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## Expansion without enlargement

*Europe's dynamism and the EU's neighbourhood policy*

The European Neighbourhood Policy was designed as an alternative to enlargement that would allow the expansionary dynamic of the EU to continue without the burden of acquiring new member states. Rather than offering membership to its neighbours, the EU offers a special relationship in exchange for these countries maintaining stability on the periphery. How successful the ENP is depends on the periphery's readiness to cooperate. Are the neighbouring states willing to make the same amount of effort as they would in the framework of the enlargement policy for a distinctly lower return from the EU?

"Accession is not the only game in town."<sup>1</sup>

Even before the completion of the EU's eastern enlargement in 2004, the Commission had begun to think about what should happen next. It was clear that this enlargement would bring with it new relations of proximity and hence new problems for and new expectations of the EU. It was also clear, however, that dealing with these issues as they had been dealt with up to then, stabilizing the periphery by means of enlargement and promises of enlargement, was no longer an option.

The EU had reached the limits of its previous dynamism of development, in which integration and enlargement had functioned in such a way as to mutually reinforce each other. By the time of the 2004 eastern enlargement, at the latest, the number and heterogeneity of the member states had increased to such an extent that they were placing excessive demands on the EU's potential for cultural, organizational, and financial integration.<sup>2</sup> This overstretch made the contradiction between the deepening and the enlargement of the EU sharper, and this is the essence of the European Union's enlargement crisis.<sup>3</sup> This view that enlargement and the deepening of European integration openly contradict one another led to the widely shared conviction that the automatism of further enlargements of the EU had to be stopped.<sup>4</sup> But it was also clear that it could not be in the EU's interest to bring its expansion dynamism to an abrupt end, since this implied that there was a danger of a sharp clash of interests between the EU and its periphery. What was needed, therefore, was a concept that made it possible for the EU to continue to expand without necessitating further enlargement. How is it possible to have expansion without enlargement? This is the core problem around which the EU's neighbourhood policy revolves.

The short history (since 2002) of the EU's development of its programme for expansion without enlargement has a characteristic feature: With the passing of time, more and more countries on the periphery of the EU have been incorporated into the programme. This began in early 2003 with the

Commission's Wider Europe concept, which covered Belarus, Russia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The next step was the Council's December 2003 Copenhagen decision, which adopted the Wider Europe concept and extended it to incorporate the countries involved in the Barcelona Process. In 2004, the expansion without enlargement programme was formulated anew in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) strategy paper and extended to Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. At present, the European Neighbourhood Policy covers 16 countries on the periphery of the EU.<sup>5</sup>

The ENP concepts that were developed to stop the EU's automatic enlargement momentum are themselves subject to an analogous dynamism. Driven partly by the desire of individual countries on the periphery to be allowed to participate and partly by the interest of individual groups of member states in questions relating to stability and security, the circle of countries towards which the neighbourhood policy is directed has grown, as has the extent of the potential "ring of friends" around the EU that the neighbourhood policy is designed to bring into being.

One way of looking at this idiosyncratic tendency to expansion in the programmatic development of the ENP is to see it quite simply as the ironic return of an EU model of development that has evidently not been overcome. However, one can also ask: What are the reasons for this expansion dynamism, which has clearly persisted beyond the Union's rounds of enlargement? The relationship between the prosperous core of the EU and its periphery can be understood as a political deal. The terms of this deal between the EU and its periphery have changed, though, as enlargement policy has turned into neighbourhood policy. This affects what this policy is able to achieve.

### Europe's dynamism

The interdependencies between the centre and the periphery of the European Union give rise to specific interactions that are the source of Europe's dynamism.<sup>6</sup> The central factor is the interest of the core of the EU in safeguarding its own existence as a politically stable zone of economic prosperity. The consequence of this dominant interest is that the core perceives its periphery in two different ways: on the one hand, as a source of various economic and political problems that damage the EU's extensive interest in stability and, on the other hand, as a protective zone that can serve to keep at bay problems arising in the more distant periphery. This ambivalent perception of the periphery — as both a source of problems and a solution to these problems — leads to the characteristic combination of exclusion and inclusion in the EU's policy towards its periphery.

The goal of an exclusion policy is to keep cross-border problems at a distance by closing borders. Of course, this kind of policy has only limited prospects of success. For one, there are technical reasons why attempts to close borders are ineffective against numerous kinds of cross-border processes. This applies particularly to cross-border environmental pollution, transmitted through the air or via water. Second, the effective closure of borders in response to certain cross-border processes can only be achieved by paying disproportionately high financial, political, and humanitarian costs. This applies in particular to the immigration controls put in place by states governed by rule of law and subject to immigration flows.

Third, attempts to implement exclusion policies can encounter difficulties in the stable zone of economic prosperity because the costs and benefits are

unequally distributed across this zone and associated with a range of different interests. This applies particularly to the regulation of mobile transnational production factors, labour migration, and foreign direct investment. All in all, therefore, a policy of exclusion with the goal of safeguarding the prosperous core of the EU has no great prospect of success. Throughout the history of the EU, this has led repeatedly to the addition of a policy of calculated inclusion to an exclusion policy or to the replacement of exclusion by inclusion. As a result, inclusion has dominated EU policy towards the periphery.<sup>7</sup>

Calculated inclusion follows the logic of self-interested aid.<sup>8</sup> In the transnational context, self-interested aid is motivated by the interest of the country providing assistance in finding ways to solve problems that spread across borders in the foreign locations where they first arise. This might mean subsidizing the environmental policy of a poorer neighbour, for example, by modernizing outdated nuclear reactors. Self-interested aid can also take the form of assistance to the reform countries' economic reconstruction and political stabilization. This serves to reduce the incentive to emigrate. All in all, the policy of calculated inclusion dictated by the logic of self-interested help amounts to letting the poorer periphery share the prosperity of the core of the EU to a certain degree. This is the systemic reason why, when new members join the EU, they stress publicly that their contribution to regional stability benefits the whole of the EU. "Romania will not make any trouble or create any unrest," emphasized the Romanian prime minister in autumn 2006. "It will contribute a zone of stability and security for the whole of southeast Europe."<sup>9</sup>

Admittedly, there are limits to the policy of calculated inclusion. For one, this policy is associated with considerable financial outlays, which can affect its prospects of acceptance in the prosperous core. This problem is made worse by the fact that the policy of calculated inclusion costs money immediately, but its positive effects will only be seen later. Second, if a policy of calculated inclusion is to be successful, the countries of the periphery must be prepared to share responsibility for it. This is a decisive difference between an exclusion and an inclusion policy: An exclusion policy is a unilateral action taken by the prosperous core in relation to its periphery, whereas an inclusion policy can only function as cooperation between prosperous core and periphery.

This leads us to the question of how, and under what circumstances, the periphery is prepared to cooperate with the prosperous core in order to pursue a policy of calculated inclusion. This question is of decisive importance for the European Neighbourhood Policy.

### **The periphery's preparedness to cooperate**

One certainly cannot assume in advance that the periphery will automatically be prepared to cooperate. This is because the EU pursues a combined policy of exclusion and inclusion towards its periphery. First and foremost, what the EU's policy of calculated inclusion means for the countries of the periphery is comprehensive economic modernization and political democratization. This policy may be very much in the interests of the countries of the periphery in the long term, but in the short term, it gives rise to costs that have to be paid by specific groups, especially in terms of higher unemployment and in the loss of previously privileged political positions.

We therefore have to address the question of the conditions under which a country on the periphery will be willing and able to cooperate with the

prosperous core of the EU in pursuing a policy of calculated inclusion. The question of who bears the costs is made even more problematic by the fact that EU policy amounts to a systematic combination of exclusionary measures taken by the EU itself and the transfer of exclusionary tasks to countries located in the less distant regions of the periphery.<sup>10</sup> One area where this is particularly noticeable is immigration policy. Economic support for neighbouring countries is made conditional on their preparedness to cooperate in the sphere of border control, to agree to shift defensive measures designed to deter immigrants onto their own territory, and to participate in deportation chains for illegal immigrants. In effect, then, one component of the EU's policy of calculated inclusion is that neighbouring countries are required to take on responsibility for exclusionary measures directed against third parties. These exclusionary tasks change the relationship between the prosperous core of the EU and its neighbours in a striking way. Performing exclusionary tasks for the EU presupposes a high degree of preparedness to cooperate on the part of the neighbouring country and will bring with it considerable costs: in material terms, because technical measures will have to be put in place at the borders and to deal with the repatriation of immigrants, and in political terms, because traditional relations with that country's neighbours will be disrupted.

This means that for countries bordering the EU, costs arise both as a result of the policy of economic and political modernization and as a result of assuming exclusionary tasks on behalf of the EU. There is therefore an even more urgent need for an answer to the question that has been posed: What motivates the EU's neighbours to cooperate with the Union within the framework of a policy of calculated inclusion, part of which is the requirement that they take on exclusionary tasks?

Up until the moment of eastern enlargement in 2004, the problem of the periphery's preparedness to cooperate with the prosperous core was repeatedly solved in the following way: The prosperous core intervened in its periphery by pursuing a policy of calculated inclusion. The first step was to offer limited participation in prosperity in return for preparedness to modernize and to pay the price of modernization. At the same time, the neighbouring countries were expected to take responsibility for exclusionary measures, in other words to act as a buffer zone between the EU and the even poorer, politically even more unstable and more distant periphery. Readiness to accept the costs of this policy was rewarded with the prospect of EU membership at a later date as a way of strengthening the neighbouring countries' acceptance of the policy of calculated inclusion. This was also designed to make it easier for the neighbouring countries to justify the costs of cooperation in the eyes of their own populations. Cooperation between the EU and its neighbours is therefore based on a political exchange: The neighbouring countries accept the burdens of modernization and the costs of the exclusionary tasks now in exchange for limited participation in prosperity now, and they are offered the prospect of EU membership together with full integration into the prosperous core later. It was only this sequencing of costs and smaller and larger gains to be expected from cooperation which ensured that the populations of the neighbouring countries would be prepared to play their part over the long term.

### **From enlargement to the neighbourhood policy**

The basis of the European Union's current policy towards its periphery is the strategy paper "European Neighbourhood Policy".<sup>11</sup> The point of reference of this document is the 2004 eastern enlargement, which means

that the external borders of the Union have changed. We have acquired new neighbours and have come closer to old ones. These circumstances have created both opportunities and challenges.<sup>12</sup> [...] The European Neighbourhood Policy's vision involves a ring of countries, sharing the EU's fundamental values and objectives, drawn into an increasingly close relationship, going beyond cooperation to involve a significant measure of economic and political integration.<sup>13</sup>

This is an abundantly clear expression of the idea of concentric circles as the classical model of EU expansion. As in the past, the periphery's task is to develop economically and stabilize itself politically, which should (a) result in fewer cross-border problems landing on the EU's doorstep and (b) provide a buffer zone between the EU and its more distant periphery. Emphasis is placed repeatedly on the intention to ensure that no sharp borders between the enlarged EU and its "new neighbourhood" come into being. At the same time, though, it is clear that the relaxation of border regimes between the EU and its neighbours must lead to a build-up of border controls between the neighbours and their periphery. The EU's exclusion policy is thus shifted further outwards and continues beyond successive enlargements. There is an implicit admission that this in turn leads to tensions between the countries that now form the outer ring of EU members and their neighbours:

A Commission proposal for Regulations on the establishment of a local border traffic regime is currently under consideration by the Council and will, if adopted, make it possible for border area populations to maintain traditional contacts without encountering excessive administrative obstacles. The European Union may also consider possibilities for visa facilitation.<sup>14</sup>

The dominant consideration, though, is the EU's interest in setting up a buffer zone and giving the countries of the periphery the task of implementing exclusionary measures: "Facilitation by one side will need to be matched by effective actions by the other."<sup>15</sup> What this means in plain terms is that, if the EU eases the border regime between itself and a neighbouring country, that country must tighten up the controls in place on its borders with third states. Therefore:

the objective of the ENP is to share the benefits of the EU's 2004 enlargement with neighbouring countries in strengthening stability, security, and well-being for all concerned.<sup>16</sup>

It is impossible to overlook the structural similarities between enlargement policy and the European Neighbourhood Policy. In both cases, it is a question of bringing successive peripheries up to the standards of the EU core, and in both cases, more intensive economic relations, aligning the legal and economic orders with one another, and the intensification of all kinds of social relations are the methods used to bring this about and the expression of the fact that it is happening. The reasons for these similarities can be found at two levels. The first set of factors relates to continuities in the personnel involved. A number of the main actors concerned with the 2004 eastern enlargement were also among those centrally involved in developing the concept of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Supply and demand factors are likely to have been the cause here. On the one hand, once the eastern enlargement had been completed the relevant actors wanted to advance their careers further; in order to do this,

they had to open up new problem areas in which they could offer a proven competence. On the other hand, the structural similarities in the problem constellation meant there was a high level of demand for the relevant expertise. "The top task force officials thus all have enlargement backgrounds."<sup>17</sup> These continuities in personnel form the basis of the transfer of ideas and rhetorical formulations from enlargement policy to the European Neighbourhood Policy.<sup>18</sup> Needless to say, individual career interests and the transfer of ideas alone cannot explain the development of the European Neighbourhood Policy adequately. These factors are embedded in an organizational momentum driven by the Commission's interest in accumulating competences at the cost of the nation–states.

The second set of causes of the similarities between enlargement and the neighbourhood policy results from the position of the European Commission in the institutional competition between the European and nation–state levels. The decisive factor here is that the Commission now has extensive and undisputed responsibilities in EU internal policy, but in foreign policy it has to wage a constant struggle for recognition of its competence. The EU's enlargement and neighbourhood policies are characteristically situated between internal and foreign policy. In terms of the initial situation, enlargement policy and neighbourhood policy refer to problems outside the territory of the European Union, i.e. they are in the first instance matters of foreign policy. From this point on, though, their paths diverge. Classical enlargement policy transposed its object from the sphere of EU foreign policy to that of internal policy. This suited the Commission, which had an interest in accumulating additional competences. With the completion of the rounds of enlargement, this mechanism by which issues are transposed from the external to the internal sphere is no longer available to the Commission. But the Commission is still interested in accumulating further competences, and the development of the neighbourhood policy is an attempt to extend the life of this transposition mechanism beyond the end of the enlargement policy.<sup>19</sup> "I admit that many of the elements which come to my mind are taken from the enlargement process."<sup>20</sup>

The prospect that the Commission might be able to extend its competence in foreign policy results from the dialectic of integration and enlargement. The dismantling of internal borders and the funds that are made available and administered at the community level mean that the European Union has reached a level of integration and of shared interests that makes it impossible for individual member states to continue to conduct a distinct policy towards their respective non–EU neighbours. Nevertheless, there are significant regional differences between individual members, or groups of members, in respect to the main focus of their interests in relation to the EU periphery.<sup>21</sup> There is no institutional provision for individual policy initiatives on the part of an EU member state towards its neighbours on the EU periphery, since an individual member cannot decide on the allocation of EU assistance funds to its own periphery; if any such policy is pursued, however, it brings with it such complications in relation to the interests of other member states that, in practice, the individual state has very little room for manoeuvre. For example, a number of member states argue that they should have a right to be involved in decisions on immigration policy taken by the southern EU member states, since they too are affected by these decisions.<sup>22</sup>

The southern member states, for their part, demand that the whole community should share the costs of their immigration policies because, they argue, this is in the interests of all EU member states. As a result of these complementary

positions, there is now a clear trend towards greater community-level coordination of control of the EU's external borders.<sup>23</sup> This means that the deepening of EU integration leads to a more close-knit network of shared interests internally, and this in turn makes it impossible for individual member states to pursue their interests in relations with non-EU neighbours and so increases the demand for a "foreign policy towards neighbouring states" at the community level.

The neighbourhood policy has been designed as an offer put forward by the Commission, a policy that corresponds to the level of integration reached by the EU and will function as a foreign policy towards neighbouring states. It is in the first instance designed to be applied to individual neighbouring states. Enlargements are a matter of the complete acceptance of the *acquis communautaire*, but the neighbourhood policy is different; it involves "special partnerships", which are individually tailored to fit the potential of each bilateral EU-neighbour relationship. At the same time, though, the European Neighbourhood Policy concept does serve as a uniform framework within which a diverse range of individual regulations come together to form a consistent overall EU project, the idea of a "ring of friends". This project is directed by the Commission and represents the introduction of some community-level elements into the sphere of foreign policy.

Overall, the European Neighbourhood Policy does two things: It meets the need to develop a community-level "foreign policy towards neighbouring states", and it simultaneously satisfies the Commission's interest in accumulating competence in foreign policy.

### **The offer of a new political deal**

I interpret the European Neighbourhood Policy here within the framework of the theory of Europe's dynamism as an attempt to extend the prosperous core's policy of self-interested aid to the periphery. Let us recall once again the political deal implicit in relations between the prosperous core of the EU and the periphery, which has produced the dynamism of successive EU enlargements: The EU expects countries on its periphery to accept the burdens of modernization and the costs of performing exclusionary tasks now and offers in exchange limited participation in prosperity now and the prospect of EU membership along with complete integration into the prosperous core later.

What are the differences between the neighbourhood policy and enlargement policy with regard to costs and benefits to the centre and periphery respectively? As far as benefits to the EU are concerned, the ENP is designed to function in a way that is as close as possible to enlargement policy: political, economic, and cultural links to the EU together with comprehensive economic and political stabilization of the periphery. In the relevant EU documents, on the other hand, it is (unsurprisingly) the benefits to be enjoyed by the neighbours that are heavily emphasized:

The objective of the ENP is to share the benefits of the EU's 2004 enlargement with neighbouring countries in strengthening stability, security and well-being for all concerned.<sup>24</sup>

But what about the costs? The decisive difference is that the EU's costs are not as high and the benefits enjoyed by neighbouring countries are fewer. For the EU, the neighbourhood policy brings with it cost advantages in a number of

dimensions: The partner countries do not accept the *acquis communautaire*. The main significance of this is that they remain outside the system of EU funds, that is to say they are not part of the community's redistribution mechanism, and the four classical EU freedoms apply to them only in cases where specific regulations are in force — unlike new members, who after enlargement can only be excluded from these freedoms temporarily and in exceptional circumstances for which reasons must be given. The partner countries conclude treaties with the EU, which means they are excluded from all EU decision-making processes. The neighbourhood policy thus makes it possible for the EU to save on all the costs that further enlargement would bring in terms of intensified competition (especially in the labour market) and of complicating political decision making, be it by unanimity or by majority rule.

What is to the advantage of the EU is simultaneously to the disadvantage of potential participants in the European Neighbourhood Policy: It is difficult for them to gain access to significant financial support, their access to EU markets is a privilege rather than a right, and they have no institutional right to have a say in EU affairs. In addition, they have failed to acquire the prestige that recognition as a potential EU member would have brought with it.

This weighing up of costs and benefits leads to the conclusion that if the political deal offered within the framework of enlargement policy — buffer zone function now in return for membership later — was the decisive factor that made it possible for relations between the EU's centre and periphery to function, and if the terms of this deal within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy have changed in a way that is to the disadvantage of the periphery, then it is an open question whether the buffer zone and stabilization function can still operate in this new framework. In other words: Will the neighbouring countries be prepared to make the same contribution as the framework of enlargement policy required while receiving much less from the EU in return?

Of course, this question can only be posed in these terms if the core problem of the neighbourhood policy, as I have laid it out here, rests on an accurate description of the EU's relationship with its periphery. We must note that the EU itself describes this relationship in very different terms.

### **The European Union as exporter of values?**

In article I-2 of its constitution, the EU describes itself as a union based on "values". It is therefore logical that this should be followed by a statement that commitment to the values of Europe is an indispensable condition of membership (Art. I-1 (2)). There is a similar formulation in the text that sets out the European Neighbourhood Policy:

The privileged partnership with neighbours will build on mutual commitment to common values principally within the fields of the rule of law, good governance, the respect for human rights, including minority rights, the promotion of good neighbourly relations, and the principles of market economy and sustainable development.<sup>25</sup>

Let us put to one side, for the time being at least, the question of whether it makes sense to include "good neighbourly relations" and "the principles of market economy" in a list of "values". Whatever our view of this may be, the



central status given to the export of "values" must be taken seriously in social–scientific terms, that is to say, as a piece of empirical data. For present purposes, there is no need either to adopt this commitment to certain values as our own position, or to question its authenticity from the standpoint of some kind of superior knowledge. Rather, we must look for the causes of the EU's programmatic commitment to the export of its values. What can the approach employed here, the theory of Europe's dynamism, contribute to the investigation of this question?

The theory of Europe's dynamism explains the development of the EU in terms of calculations of interest made by the different actors and groups of actors. The main focus of attention is the interest of the core EU in securing its prosperity and stability by promoting prosperity and stability in surrounding areas. On this basis, we can investigate the export of values as an important instrument used to promote prosperity and stability. This theoretical perspective — that of treating values as instruments — has the advantage that it in no way obliges us to dispute their existence or acceptance (and so avoids any ridiculous posture that insists on exposing values as fraudulent), but it does make it possible to ask questions about the way limits are placed on the export of values as a result of the calculations of interest within which that export is framed. In this framework, one can also understand the curious classification of "neighbourly relations" and "principles of the market economy" as "values": They are preconditions of political stability and economic development in the periphery and thus essential to the interests of the EU's prosperous core. There are three empirical considerations which strengthen the hypothesis that the EU's export of values in the framework of its neighbourhood policy follows the logic of calculations of interest.

First, a comparison between different partner countries reveals that they are treated differently by the EU even though their "value deficits" are identical or very similar. This is incompatible with the logic of the export of values as an end in itself and strengthens the hypothesis that the varying degrees of geopolitical relevance of individual neighbouring countries are more important than the values they manifest. This could explain the EU's reluctance to push individual North African countries to comply with European values, given the importance of these countries in combating immigration and the competition between the European Union and the United States for political influence.<sup>26</sup>

Second, comparisons over longer periods of time show that one and the same country on the periphery can initially be kept at a distance by the EU with the argument that it has a value deficit, only to be recognized later on as a serious candidate for EU membership even if this deficit has not been overcome. From a value perspective, this behaviour is inconsistent. It suggests that a change in the strategic significance of a country or region is a more important factor in determining the EU's actions than problems relating to its values. This could explain why the EU's position towards Turkey's endeavours to join the Union changed after the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.<sup>27</sup>

Third, the EU's relations with some countries on the periphery place it in a dilemma. The export of democratic values can lead to the strengthening of certain political forces in a way that will be detrimental to cooperation with the EU — either because one can foresee that political forces hostile to the EU would exploit the political space opened up by democracy to establish themselves on a permanent basis, or because democratization would lead to a temporary destabilization of political conditions and the costs of this transition period will be too great and their outcome considered too uncertain. "The goal

of short-term stability therefore overshadows the goal of improving long-term prospects for democracy."<sup>28</sup>

All three of these ways of looking at the relationship between the export of values and the interest in stability make it clear that the political stability of the periphery is of primary importance for the EU's neighbourhood policy, and they show that the export of values can only be pursued in the framework of and as part of a policy designed to promote the goal of stability.<sup>29</sup>

I am not arguing that the EU's talk of values needs to be unmasked as rhetoric without any binding substance. This would be both theoretically senseless and empirically wide of the mark, since the EU does indeed try hard to strengthen the protection of human rights, democratic institutions, and the rule of law in its neighbourhood. These efforts are a part of the means to the ends of prosperity and pacification, which modifies their substance (or may do so — this is an empirical question), but by no means renders the export of values worthless. On the contrary: One can argue persuasively that the only way to achieve long-term improvements in the countries bordering on the EU is by spreading "values" as a matter of strategic interest and by means of the interactions between the improvement of democratic standards and greater prosperity and political stability.

The result of this examination of the export of values hypothesis is as follows: The success of the neighbourhood policy depends very much on the readiness of the periphery to cooperate, and this in turn depends on whether these countries accept the offers made by the European Neighbourhood Policy within the framework of the political deal represented by this policy. It is clear from the comparison that the neighbourhood policy offers the periphery less than enlargement policy did. Social scientists examining this policy have already noted: "The ENP requires much of the neighbours, and offers only vague incentives in return."<sup>30</sup> In short: "The carrot is smaller."<sup>31</sup>

This does not amount to a final verdict on the European Neighbourhood Policy's prospects of success. The decisive factor in relation to the neighbours' readiness to cooperate is how they see and evaluate the offer made by the policy on a spectrum of political possibilities. There is no reason why this spectrum must be exhausted by the alternatives of neighbourhood policy or full membership.

### **The neighbours' calculus of cooperation**

An expansion mechanism is built into the development of the European Union. This mechanism is a result of the shared interests and interaction between the prosperous core of the EU and its periphery. The core of the EU has an interest in an economically prospering and politically stable periphery, and this core has grown as a result of enlargements; up to now, this has led to repeated rounds of enlargement. The prospect of EU membership has proved to be a strong incentive for the peripheries, prompting them to carry out economic and political modernization and to take on functions on behalf of the core EU. Enlargement policy thus rested on a political deal between centre and periphery: acceptance of the buffer zone function and the burdens of modernization now in return for EU membership later.

Within the framework of the theory of Europe's dynamism, it can also be shown that although the periphery's commitment to the EU's values plays a role, this has an instrumental character with regard to the core's dominant

interest in stability, and it is this interest that establishes the framework for the export of values from the EU to the periphery. This means that the crucial question for the policy of expansion without enlargement, i.e. the transition from enlargement policy to European Neighbourhood Policy, is whether the periphery is prepared to accept these burdens without having any prospect of future membership — in other words, whether the deal between centre and periphery also works when the conditions are less advantageous to the periphery.

Right from the start, the relevant EU actors knew very well that the success of the neighbourhood policy depended on whether the countries on the periphery would find the offers it made them sufficiently attractive. Therefore, the decisive question is:

The goal of accession is certainly the most powerful stimulus for reform we can think of. But why should a less ambitious goal not have some effect?<sup>32</sup>

What constitutes an incentive that could prompt a neighbouring country to cooperate with the EU on the basis of the European Neighbourhood Policy? It would be a mistake to assume that the countries on the periphery necessarily base their calculations about cooperation with the EU on the comparison between the prospect of membership and the neighbourhood policy. This assumption overlooks the possibility that these countries might have other alternatives, or at least believe they do.

An analysis of the prospects of cooperation between the EU and the periphery must therefore reconstruct the calculations of (expected) costs and benefits made by the countries of the periphery themselves. Reducing the calculations of the countries on the periphery to a choice between membership and the neighbourhood policy would mean assuming that they see no alternatives to the EU. And this would mean treating the exception, dependence on the EU without alternatives (or an absence of competition because the EU is so attractive), as the rule. This would be analytically mistaken and politically naive. The EU may see the situation realistically when it describes itself as "a pole of attraction for its neighbours",<sup>33</sup> but it should not assume when designing its neighbourhood policy that neighbouring countries find it irresistible.

This means that the decisive factors which provide a basis for readiness to cooperate are the comparisons neighbouring countries themselves make between the European Neighbourhood Policy and the alternatives to that policy they themselves see.

In this regard, there are major differences between individual countries and groups of countries on the periphery. It would be impossible to investigate each case in detail here. On the basis of the analysis so far, we can formulate a two-dimensional analytical schema: It is clear that readiness to cooperate depends, on the one hand, on what a neighbouring country actually expects from the EU and, on the other hand, on the alternatives a neighbouring country may see to the offer represented by the neighbourhood policy.

It would be analytically profitable and politically sensible to evaluate the Country Reports that are drawn up in the course of the European Neighbourhood Policy, in order to establish their implications for the cooperation calculations of the EU's neighbours. It would make sense to start

from the following four variants:

– A country expects little from the EU and has few alternatives. The consequence is very little interest in the ENP, especially because the country sees itself as having fundamental problems and does not think the EU can do much to solve them. As a result, the ENP can hardly come into play here.

– A country expects a great deal from the EU and has few alternatives. One indication that a country sees its position this way is that it employs extravagant moral rhetoric to reinforce its expressions of desire to move closer to the EU or to join. This is most unlikely to lead to a partnership under conditions that the country on the periphery will find satisfactory. This may result in irrational reactions that take the country in the direction of political isolation. As a result, the neighbourhood policy can come into play to a certain extent, but the resulting cooperation is unstable because it is accompanied by permanent political frustration.

– A country expects little from the EU and has good alternatives available. A neighbouring country in this situation is in a (relatively) strong position. It is very likely that this constellation will lead to cooperative relations with the EU outside the European Neighbourhood Policy.

– A country expects a lot from the EU and has good alternatives available. This constellation leads to a country persevering in its long-term efforts to join the EU. The neighbourhood policy comes into play in this constellation, but it fails to address the central problem of the European Union: "We cannot go on enlarging forever."<sup>34</sup> The precondition of this cooperation calculation, which leads to stable relations of cooperation as envisaged by the European Neighbourhood Policy, is therefore the abandonment of the central goal of that policy: expansion *without* enlargement.

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<sup>1</sup> Romano Prodi, "A Wider Europe: A Proximity Policy as the key to stability", Sixth ECSA Conference, Brussels, 5–6 December 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Jürgen Gerhards, *Kulturelle Unterschiede in der Europäischen Union* (Wiesbaden 2005); Michael Hölscher, *Wirtschaftskulturen in der erweiterten EU* (Wiesbaden 2006); Richard Münch and Sebastian Büttner argue against unquestioningly accepting the assumption that growing heterogeneity is an obstacle to integration in their article, "Die europäische Teilung der Arbeit. Was können wir von Emile Durkheim lernen?", in Martin Heidenreich (ed.), *Die Europäisierung sozialer Ungleichheit* (Frankfurt am Main 2006), 65–107.

<sup>3</sup> Georg Vobruba, "The Enlargement Crisis of the European Union: Limits of the Dialectics of Integration and Expansion", *Journal of European Social Policy*, 1, 2003, 35–62; Maurizio Bach, "The Enlargement Crisis of the European Union: From Political Integration to Social Disintegration", in Maurizio Bach et al. (eds.), *Europe in Motion: Social Dynamics and Political Institutions in an Enlarging Europe* (Berlin 2006), 11–28; Sonja Grimm and Wolfgang Merkel, "Die Grenzen der EU: Erweiterung, Vertiefung und Demokratie", in Jens Alber and Wolfgang Merkel (eds.), *Europas Erweiterung: Das Ende der Vertiefung?*, *WZB-Jahrbuch 2005* (Berlin 2006), 183–206.

<sup>4</sup>

- See, for example, "Frankreich warnt vor neuer Welle der Erweiterung", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 13 December 2005, 6.
- <sup>5</sup> Karen E. Smith, "The Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy", *International Affairs*, 4, 2005, 757–773.
- <sup>6</sup> Georg Vobruba, *Die Dynamik Europas* (Wiesbaden 2003).
- <sup>7</sup> For a historical and systematic examination of the shifts in borders associated with these processes, see Mathias Bös and Kerstin Zimmer, "Wenn Grenzen wandern. Zur Dynamik von Grenzverschiebungen im Osten Europas", in Monika Eigmüller and Georg Vobruba (eds.), *Grenzsoziologie. Die politische Strukturierung des Raumes* (Wiesbaden 2006), 157–184.
- <sup>8</sup> Georg Vobruba, *Gemeinschaft ohne Moral* (Vienna 1994), 185–187.
- <sup>9</sup> "'Die Rumänen werden keinen Ärger Machen.' Interview mit Calin Popescu Tariceanu über den bevorstehenden EU–Beitritt", *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 4–5 November 2006, 10. Similar references to the functions of their countries in providing stability for the EU have been made by a former Polish president, reported in "Aleksander Kwasniewski im Gespräch: Der Westen scheint müde, wir sind frisch", *Tagesspiegel*, 11 March 2000, 6, and Viktor Yushchenko, at the time candidate for the Ukrainian presidency, "Wir wollen eine europäische Ukraine", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 30 September 2004, 9. For more on this point, see Vobruba, *Die Dynamik Europas*, 23.
- <sup>10</sup> Paolo Cuttita, "Das Mittelmeer als Wohlstandsgrenze", in Eigmüller and Vobruba, *Grenzsoziologie*, 251–257.
- <sup>11</sup> "Commission of the European Communities, European Neighbourhood Policy", Brussels, 12. 5. 2004, COM (2004) 373 final.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.
- <sup>17</sup> Judith Kelley, "New Wine in Old Wineskins: Promoting Political Reforms through the New European Neighbourhood Policy", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 1, 2006, 32.
- <sup>18</sup> Elsa Tulmets, "New Modes of Governance in EU's External Relations: Explaining the Transfer of Ideas and Methods from Enlargement to the Neighbourhood Policy", European University, Florence 2006, unpublished paper.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.
- <sup>20</sup> Prodi, "A Wider Europe".
- <sup>21</sup> Georg Vobruba, "Internal Dynamics and Foreign Relations of the European Union", in Bach et al., *Europe in Motion*, 59–77.
- <sup>22</sup> Monika Eigmüller, *Grenzsicherungspolitik* (Wiesbaden 2007).
- <sup>23</sup> One response to this has been the setting up of a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (better known as FRONTEX), see Official Journal of the European Union, Council Regulation (EC) No. 2007/2004, 26 October 2004.
- <sup>24</sup> "Commission of the European Communities, European Neighbourhood Policy", 3.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* For another similar formulation, see Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006, which lay down general provisions establishing an European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (Preamble and Art. I (3)).
- <sup>26</sup> Michael Emerson et al., "The Reluctant Debate: The European Union as Promoter of Democracy in Its Neighbourhood", CEPS Working Document 223/2005, Brussels, 22.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 12. On the status of geo–strategic arguments for Turkish membership, see Vobruba, *Die Dynamik Europas*, 90.
- <sup>28</sup> Kelley, "New Wine in Old Wineskins", 46.
- <sup>29</sup> It is another question entirely whether the European Union needs some kind of reference to values for purposes of identity–formation (it probably does), and this question in turn needs to be distinguished from that of whether ties to the EU based on values actually exist (they probably do not). On the first question, see Rainer M. Lepsius, "Identitätsstiftung durch eine europäische Verfassung", in Robert Hettlage and Hans–Peter Müller (eds.), *Die europäische Gesellschaft* (Konstanz 2006), 109–127, and on the second, Sylke Nissen, "European Identity and the Future of Europe", in Bach et al., *Europe in Motion*, 155–174.
- <sup>30</sup> Smith, "The Outsiders", 772.
- <sup>31</sup> Kelley, "New Wine in Old Wineskins", 36. The same image is used by Smith in "The Outsiders", 770.

<sup>32</sup> Prodi, "A Wider Europe".

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

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