic of Serbia, of the other part (2008), the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Serbia on the facilitation of the issuance of visas (2007), the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Serbia on the readmission of persons residing without authorization (2007), and the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Serbia on trade in textile products (2005). (Commission/Treaties)

In terms of international relations, the post-Milošević period has a steady history of relative peace, but turbulent history of diplomatic 'ups' and downs'. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia became a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on the 10th of November 2000. The president of the FRY at the time, Vojislav Koštunica, signed the basic documents of the OSCE (the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charter and others) on the 27th of November 2000 in Vienna, "whereby the FRY accepted all norms, standards and commitments deriving from these documents." (MFA/Serbia & OSCE, 2002) Serbia and Montenegro have actively assumed obligations under the Vienna Document on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBM) and the Document on Small and Light Weapons (SALW)", which includes exchanges of military information, and sharing calendars of military activities on an annual basis. (Ibid.)

Serbia and the administration in Belgrade have built strong ties with two OSCE missions: The OSCE Mission to the FRY and the OSCE Mission to Kosovo and Metohija (OMIK). The OSCE Mission to the FRY followed after the initiative of the FR of Yugoslavia, and was

established by the decision of the OSCE Permanent Council, on the 11th of January 2001. "The Mission is based in Belgrade and is active in the entire territory of Serbia and Montenegro. Its mandate is to offer assistance and expertise, in close cooperation with the competent bodies of Serbia and Montenegro, to Serbia and Montenegro's authorities at all levels as well as to interested individuals and organisations, in the spheres of democratization, protection of human and national minority rights, rule of law, development of independent media, promotion of protection of the environment, economic transition." (Ibid.) The OSCE Mission to Kosovo and Metohija (OMIK) was established on the 1st of July 1999 and operates in cooperation with both the administration in Belgrade and the UN Provisional Administration for Kosovo and Metohija (UNMIK). "The building of democratic institutions and the organization of elections are among its principal tasks." (Ibid.)

4.2. Serbia – Regional cooperation as condition and norm

As announced in the Thessaloniki European Council of the 19th and 20th of June 2003 the EU was ready to fully and effectively support the European perspective of Western Balkan countries. In the Council conclusions of 16 June 2003 and its Annex entitled 'The Thessaloniki Agenda for the western Balkans: moving towards European integration' the EU identifies "ways and means of intensifying the stabilisation and association process, including the drawing-up of European partnerships." (Council Regulation, 2004) With the Council Regulation of March 2004 on the establishment of European partnerships in the framework of the stabilisation and association process, European partnerships were launched and adopted by the Council.

The first European Partnership with the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro, including Kosovo under UNSC Resolution 1244 was adopted on the 14th of June 2004 with the Council Decision 2004/520/EC, which was repealed in the Council Decision 2006/56/EC. This decision established the second European Partnership with the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro. The 2006 European Partnership was repealed in the Council Decision 2008/213/EC, which established the third and current European Partnership between Serbia and Kosovo under Resolution 1244. (Council Decision, 2006, 2008)

This document sets out Serbia's short and medium term goals and priorities, which among numerous political and economic goals, identifies Serbia's key priorities for its path to EU membership: compliance with the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) and interim agreement, full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), constructive cooperation on questions concerning Kosovo; the implementation of constitutional provisions in accordance with European law and European standards, the reform of public administration, reform of the judicial system, anti-corruption policy and completion of the privatization process. (Council Decision, 2008)

Regional cooperation, good neighborly relations are furthermore outlined as important goals in Serbia's path to EU membership also in the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). On the 10th of October 2005, Serbia and the EU opened negotiations on the SAA. "The first round of technical negotiations on this document was held in November 2005. […] the negotiations were suspended on 3 May 2006 and resumed a year later – on 13 June 2007." The SAA and Interim Agreement with the EU were signed on the 29th of April 2008 in

Brussels and ratified by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia on the 9th of September 2008. Serbia has been unilaterally implementing the interim trade agreement since the 1st of February 2009. At the 1-2 March 2012 European Council, Serbia was granted candidate country status (SEIO/Historical Overview; Council conclusions, 2012)

The SAA between Serbia and the EU clearly outlines regional cooperation and good neighborly relations as key commitments on Serbia's part. In the list of the aims (Art. 1.2.b) of the Association, all parties agreed to "contribute to political, economic and institutional stability in Serbia, as well as to the stabilisation of the region." (SAA Serbia, 2007, p. 10) In Article 5 the SAA repeats that "International and regional peace and stability, the development of good neighbourly relations, human rights and the respect and protection of minorities are central to the Stabilisation and Association process." (Ibid. p. 13) In Articled 6 and 7 Serbia commits to develop cooperation and good neighbourly relations with regards to border management, combating organized crime, preventing corruption, money laundering, illegal migration and human trafficking, trafficking of small arms, light weapons, and illicit drugs, as well as combating and preventing terrorism. (Ibid., pp.13-14) Titles II and III regarding political dialogue and regional cooperation, reiterate the importance and more importantly the condition and Serbia's obligation to foster good neighborly relations, as can be clearly noticed from Article: "In conformity with its commitment to international and regional peace and stability, and to the development of good neighbourly relations, Serbia shall actively promote regional cooperation." (Ibid., p. 18)

Following the signature, ratification and unilateral implementation of the SAA, Serbia has made numerous efforts in fully committing to the SAA, European Agreement and other EU and OSCE documents in regard to regional cooperation and good neighborly relations. Surprisingly, one of the more active players in regional cooperation is Ivica Dačić, the current First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs, and also a member of the Socialist Party of Serbia, former Milošević's party colleague. As Minister of Internal Affairs, Dačić has signed several agreements with Internal Ministers of Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Moldova, (FYRof) Macedonia, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Romania including the Convention for Police Cooperation for South Eastern Europe signed in Sofia on the 21st of May 2010. (Government/News, 2010) These agreements on police cooperation in the region, as well as other initiatives against terrorism and organized crime both in the region and worldwide, are in line with the provisions of Articles 6 and 7 of the SAA and other preceding documents Serbia committed to.

Probably the most persistent actor in regional cooperation was the at the time (2008-2011) Deputy Prime Minister for EU integration and Minister of Science and Technological Development Božidar Đelić. After his education and professional experience abroad, Đelić returned to Serbia and was Minister of Finance and Economy in the government of prime minster Zoran Đinđić, and later Zoran Živković (after Đinđić's assassination) from 2001 to 2004. He joined the government of Vojislav Koštunica (who he competed against for the place of prime minister in that government) as the Serbian Deputy Prime Minister, in charge of European integration, from May 2007 until July 2008, when he was given the title of Deputy Prime Minister for EU integration and Minister of Science and Technological Development. He was the key player in SAA negotiations and relations with Brussels, and he was the one who signed the SAA on behalf of Serbia in Luxembourg on April 29, 2008.

(Government/Ministers) Since the 2012 elections, the post of Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration is held by Suzana Grubješić.

Regional cooperation occurs also in terms of cross-border cooperation achieved through concrete projects with the help of EU's pre-accession technical and economic assistance. The main institution in charge of regional and cross-border cooperation, in particular dealing with and giving advice on EU pre-accession assistance, is the Office for European Affairs in Novi Sad. This institution has set its strategies in line with the SAA and it preceding documents - "Creation of joint projects with regional and other European partners upon the use of EU's pre-accession funds [and] cooperation with leading European and international institutions." (Office for European Affairs/About us)

Following the path of regional integration, Serbia has become an active member in numerous regional organizations, some of which were established on the initiative of the EU and OSCE, while some were initiatives of countries from the region. These regional organizations include: The South-East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP), The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), Central-European Initiative (CEI), Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AII), South-East Europe Cooperative Initiative (SECI), SECI CENTER – Regional Center for Combating Trans-border Crime, The Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), The Danube Cooperation Process (DCP), The Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), International Sava River Basin Commission. (MFA/Regional Cooperation)

Serbia participates in the South-East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP), starting from the Skopje Summit of October 2000. Besides Serbia, Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Turkey make up the countries of the South-East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP). The SEECP "was initiated in 1996 with a view to transforming South-Eastern Europe into the region of stability, safety and cooperation in line with the European integration processes and through promotion of mutual dialogue and cooperation […]." (MFA/SEECP) The key document of the SEECP is the Charter on Good-Neighbourly Relations, Stability, Security and Cooperation in South-Eastern Europe, which was adopted in Bucharest in 2000 and amended at the Cooperation Process Summit in Zagreb on 11 May 2007, at which the relationship between the SEECP and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was defined. At the Zagreb Summit the countries agreed that the SEECP will "continue to play its role of a Forum for Political Dialogue and Direction of Cooperation between Participating States, the RCC Secretariat, based in Sarajevo will serve as an operational support to the Process." (Ibid.) The RCC as mentioned, replaced the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe on the 27th of February 2008. (RCC)

4.3. Kosovo and the limits of conditionality

The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the Southeast Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP) play a paramount role in regional cooperation among states of Southeastern Europe and function in an upmost diplomatic environment. However, Serbia's diplomatic demeanor has been put to the test after the unilateral declaration of independence by the Assembly of Kosovo on February the 17th in 2008. At the first Regional Cooperation Council in Sofia on

the 27th of February 2008, just ten days after Kosovo's proclamation of independence, Serbia's Foreign Minister at the time, Vuk Jeremić, said that this event "triggered a debate in the region about just how far cooperation can go." (Jeremić/RCC, 2008) In the same address, Jeremić has remained as diplomatic as he could, and added "Serbia has no intention to obstruct the important work that needs to be done in advancing and deepening regional cooperation. But the minimum requirement, from our perspective, for us to continue going forward, is for the procedural status quo to be maintained." (Ibid.) Only one day later, at the meeting of the Southeast Europe Cooperation Process, his diplomatic demeanor and calm became less apparent:

> "It may be undiplomatic to say so, but your countries find themselves facing the consequences of a perverse choice that asked of my country to choose between Kosovo and Europe. As a result of this, you are effectively being put in a situation to choose between Serbia and Kosovo. […]The countries that choose to pre-empt a negotiated solution to Kosovo's future status by recognizing the illegitimate secessionist ambitions of the province's Albanians will have chosen to downgrade their relationship with Serbia." (Jeremić/SEECP, 2008)

Following a wave of recognitions of Kosovo as an independent state by influential countries like the US and most Western European countries, Serbia and its foreign policy officials were facing pressure from two sides. One source of pressure was the 'recognition race', where Serbia had to appeal to relations with other countries and lobby for preserving the status-quo in the Kosovo question. Another source of pressure was the Serbian public and the parties of the opposition, who used this period to rally support with claims that the Government is incapable of preserving Kosovo. At that point, President Tadić and, especially, Foreign Minister Jeremić have turned away from diplomatic behavior and towards a relatively populist appearance to calm the dissatisfaction of the Serbian public.

One of the first actions of the Prime Minister at the time Vojislav Koštunica was to recall the ambassador to the US Ivan Vujačić for consultation in Belgrade. A few days later, Serbia has recalled envoys from other capitals of EU member states that have recognized Kosovo's independence. After the emergency UN Security Council meeting, Jeremić explained the recall of envoys to countries that recognized Kosovo's as an independent state: "Whoever decides to trample on international laws and brutalize and trample on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia cannot continue having normal relations with our friendly, peaceful and democratic nation." (Xinhua, 2008) Serbia has later recalled envoys from its neighboring Montenegro, Croatia, Bulgaria and Macedonia for consultations in Belgrade. Recalling ambassadors can be interpreted as a symbolic protest from one perspective, but from a diplomatic standpoint, such a decision can be considered risky and undiplomatic, since it could have weakened relations of Serbia with other countries, and especially the EU.

After the parliamentary elections of May 2008, and with a less populistic and nationalistic government, Serbia's diplomacy has returned to the path of dialogue and cooperation. All of the ambassadors returned to their embassies abroad later the same year. This decision of the Foreign Ministry was made in order for Serbia to "normalise its ties with the EU in order to win EU candidate status by the end of the year and remove the visa requirements on it citizens wanting to visit the Union." (Jozwiak, 2008) The opposition leaders interpreted this softened and more open diplomatic stance as giving in to EU pressure and conditions.

The question whether Serbia needs to choose between the EU and Kosovo, or whether Serbia's EU membership is conditioned by Serbia recognizing Kosovo's independence, has been a matter of debate since the declaration of independence. While the stance of the EU as a whole is that the EU is neutral regarding the status of Kosovo, and remains in favor of international supervision under UNMIK and EULEX of the territory, some EU officials from the European Parliament, as well as representatives of EU member states clearly indicate that Serbia needs to recognize Kosovo's independence in order to advance on its path toward EU membership.

The European Union is status-neutral, due to the fact that member states are not united in one common stance on the statehood of Kosovo. All current member states recognize Kosovo as an independent state except for Spain, Romania, Cyprus, Greece and Slovakia. The Europa official website of the European Union and EU official documents mention Kosovo under the UN Security Council Resolution 1244. As internal EU pressures for a European consensus on the status are rising, the neutral stance of the EU reframes the question of Kosovo's future, diverting the attention to a European future of Kosovo, away from the future of Kosovo's status. A recent statement of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and Vice President of the European Commission, Catherine Ashton illustrates the stance of the EU: "The EU may have left the status issue to individual member states. But the EU as a whole is clear that the future of Kosovo is European." (Ashton, 2010)

While the EU is divided on the status of Kosovo, there is consensus on all levels that regional cooperation is an important part of association and eventual accession to the EU of Western Balkan countries. In the European Parliament Resolution on Kosovo of 2009, the European Parliament "urges Kosovo and Serbia to engage in constructive dialogue on matters of common interest and to contribute to regional cooperation." (European Parliament, 2009) This message to Serbia is vague and broadly defined and cannot directly be interpreted as an accession condition. A more direct, yet diplomatic message is sent in the proposal for a resolution of the European Parliament in Kosovo in 2010, which "underlines that good neighbourly relations are an essential criterion for the aspirations of Serbia as well as of all the other countries in the region to join the EU. […] understanding that the official recognition of Kosovo is not a feasible political option at the moment for the Belgrade leadership, [the European Parliament] nevertheless calls on Serbia to be pragmatic on the status issue." (European Parliament, 2010,p.3) Although this resolution is at the moment in a proposal/draft phase, the MEP Ulrike Lunacek, from the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, who drafted the proposed resolution, clearly reiterates and maintains the position that "Without the good will to have good cooperation with Kosovo, Serbia cannot be a member of the EU because cross-border cooperation is one of the arteries of the European idea." (Lunacek, 2010, quoted in B92/May 2010)

The problem with such a stance is that 'good cooperation' and 'constructive dialogue' can be broadly defined. They can be interpreted both as Serbia's recognition of Kosovo's independence (interpretation of some MEPs, diplomats and officials from EU member states) or pushing for the solution of Kosovo's status through international fora and reopening negotiations between Serbia's and Kosovo's officials (the interpretation of Serbia's current government). It is however clear that the unresolved Kosovo issue on Serbia's agenda can

hinder Serbia to pursue regional cooperation and maintain diplomatic relations with other neighbors. Serbia rejects to participate at meetings and events, at which Kosovo is invited under the name of Republic of Kosovo, and insists that Kosovo can participate only under the auspices of UNMIK and the UN Security Council Resolution 1244. Simply put, Serbia's officials deem the procedural, formal and at the same time highly symbolic status and name of Kosovo to be more important than the quality and content of the regional meetings themselves. Because of such a position, Serbia has missed the opportunity to participate in regional discussions and to demonstrate the willingness and commitment to regional cooperation and good neighborly relations. Examples include the absence of Serbian representatives at the inauguration of Croatian President Josipović and the Balkan Summit at Brdo near Kranj in Slovenia, because representatives from Kosovo were invited as representatives of the Republic of Kosovo. (Ekonomist, January, March 2010) Serbia did attend the EU Western Balkans Conference in Sarajevo of June 2010 organized by the Spanish Presidency, at which Kosovo's representatives were accompanied by UNMIK officials.

4.4. Conclusions: The power of norms

The question of what regional cooperation in terms of the Kosovo issue really means, and whether Serbia's recognition of Kosovo as an independent state is a real condition of Serbia's EU membership is still debatable. However, the answer relevant for the purpose of this paper is the reply of Serbia's officials. A statement of Vuk Jeremić best illustrates the position: "Anyone who thinks that Serbia, in case it had to choose between the European Union and Kosovo, would choose the EU, is making a mistake. It will not happen." (B92, March 2010) This position clearly confirms the limits of EU conditionality. Succesful conditionality requires the promised rewards to outweigh the costs of accepting certain conditions. The current Government of Serbia (and the majority of politicians in the Serbian Parliament), regardless of the nature of their interest, value preserving the territory of Kosovo as part of Serbia more than Serbia's EU membership. Because of this, regardles whether recognition of Kosovo's independence is a condition of EU membership or not, this condition would fail as a mode of EU influence on Serbia.

It is however noteworthy that in spite of Serbia's undiplomatic foreign policy moves in relations to the Kosovo issue, blunt and bold statements and overall agressive diplomacy of Foreign Minister Jeremić at the time, the foreign policy actions of Serbia remain in the realm of diplomacy and peaceful international relations. With the current government belonging to the more populist and right wing (Serbian Progressive Party and the Socialist Party of Serbia) it is almost surprising that Serbia's diplomacy follows that trend. Even in matters of upmost national, historical, cultural and political sensitivity like the secession of a country's territory, Serbia's foreign policy remains in the framework of European and international norms, namely the peaceful resolution of disputes, absence of the use or threat of use of force. Furthermore, as concluded in the previous chapter, regional cooperation is both a norm and a condition. Due to the fact that regional cooperation is broadly defined, one can argue that Serbia's foreign policy actions do not meet the condition of regional cooperation. However, compared to the policy of the Milošević regime towards Kosovo, the current 'aggressiveness' of one or two undiplomatic statements of Serbia's officials certainly cannot be construed as unwillingness to commit to regional cooperation and peaceful resolution of disputes.

If in the Kosovo issue regional cooperation and good neighborly relations as a condition mean recognition of Kosovo independence by Serbia, that condition is destined to fail. If regional cooperation and good neighborly relations as a norm in the Kosovo issue means a peaceful, ongoing dialogue and resolving the issue through all available diplomatic and legal channels, then that norm may bear fruit. Regional cooperation will succeed only if is stressed as a norm, since norm transfer is much more subtle, long-lasting and sustainable, because norms define what is 'normal'. Conditions on the other hand are direct, short-term and face the danger of backfiring in situations of over-conditionality or in issues like the Kosovo question, where the costs of condition fulfillment and rule transfer outweighs the promised reward, as the case-study of Serbia's foreign policy has shown.

Conclusions

After reviewing the literature on different modes of influence, presenting the developments of the rhetoric found in declarations and norms and conditions found in particular actions in the form of binding contractual agreements and documents, and after providing some successful and unsuccessful empirical examples of the effect of EU conditionality and normative power, the paper has reached several conclusions. This section of the paper will summarize the findings and present three main conclusions drawn up from the previous sections.

Conclusion 1: The distinction between the effectiveness of normative power and the power of conditionality of the EU on foreign policy in the Western Balkans is hard to assess because the very norms and conditions are hard to differentiate. Norms and conditions in the realm of international relations and the relationship between the EU and the countries of the Western Balkans are identified by analyzing what the EU says and does. EU's rhetoric and particular actions in foreign affairs have set norms of behavior between the EU and the countries of the Western Balkans. Since the EU realized the mere use of normative power and appealing to norms is not as effective, the EU introduced several ways of conditioning the EU countries, including technical and financial assistance, as well as the less obvious political support and backing in certain international affairs. However the conditions that the EU has established are influenced by and drawn from the existing norms of international relations in Europe, which makes norms and conditions unrecognizably similar. One example are good neighborly relations and regional cooperation, which in the early stages of European integration of the Western Balkan countries were just a norm, but over time developed into implicit *de facto* conditions for EU membership.

Conclusion 2: Conditionality as a mode of influence has clear limitations in foreign affairs, while the use of and appealing to norms are more effective tools of influencing ones foreign policy decisions in international relations. A clear example from the case study of Serbia explains the limitations of EU conditionality. In the case of Kosovo, Serbia's foreign policy position is that Kosovo will never be an independent state, and will remain a part of Serbia's territory. It is still debatable whether Serbia's recognition of Kosovo is a condition of EU membership or not. The debate whether this condition exists is still unresolved, because the condition of good neighborly relations/regional cooperation is broadly defined. One understanding of the condition is that Serbia needs to recognize Kosovo's independence,

which would solve the Kosovo issue. The other understanding (Serbia's position) is that regional cooperation means pursuing negotiations and using international fora to find a solution to the dispute. It is however clear from Serbia's diplomacy of the last decade that Serbia could lessen or even abandon its EU membership aspirations if the first understanding of this condition is reintroduced.

Regional cooperation as a norm is however more universal than the concrete question of Kosovo's status. It encompasses other norms of international relations, like peaceful settling of disputes, pursuing constructive political dialogue, the respect of mutual interests and the refraining from the use of or the threat of use of force. Norms are also more subtle in their effect, which is important in politically sensitive cases and diplomacy. In the case of norms as a mode of influence, it is expected from Serbia to behave in the abovementioned manner, since it is considered 'normal' in international relations. No one is forcing or conditioning Serbia to change its foreign policy positions, like in the case of conditionality as a mode of influence.

These are the reasons why norms are more effective in foreign affairs than conditionality. The limitations of conditionality occur when the reward is less important than the cost of fulfilling the condition for that reward. In cases like Kosovo and Serbia, where a certain territory is more valuable than EU membership, conditionality is destined to fail. Appealing to norms on the other hand is a passive (or perceived to be passive) mode of influence. The target country is less threatened, it does not put up a defensive stance and is more prone to influence.

Conclusion 3: The third conclusion stems from the first two: The EU should in the case of Serbia, and in its attempts to influence Serbian foreign policy, not rely on conditionality. With the existing perception of over-conditionality among the general public in Serbia, conditioning Serbia on an issue of such national, cultural, historical and political sensitivity may back-fire and deteriorate the relations between the EU and Serbia, making the EU less likely to successfully influence Serbia's foreign affairs in the long run. The EU should instead rely on its normative power, continue pursuing its neutral stance (which means dealing with its internal pressures for a more decisive stance) and appeal to the existing norms of behavior in international relations in the region. Opting for this more passive mode of influence will have a greater effect on achieving regional cooperation, even in sensitive issues like the status of Kosovo. As described in the conceptual section of this paper, the EU should apply the social learning and lesson-drawing models of influencing Serbia, namely through persuasion and acknowledgment of equal status in the dialogue. The fact that the current Serbian leadership has opted for a diplomatic and legal strategy of resolving the Kosovo dispute, unlike Milošević's regime, which opted for use of force, indicates that Serbia pursues a foreign policy based on the existing norms in international relations, described in this paper. That is precisely the reason why the EU (and its member states) should appeal to these norms and use the opportunity of the pro-European rhetoric of the current government to exercise its normative power. Relying on conditionality in the sensitive issue of Kosovo, if back-firing, may prove to be more damaging than constructive. Translating this conclusion into the stick-and-carrot metaphor, if the carrot is not sweet enough, one needs to sweet-talk the other.

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