GeoJournal Library 115

Filippo Celata
Raffaella Coletti *Editors*

Neighbourhood Policy and the Construction of the European External Borders

Springer

Filippo Celata • Raffaella Coletti
Editors

Neighbourhood Policy and the Construction of the European External Borders

Springer

Editors
Filippo Celata
Department MEMOTEF
University of Rome La Sapienza
Rome
Italy

Raffaella Coletti
Department MEMOTEF
University of Rome La Sapienza
Rome
Italy

ISSN 0924-5499 ISSN 2215-0072 (electronic)
GeoJournal Library
ISBN 978-3-319-18451-7 ISBN 978-3-319-18452-4 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18452-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015938318

Springer Cham Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is a brand of Springer International Publishing
Springer International Publishing is part of Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

GeoJournal Library

Volume 115

More information about this series at http://www.springer.com/series/6007

Preface

In the introduction to their *Border as Method*, Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson consider the strategic role of borders "in the fabrication of the world". Borders, they note, "far from serving merely to block or obstruct the passage of people, money or objects, have become central devices for their articulation" (2013, p. 3). Political geographers have begun to turn their critical attention to this "productive" function of borders and border-making, and this volume is an important contribution in that regard, analyzing the myriad of initiatives that make up the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) through the lens of an ever-shifting play of re- and cross-bordering.

As Mezzadra and Neilson suggest, the play of borders should be seen in a frontier-like logic of "the creative destruction and constant recombining of spaces and times", a continuous process of "geographical disruption [and] rescaling" of the territorialities of wealth and power (2013, p. 6). The ENP, as the shifting frontier of EU power and actorness, is a perfect example of such logic, where re- and cross-bordering processes work to produce ever-new constellations of sovereignty, governmentality, wealth and power. The current volume carefully traces some of the geographies of these processes, going "Beyond Fortress 'EU'rope", as it announces in the title of its opening chapter, and looking precisely to the "productive" making of the 'EU'ropean neighbourhood as the EU's extended and extensive borderspace/scape. In doing so, it complicates easy distinctions between the visibly hardening EU external borders and the variety of ways in which the Union's actions and actors spill beyond and across them, noting how such concurrent openness and closure, collaboration and securitization, are not at all contradictory but, actually, part of the very same process/project of the making of spaces for 'EU'rope.

Such a nuanced geographical perspective on the making of the neighbourhood provides an important counterpart to the existing literature in International Relations and European Studies, still strongly marked by 'diffusionist' understandings of the externalization of EU governance and the stretching of EU spaces and actions. As the chapters in this volume highlight, rather, what we are witnessing is not simply a spread of EU actorness across space or into ever wider spaces, but rather a much more complex and fluid process of the reworking the confines of what and where Europe is; a series of constantly shifting, "productive" re-articulations of

European economic but also political-juridical and regulatory spaces. Indeed, as the contributions here note, Neighbourhood region-making, whether in the Mediterranean or at the EU's Eastern borders involves a multiplicity of political and economic projects at a variety of geographical scales, sometimes complementary but often contradictory. The discussion of cross border regions and Macro-region initiatives to which the book devotes considerable attention highlights this very diversity, noting how such making of 'European spaces' is built on a shifting and tenuous balance between integration and exclusion, and an ongoing re-definition of what is to be shared, how, and with whom, choosing to make selectively mobile certain categories of capital, goods, labour and investment.

The analysis offered here also does not forget the wider geographical context for EU actions, for the ENP of course does not exist in a geopolitical vacuum. It is the EU's frontier, but also one where the Union comes into direct competition with other global actors such as Russia, China and the United States, as geopolitical/geoeconomic challengers but also as ideational competitors. The making of neighbourhood spaces for 'EU'rope is hardly uncontested, and indeed increasingly runs into alternative projects of political and economic region-making that explicitly counter EU agendas of democratization and neo-liberal trade promotion (whether in the Ukraine, or North Africa). Such attention to the multiple geographies that both frame and are framed by EU neighbourhood initiatives is crucial in capturing their complexity, and brings to the fore their power as, above all, modes of "productive" re-bordering.

Luiza Bialasiewicz

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the financial support of the European Union Seventh Framework Programme FP7/2007–2013 under Grant Agreement n. 266920: *Euroborderregions. European Regions, EU External Borders and the Immediate Neighbours. Analysing Regional Development Options through Policies and Practices of Cross-Border Co-operation* (www.euborderregions.eu). The European Commission is not liable for any use that can be made on the information contained herein.

Contents

Chapter 1
Beyond Fortress 'EU'rope? Bordering and Cross-Bordering Along the European External Frontiers

Filippo Celata and Raffaella Coletti

1.1 Neighbourhood Policy and the Re-Bordering of Europe

The enlargement in 2004 led to a new strategic investment from the European Union in its neighbouring countries. The European Union (EU) had to deal with three main challenges: first, to guarantee the security and stability of the Union along its new external border; second, to avoid the emergence of new "dividing lines" between the enlarged EU and its neighbouring countries; and third, to strengthen relations with those countries who, although not EU members nor candidates for accession, are of strategic relevance for the geopolitical and geoeconomic reconfiguration of 'EU'rope as a global actor.

The main response from the EU to these challenges was the elaboration of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), firstly introduced by the "Wider Europe" Communication in 2003. The policy was definitively launched in 2007 and according to the European Commission its aims included avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines and reinforcing prosperity, stability and security in the partner countries. To this end, the ENP includes a complex set of strategies aimed at cooperation on the one hand and securitization on the other, and which will be reviewed in the following sections and chapters.

The ENP includes those countries that are proximate to the EU but are not candidates for accession: ten Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria and Tunisia) and six Eastern countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine) (Fig. 1.1).

The final aim of the ENP should be "to share everything but institutions", as famously declared by the former Head of the European Commission Romano Prodi

F. Celata (✉) · R. Coletti
Department Memotef, University of Rome La Sapienza,
Via del Castro Laurenziano 9, 00161 Rome, Italy
e-mail: filippo.celata@uniroma1.it

F. Celata, R. Coletti (eds.), *Neighbourhood Policy and the Construction of the European External Borders*, GeoJournal Library 115, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-18452-4_1

Fig. 1.1 The European Union and its neighbourhood. (Source: designed by the authors)

in 2002. The idea is that relations between the EU and its neighbouring countries should somehow replicate the same degree of integration that exists among member States even though neighbouring partners have no prospect for becoming member States, at least in the short term.

The creation of this new geographical entity—the European neighbourhood—and the idea of bringing these countries 'closer' to the EU by fostering cooperation and their 'approximation' to the Union, has been said to materialize a logic of "concentric circles" (Moisio 2007; Zielonka 2006). The Euro area, the Shengen area, the EU, countries in pre-accession and, finally, neighbouring countries (Fig. 1.2): all of these constitute a sequence of buffer zones where a sort of soft and mobile path toward closer integration with the EU is projected, which is discursively opposed to the hard lines that other EU policies are putting forward and that are often represented by the imaginary of a "Fortress Europe". The ENP is based on the idea of a "wider Europe" with blurred borders: a space of strengthened cooperation based on the recognition of common challenges, common values, a common history and—hopefully—a common future of "friendship", increased convergence and integration.

Such a strategy has much to do with the re-bordering of the EU, of its external frontiers, of its relations with the outside world as well as of its internal and peculiar territoriality, as we will see in the next pages. This is indeed the main issue that we

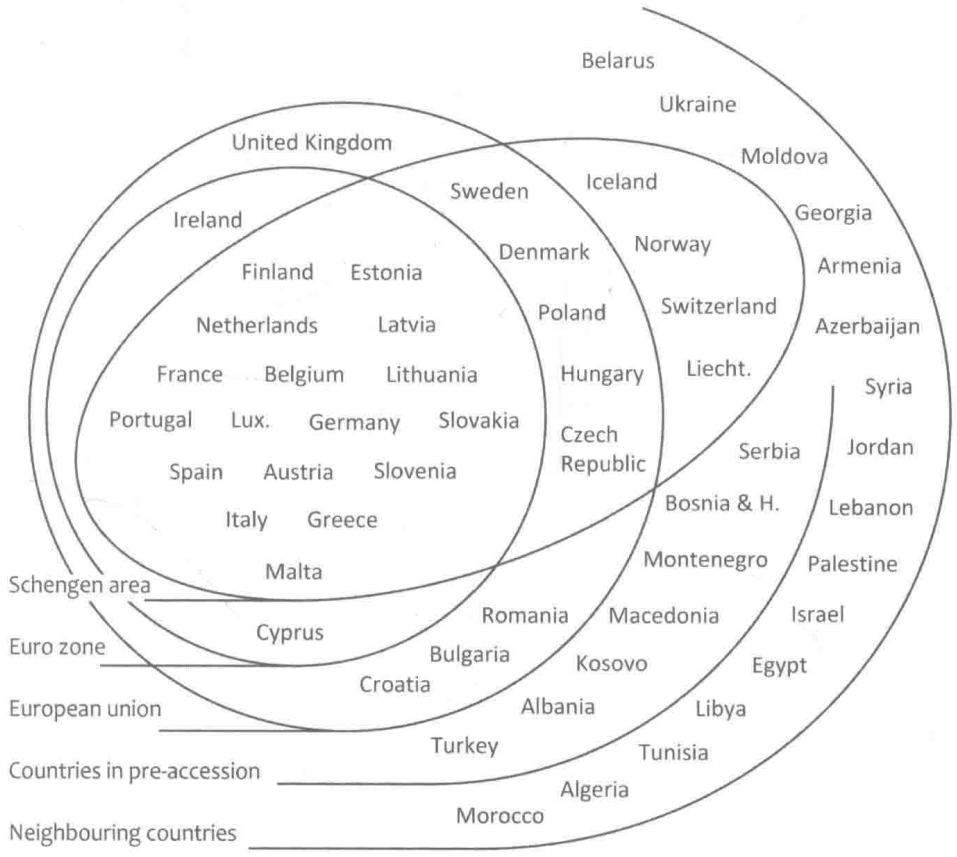

Fig. 1.2 Neighbouring countries and the concentric circles of integration. (Source: designed by the authors)

will explore in the book. This introductory chapter is aimed at giving a first glimpse at the extremely wide variety of ways through which such re-bordering is pursued by presenting the state of the art of scholarly debates on the topic and how we intend to contribute to those debates.

We critically reflect on how a unique policy framework is supposed to deal with the diversity of contexts where the ENP operates (Sect. 1.2) and to promote domestic reforms in partner countries through conditionality measures (Sect. 1.3). Section 1.4 problematizes the ambiguity between cooperation and securitization in EU's relations with neighbouring countries, while Sect. 1.5 deals with the Eurocentric character of the ENP and introduces the issue of bordering, which is explored further in Sect. 1.6. Section 1.7 focuses on the variegated geometries of the European Neighbourhood Policy and on the ongoing regionalization processes across the EU external borders, while Sect. 1.8 discusses (external) Europeanization as a multi-dimensional and selective dispositive and how it relates with the (re-)bordering of the "wider Europe". Section 1.9 presents the structure of the book and introduces the contents and aims of the following chapters.

1.2 A Single Policy for a Diverse Neighbourhood?

The ENP has been the object of a vast debate since its launch and it continues to be so especially after the so-called 'Arab spring' and because of the rapidly changing geopolitical scenario along the Mediterranean shores and in Eastern Europe.

The first issue of the ENP that has been critically scrutinized within policy and academic debates is related to the policy's geographical delimitation. According to this line of criticism, the idea of including Mediterranean countries and Eastern European countries within a single (and invented) geographical entity— that of the "European neighbourhood"—did not take into proper account the high political, cultural and socio-economic diversity of the area, "not only on a country-by-country but also on a regional and sub-regional basis" (Aliboni 2005, p. 2).

Even the European Parliament expressed doubts about "the meaningfulness of the ENP's geographical scope, as it involves countries which are, geographically and culturally, European together with Mediterranean non-European countries" (European Parliament 2007): "You cannot have a coherent policy for such heterogeneous countries" (EU official, cited in: Dimitrovova 2010a, p. 472).

EU institutions are certainly aware of these differences and, consequently, repeatedly highlight the need to guarantee the proper "differentiation" and targeting of ENP strategies towards each partner country. Despite such emphasis on differentiation, the idea is that the EU and its partners share many "common challenges", which justifies the definition of a unique strategy. At the same time, an excessive differentiation of the policy principles and aims could lead to accusations of 'double standards', undermining the credibility of the EU commitment to pursue the same "common values" in all partner countries (Balfour 2012).

Notwithstanding such a common policy framework, one of the aims of the book (see Chap. 3 and 4) is to show how the actual implementation of the ENP results into a peculiar balance between homogeneization and differentiation, policy transfers of the same model everywhere on the one hand, and adaptations to specific circumstances on the other hand (Celata and Coletti 2013). In our opinion, looking at how such a balance is pursued in each case is crucial for understanding the ENP, its strategic functioning, its appropriation by a plurality of actors and its travelling across space and boundaries.

Nevertheless, the extremely wide geographical scope of the policy still remains a debated issue, not to mention the inclusion of Israel in the same partnership with Arab countries, the involvement of problematic countries such as Belarus or Libya, or the decision of a strategic neighbour such as Russia not to adhere to the ENP. Another related and more general issue, as we will see, is the geographical scale at which the EU's external policies should be implemented, given the co-existence and the more recent multiplication of micro-, meso- and macro- regional strategies with overlying and variable geometries across the EU's external borders (see Sect. 1.7 and Chap. 3, 4 and 6).

The subsumption of the Euro-Mediterranean strategy within the ENP has been especially criticized, not only due to the specificity of the area but also because in this way—according to many observers—the ENP risks compromising the perspectives for regional integration and multilateralism in the Mediterranean. Notwithstanding the fact that EU institutions highlighted that the ENP would "reinvigorate" the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, the ENP constituted a shift of EU's priorities from its Southern shores to Eastern Europe (see Chap. 3).

It has been already mentioned, moreover, that the ENP was designed as a response to the EU's 2004 Eastern enlargement. Enlargement not only represents the challenge that the ENP wishes to respond to but it also serves, somehow, as a model for the design of the policy. In fact, the strategy adopted towards neighbouring countries represents a policy transfer from the enlargement approach (Kelley 2006), where partner countries commit themselves to pursuing the objectives of the *acquis communautaire* and to implementing those reforms which are requested to pre-accession countries. The ENP, in other words, is certainly not merely an external assistance programme. As declared in 2009 by Benita Ferrero Waldner, European Commissioner for External Relations and ENP:

> Drawing on the EU's unique range of instruments, we are seeking to achieve a new, innovative style of partnership (…). This is not philanthropy. It is 21st century European foreign policy. (Ferrero-Waldner 2009, p. 2)

Such aid programme, moreover, is not complemented solely by some trade liberalization measures. In previous EU external policies, e.g. the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, 'integration' was interpreted almost exclusively in terms of fostering trade relations which required a certain degree of legislative harmonization. The ENP has gone a step further and proposed, more recently, a 'deep' and 'comprehensive' commercial integration (see Chap. 5) with the already mentioned final aim to share "everything but institutions".

This is one of the main limits of the policy according to many observers. As stated by Zaiotti (2007, p. 152), "the ENP was not developed with the neighbours in mind". The ENP is a policy transfer of the "enlargement methodology" (Gawrich et al. 2010), that is hardly adaptable to those countries with no prospects for accessing the EU nor qualifications for EU membership because they are not "European" countries.

In any case, the request for the adoption of the *acquis* and for economic and political reforms in partner countries is not supported nor justified by an enlargement perspective in the short term. The incentives offered in the ENP framework are too limited to support domestic drivers for institutional reform (Gawrich et al. 2010). The ENP generated, more generally, a gap between the expectations raised by the policy and the EU's "capacity to deliver" (Cremona and Hillion 2006, p. 18). The adoption of the narratives of enlargement and integration, finally, creates ambiguity and false expectations regarding what the final aims of the policy are and what it is effectively able to 'deliver'.

1.3 Exchanging Aid for Democracy? The Problem with Conditionality

The issue of the gap between aims and incentives brings us to the widely debated issue of conditionality in the implementation of the ENP (Kelley 2006; Cremona and Hillion 2006; Boedeltje and Van Houtum 2011; Kramsch 2011), and, in general, as a foreign policy tool that, according to many observers, is largely ineffective.

ENP allocations towards each partner country are very diverse, as we will see in Chap. 3, depending on the highly diversified quality of geopolitical relations between the EU and each of those neighbours. In this regard, there is an increasing emphasis—at least on paper—on conditioning the distribution of ENP benefits towards the implementation of domestic reforms and "good governance" in partner countries (Aliboni 2005).

Previously, within the EU's external strategies, the principle was that of "negative conditionality", i.e. a suspension of relations with countries that have violated human rights. The ENP is instead based on the principle of "positive conditionality": relations will be only fostered with those countries that express their commitment toward political reforms (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005). These reforms, as already mentioned, are not solely instrumental to, for example, trade liberalization, but are considered goals in themselves.

Such a 'soft' approach and the strong emphasis throughout the ENP on the 'civilising' mission that the EU is supposed to play in the world, has brought Ian Manners to define the EU as a "normative power" (2002), indicating the EU's preference for soft power with respect to the 'harder' power which is typical of US policies in the area, for example (see Chap. 7). Within the ENP framework, the approach is normative as long as it emphasizes the need to use aid, cooperation and integration as 'sticks' to promote political changes in non-EU countries.

Such a normative approach has succeeded in keeping relations between the EU and its partners "cordial and constructive" (Emerson and Noutcheva 2005), with respect to the more problematic relations the US has with several countries in the area, for instance. However, the EU "has failed to use its more positive image (…) to set out an alternative reform path" (Youngs 2006).

At times, there is an impression that ENP "common values" alone, as once stated by the EU Commissioner for External Relations, Ferrero-Waldner, (cited in: Boedeltje and Van Houtum 2011, p. 136), are supposed to constitute the "weapons" (sic) for pushing neighbours toward meeting the requirements of the EU and adopting the norms of liberal democracies.

The 'sticks' of conditionality have never brought any relevant result (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005; Balfour 2009). The failed attempts to promote democratization in partner countries are often justified by the scarcity of incentives: "we can't buy reform, we are conscious of the fact that we don't have the money to buy reform" (EU official, cited in Jones 2006, p. 426). European leaders repeat that "democracy cannot be imposed" while—according to many observers—they do not even try to use conditionality properly (Boedeltje and Van Houtum 2011; Kramsch 2011). EU institutions and European countries have often been silent about the lack of democratization in some of their most preferred partners who have even been rather praised for their achievements in this domain. In the years before the Arab uprisings of 2011, "some critics detect[ed] a return to the continent's traditional approach to the region—supporting authoritarian governments in exchange for natural resources and stability" (Youngs 2006, p. 5), and—increasingly in recent years—as an attempt to improve migration management, as we will see in Sect. 1.4.

The 'soft power' that the EU is adopting towards its neighbours, however, seems to be too soft indeed as confirmed by an inability to cope with the recent return of 'hard' geopolitical threats along the EU's external frontiers (see Chap. 7). Such inability confirms most of the criticisms about the ENP framework and its instruments (Whitman and Juncos 2012). The changing political regimes in many partner countries, moreover, has shown what the risk of having governments, rather than countries, as political partners is.

Another frequently mentioned criticism of the programme is the overwhelming role of central political authorities of neighbouring countries with respect to, for example, sub-national authorities or civil society (O'Dowd and Dimitrovova 2011; Scott and Liikanen 2010; Scott 2011; see Chap. 3 and 4), which may be regarded as alternative means to promote democratization 'from below'. The post-Arab spring scenario has shown, however, that democratization is a rather complex process and that we still need to learn how to deal with it through soft means and pro-actively rather than through the 'hard' power of ex-post military intervention.

Not surprisingly then, in Arab countries which struggled for the same 'common values' the ENP is trying to promote, democratic protesters are sceptical toward EU commitment in this regard. While some of those actors perceive Europe as a controversial ally, others think that it may even be an obstacle to democratization.

> The European Union continues to promote an agenda for trade and investments which has already proven to be useless for the developing needs of partner countries and that, if con-

> firmed and enhanced, could seriously challenge the ongoing democratic transitions. (Arab NGO Network for Development, February 2012, translated by the authors).

Recession and the debt crisis in Europe, moreover, have contributed to decreasing the EU's attractive power with respect to its neighbours (Whitman and Juncos, 2012), in parallel with the rising importance of other global players in the area (see Chap. 7). Notwithstanding a recent increase in the ENP budget, the gap between the ambitious policy aims and its ability to effectively reach its goals remain enormous (Balfour 2012).

In Chap. 5 we will see how the EU is trying to renew the ENP in order to respond to this changing scenario on the one hand, and to some of the above mentioned criticisms on the other hand. The issue of 'differentiation', for example, has been reaffirmed and strengthened; positive and negative conditionality measures are supposed to improve and an increasing emphasis has been given to the involvement of civil society. While the scope and novelty of these changes is limited, other issues still remain open and unsolved, as they interrogate the same essence of the EU as a (global) political actor.

1.4 Cooperation, Securitization and the Limits of 'EU'rope

The "dividing lines" that the ENP seeks to avoid are not only those between new and old EU member States and their immediate neighbourhoods but also, more specifically, those resulting from the Schengen Agreement. The ENP is an attempt at preventing the freedom of movement within the EU from being obtained at the expense of strengthening the EU's external border (Beck and Grande 2007, p. 176).

A frequent critique of the ENP, in this regard, is that such attempt is only on paper. The "ring of friendship" that the ENP is trying to promote, in other words, is incoherent with the emphasis on security issues and on external threats such as illegal migration and terrorism (Zaiotti 2007; Lynch 2005; Bialasiewicz et al. 2009). As Luiza Bialasiewicz points out:

> Although the EU may pronounce itself a 'soft' and 'civil' power, its leaders are increasingly explicit about the fact that the EU's various 'soft' initiatives—including the ENP—are aimed also (if not primarily) at protecting Europe from 'hard' threats. (Bialasiewicz et al. 2009, p. 79)

Throughout the ENP, EU institutions try hard to balance this emphasis on securitization by prioritizing other dimensions of cooperation—to contrast the image of a fortress Europe with the idea of a borderless Europe, as we will see in the next pages and particularly in Chap. 4. However, it is difficult to deny that the main aim, especially in recent years, is to use cooperation for the securitization of EU's external borders. The two goals, moreover, are contradictory and create ambiguity in the implementation of the policy (Boedeltje and Van Houtum 2011, p. 143).