

Panel 1: Claiming Partnership? Neighbourhood countries' influence on EU foreign policy

Much scholarly attention has been placed on examining the EU's influence on countries in its eastern and southern neighbourhood, and the EU's promotion of democratic and economic reforms. Neighbourhood countries are often understood as 'objects' or 'recipients' of EU external governance, whose progress in 'downloading' EU laws and norms is analysed. Yet, there have been many instances in which neighbourhood countries have managed to shape EU foreign policy and to gain considerable concessions from the EU, for example in the context of negotiations on Association Agreements (AAs) and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs), on Visa Liberalisation, EU financial assistance or EU engagement more generally. The EU's willingness to make concessions vis-à-vis smaller, politically and economically weaker states in its neighbourhood is puzzling, especially in light of the EU's superior bargaining power in such highly asymmetrical relationships.

The papers in this panel examine how and under which conditions small states in the EU's neighbourhood have managed to gain concessions from the EU and/or shape or influence EU foreign and external relations policies more generally. We welcome conceptually and theoretically-guided contributions on the conditions for neighbourhood countries' influence on EU policy, for example contrasting bargaining dynamics and strategies of persuasion. We especially invite comparative case studies, examining patterns of neighbourhood countries' influence on EU foreign policy.

Panel 2: Tertius gaudens? Third powers and the Eastern Partnership countries

Against the background of a protracted EU-Russia disengagement and especially clash of both parties' positions over the EU's Eastern Partnership, third states have become increasingly engaged with the six countries participating in the initiative. China, Turkey, Iran and the Persian Gulf states, for example, have been developing cooperation with the EaP states on a variety of military, economic, energy and socio-political issues. Engagement has ranged from individual bilateral initiatives (e.g. China-Belarus Comprehensive Partnership, Agreement on Strategic Partnership between Azerbaijan and Turkey, Saudi Arabia's investment initiative in Ukrainian farming land) to more multilaterally-oriented projects and platforms, such as China's Belt and Road Initiative, the Economic Cooperation Organisation or the South-West Transport Corridor project. This has led the EaP states to revise their foreign policy positions and geopolitical strategies vis-a-vis regional powers.

Papers in this panel focus on current (overlapping) strategies of third states in EaP countries, and the ways in which individual EaP states have reacted to them, especially in the context of their relations with the EU and the Russian Federation.

Please submit proposals by Thursday, 17 January 2019 to Dr Giselle Bosse, Maastricht University (g.bosse@maastrichtuniversity.nl) and Prof Alena Vieira, University of Minho (vysotskayaa@gmail.com).

Proposals should include a title, an abstract of 250 words and a short biographical note about the author/s and their institutional affiliation. The UACES deadline is 20 January 2019.