

Evolving Europe: Voices of the Future

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Topic: “Good Governance in Eastern Partnership Policy: Institutional Challenges in Ukraine and Belarus”.

Overview

By and large the European Union (EU) system of good governance¹ has been effectively introduced in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) member states (MS). Its various policy tools, including the conditionality² approach, have shown to be able to influence processes of countries' transition towards democracy and gradually change institutional capacity in governing agencies. More to the point, the EU offered specific technical instruments to benefit from and reform existing institutions of governance in Eastern Partnership (EaP)³ countries. The Eastern Partnership has been the first comprehensive initiative introduced in 2009 into the system of the European Union's external relations,

¹ **‘Governance’** definition employed here means “**the method** of ‘governing’ proposed for obtaining lasting economic, social and institutional development, promoting healthy equilibrium amongst the state, civil society and the economic market, and generating expressly for this purpose active involvement by citizens “. A System for the Good Governance in the European Union”, contributions to the White Paper on Governance. Doctrines of “Good Governance”, according to World Bank: rule of law; stable, coherent political leadership, enjoying trust and legitimacy; competent, neutral and efficient civil service; transparency, predictability and accountability in public administration; mechanisms of voice for civil society participation.

² **Political conditionality** is a strategy of reinforcement used by international organizations and other international actors to achieve political change at the state level. All major European organizations used political conditionality to promote human rights, the rule of law, and democracy in Central and Eastern Europe after the end of communism.

³ **The Eastern Partnership (EaP)** policy initiative was launched in May 2009 with the aim of establishing a political association and economic integration between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Comprehensive Institution Building Programs (CIBP) are expected to develop and improve the capabilities of the partner states' public institutions. CIBP will focus on capacity building in the EaP countries, identifying weak spots and addressing these through training, technical assistance and equipment where necessary. In addition the EaP sets up a network of civil society organisations in the EU and the partner countries.

and designed to help Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine with their approximation to and integration with the EU. The following initiative created a critical necessity to put into operation management structures to advance European integration in EaP countries in order to improve their governance quality: rule of law, clear division of powers, control of corruption and design of impartial, and professional public administration.

Introduction:

It is important, not to say critical, for democratic governance to design institutional constraints to prevent power abuse by government officials and establish effective relationships with existing civil society actors in Eastern Europe. The key challenge in adapting core democratic institution values, especially those related to good governance, to Eastern Partnership countries will be to make them independent of interference by the government in power. Countries covered by the Eastern Partnership are all facing a series of challenges: a crisis of statehood, caused by weak governance, long history of presence of autocratic regimes and tensions in relations with Russia, which is seeking to protect its interests in an area where it has traditionally exercised its power.

Given the lack of membership perspective, the paper will seek an answer whether conditionality tools can promote political reforms in the EaP countries, which are normally poor, often repressive/dictatorial and in some cases caught up in domestic conflicts by looking at the Ukraine. It asks the following question: What is a scope of the impact of European political conditionality on the democratic institutionalisation process in Ukraine? To answer the question, the paper will identify strengths and weaknesses of the EU political conditionality as a policy instrument and its ability to bring change in the area of democratic development by making an empirical review of Europeanisation literature about the conditions under which we would expect domestic change in response to the EU conditionality. Second, it will analyse if those institutional policies, which worked out for accession countries, will work for the neighbourhood countries, here: for Ukraine. Finally it will look at programmes offered to Ukraine within the Eastern

Partnership Framework and identify conditions under which those programmes could have worked most effectively by using the most effective implementation mechanisms.

Section 1. Political (Democratic) Conditionality and Europeanisation literature

Europeanization literature pointed towards important role of the EU in the shaping of domestic political environment and helping to build liberal democratic institutional foundations in Eastern Partnership countries. A communist single party rule in Eastern European countries critically corrupted civic values and introduced sense of biased reliance on governmental support for people's every day-to-day activities. Taking into consideration that the EU was founded on values such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, and the rule of law, EaP countries would in addition be able to benefit from the EU's credible power of being a normative authority founded on democratic values and norms (i.e., from development of shared/common public sense of civic responsibility and civic morality – Boeckendorff paradox).

Conditionality in general, as used in development assistance by international organizations, has been defined as the practice of allocating aid resources to be used consistently with a set of previously agreed objectives (Steunenberg, Bernard; Dimitrova, Antoaneta, 2007). In the European Union, conditionality developed from a minor policy tool used in agreements with third countries, to the main pillar of EU enlargement governance and a successful tool of EU foreign policy (Smith, 2003). It is distinct from the conditionality employed by the World Bank and the IMF, as the benefits which countries receive are not only financial, but are linked to EU membership (see Dimitrova, 2005; Dimitrova and Pridham, 2004; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2005a, b). Analysis suggested that the outcome of political conditionality in the European non-member states has been marginal mainly because of domestic conditions (Schimmelfennig, 2002, 2003, 2011; Vachudova, 2005, 2009; other). The domestic effect is conceptualised as a process of change at the domestic level in which the states adapt their processes, policies, and institutions to new practices, norms, rules, and procedures (Sadurski 2004). Given the absence of general guidelines as how this should operate in

countries without membership perspective, conditionality will benefit from being explored through case studies, in the course of this paper, the case of Ukraine.

Conditionality and Socialisation being two key features of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and EaP have always been structural components of the EU's transformative strategy towards EaP countries. Socialisation strategy acknowledged actors who generated behavior changes by creating reputational pressures through shaming, persuasion and efforts to socialize state actors (Vachudova 2005, Ian Manners 2002). This belief in changing norms in societies also placed the strong emphasis on civil society and cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The scholarly analysis of the ENP included the debates about EU conditionality as a 'reform anchor and motor of change' within ENP countries. Sasse pointed out that second wave of Europeanisation literature focusing on conditionality impact framed it as a process rather than intervening or causal variable. It showed the importance of different actor and issues over time which affected in either positive or negative ways progress for institutional, behavioral or policy change. The main elements of conditionality identified were the incentive structures, the consistency and credibility of conditions, an underlying power asymmetry and the adoption costs (Sasse 2009, 2010). Sasse joined the existing debate about conditionality and showed the limitations and positive challenges of the instrument both for the EU itself and ENP countries, by using neofunctionalist assumptions based on socialization ('rhetorical' entrapment, according to Schimmelfennig, 2004, 2005) and 'procedural entrapment' explanations. From neo-functionalist perspective, 'if an ENP country with membership aspirations meets the EU's objectives and technocratic conditions described in Copenhagen criteria⁴, the EU will find it difficult not to grant membership.

⁴ Copenhagen criteria: 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.

Schimmelefennig and Sedelmeier (2005) distinguish between three explanatory models of conditionality: the external incentives model – a rational bargaining model, the social learning model (social constructivist model) and a lesson-drawing model. From a rationalist perspective, the effectiveness of the conditionality is evidently limited. Rational choice institutionalism follows the logic of resource redistribution and the presence of supporting institutions as the main factors facilitating change. According to Schimmelefennig (2004) and Sedelmeier (2002; 2004; 2005;) the impact of democratic conditionality on non-EU neighbor states depended largely on cost-benefit calculations on the part of domestic actors, where the national government is the main actor. Mechanisms of conditionality consisted of material bargaining and social influence.

In 1995⁵ increasing further the scope of conditions, the European Commission added a number of areas such as human rights or nuclear safety in which the Union itself does not have competences or common rules. These have been so numerous that it is possible to claim that a new enlargement method has been developed (Maniokas, 2004) and a separate ‘enlargement *acquis*’ has emerged including requirements for horizontal administrative reform, regionalization, reform of the judiciary, ethnic minorities’ rights, border treaties (friendship and cooperation treaties), safety of nuclear power plants and so on (Steunenberg, Bernard; Dimitrova, 2007). Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005a) propose an external incentives model explaining the effects of conditionality by suggesting that governments would adopt EU rules if the benefits of EU rewards exceed the domestic adoption costs. They expect the cost benefit balance would depend on four sets of factors. These are the determinacy of conditions, the size and speed of rewards, the credibility of threats and promises and the size of adoption costs (2005a: 12-3). The test of this model on the comparative cases of the new EU member states suggests that the success of the external incentives model differs depending on the type of conditionality, *acquis* conditionality working better than democratic conditionality (2005b: 212-5).

⁵ The Madrid European Council

Bilateral and multilateral agreements signed, diplomatic delegations set up by the European Commission in third countries, autonomous measures such as regulations, decisions on common commercial policy, financial assistance undertaken, communications from the Commission, opinions and also CFSP instruments such as common positions, common strategies, declarations, and statements should be examined when exploring the impact of the EU political conditionality and in order to answer a question: to what extent the consolidation of democracy in the transition countries appeared to be the result of the EU conditionality. The problematic question is whether the Enlargement strategy used by EU might also be successfully applied to non-Member countries. A systematic examination of the limits of the EU's impact as well as its extent is essential, because the effects may not have been as great as supposed. (Grabbe, 2006)., financial and diplomatic aid and intensity of these actions undertaken over time.

According to Sasse, Ukraine's declaration of EU membership to be their strategic objective would potentially work as the 'procedural' entrapment for the EU. The shortcoming of the EU strategy towards its ENP country as the EU's response to Ukraine's 'Orange Revolution' demonstrated was uncertainty within the EU itself as to whether ENP is 'an alternative, or precursor, to full membership'⁶. Sasse analysed institutional instruments of the ENP, such as PCA (Partnership and Cooperation Agreement), Country Strategy Paper, Action Plans, which closely resembled the 'accession partnership documents' and other existing institutional arrangements towards Member countries both for Ukraine and Moldova. She showed the following shortcomings such as absence of benchmarks, timing and follow up (assessment criteria) from the Strategy paper and Action plan. According to the article, despite of existing shortcomings, EU, however, entrapped in cognitive change and socialization in the Ukraine. Key achievements of the EU conditionality in Ukraine included: Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Cooperation, the opening of negotiations on visa facilities, the EU's granting of Market Economy Status to Ukraine and the EU Border Assistance

⁶ Sasse, 2009

Mission on the Ukrainian-Moldovan Border⁷. Moreover, the Action Plan has de facto acknowledged Ukraine's membership prospect.

As EU influence operates through many different actor constellations and its goals are often unclear, so the overall impact can be very diffuse. Along with the impact of the EU conditionality and EU actions the Council of Europe (CoE) and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) were actively involved in the transmission of basic liberal norms independently of and before the EU and did not have any significant material rewards to offer. The EU focused on material bargaining whereas the OSCE and the CE relied on social influence. Both social and material rewards usually go together and the degree of compliance will then tell whether social or material rewards were causally influential. The activities of the Council of Europe and OSCE will not be covered here due to paper limitations.

Section 2. Eastern Partnership Policy and its instruments (regional integration initiatives).

The ENP developed of the last stage of the EU's eastward enlargement as an alternative to the EU membership and a strategy towards transition to liberal democracy and market economy in the EU neighbouring countries. It included the concept of 'good governance', democratization, increased trade and investment and dealt with certain security issues without promise of membership. Since 2002 ENP policy has been identified as the outcome of institutional learning and strategic adaptation on the part of the Commission aimed at redefining and expanding its foreign policy domain (Lavenex, 2004). The Eastern Partnership (EaP) policy initiative was launched in May 2009 with the aim of establishing a political association and economic integration between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. From the EU perspective, the EaP is designed to 'accelerate political association and further economic integration between the Union and partner countries'. According to Tom Casier, the institutional

⁷ EC, 2005b, <http://delukr.cec.eu.int/site/page38056.html>

design of the ENP itself, especially its differentiated approach and lack of finality gives the policy a strong political character. This question is particularly important for both debates on EU-Ukraine relationship and on the EU's "transformative power."

It is a policy based on a differentiated approach and committed to supporting each EaP country to progress in its own way and at its own speed by offering new Association Agreements to those partner countries that are willing and ready to take on far-reaching commitments with the EU and that meet the essential conditions of ENP. As far as Comprehensive Institution-Building Programmes are concerned, these programmes will focus on capacity building, identifying weak spots and addressing these through training, technical assistance and equipment where necessary. Thus the EU will help the partners more intensively than before to achieve the reforms necessary. The Eastern Partnership will provide help to the less developed regions within the Eastern Partner countries, drawing on the experience of the EU's economic and social policies. The idea is to help countries identify economic and social inequalities, and improve economic and political conditions. Multilateral initiatives of the Eastern Partnership will support countries' efforts by providing a framework in which common challenges can be addressed. This will include seminars to improve understanding of EU legislation and standards, sharing of experience and development of joint activities between the countries of the Eastern Partnership where appropriate⁸. For this purpose four policy platforms are introduced: on democracy, good governance and stability; economic integration and convergence with EU policies; energy security; and contacts between people. Regional integration initiatives, according to Van Langenhove, should fulfill at least eight important functions: the strengthening of trade integration in the region; the creation of an appropriate enabling environment for private sector development; the development of infrastructure programmes in support of economic growth and regional integration; the development of strong public sector institutions and good governance; the reduction of social exclusion and the development of an inclusive civil society; contribution to peace and security in the region; the building of environment programmes at the regional level and the

⁸ Eastern Partnership, memo, Brussels, 2008.

strengthening of the region's interaction with other regions of the world⁹. ENP rules transfer is mainly seen in the Action Plans which are defined as an 'agreed agenda for common work' by the European Commission (EC)¹⁰. These are documents concluded between the EU and its neighbors, reflecting the differentiated character of the ENP. According to Solonenko and Shapovalova (2011), support for democracy should be a genuine priority in the EU's policies towards the region both at the political and assistance level. The empowerment of civil society through engagement with non-state actors, democratic governance based on the principles of transparency, accountability and citizens' participation should become an important aspect of the EaP. The same authors stated that despite the many achievements the EU made in setting up new institutions and sectoral integration frameworks, the EaP has failed to produce tangible reform on the ground (Solonenko and Shapovalova, 2011). Further, I discuss domestic situation in the Ukraine and its cooperation with the EU.

Section 3. Ukraine: Geopolitical context. President Yanukovitch and its political comeback in EU-Ukraine relationship.

It is a fact that the post-Soviet elites' preferences for closer relations with the EU are supported by geopolitical motives. Each of the partner states is influenced by Russia as a neighbour and insecurities followed by sharing similar problems of weak statehood along with security concerns related to energy issues and territorial integrity. Therefore, geopolitics is the lenses through which EaP countries view their relations with the EU. All of EaP countries are offered the prospects of 'political cooperation and economic integration' without a differentiation in terms of objectives and instruments. The six partner countries, including Ukraine as a flagship country for the EU, have been offered Association Agreements, Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas, Visa Facilitation Agreements and full visa-free regimes in the long term, based on their progress in bilateral relations. EaP for Ukraine may seem to add little value and in fact it is even perceived as a retrogressive step (Solonenko, 2011). Under the ENP, Ukraine became the only country negotiating an Association Agreement with the EU. So the EaP ends

⁹ De Lombaerde and Van Langenhove 2007, pp. 377-383.

¹⁰ EC, 2006, p.3

Ukraine's "flagship" status and its particularity among post-Soviet countries. Between 2007 and 2010 the European Union provided funding to Ukraine for bilateral programmes under the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) as of 494 million Euro¹¹. The new EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (AA) demonstrates what is achievable in relations with the EU and may motivate the less advanced states to imitate Ukraine's course of integration with the EU. The negotiations of the AA give a sense of purpose, focus and dynamism into bilateral relations with EaP countries. Unlike the ENP instruments, such as the Action Plans, which consisted of 'soft-law', the new Agreement will contain 'hard', legally-binding commitments, the renegotiation of which could have legal implications for both sides. If the ENP Action Plans offer a wide-ranging but vague blue print for domestic political and economic reforms, the negotiations of the AA introduce a much greater degree of specificity and commitment into partners' relations with the EU. In particular, the agreements on Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTA) include a very detailed set of policy prescriptions, that require extensive approximation to the *acquis*¹². There remains a considerable mismatch between the EU's emphasis on rule-based convergence in political, economic and governance dimensions, on the one hand, and the political and economic realities as well as geopolitical aspirations of these countries, on the other¹³.

Yanukovych says that his aim is to balance relations between Russia and the European Union, with EU integration as a "strategic aim". Major difference of Yanukovich team with the previous one is its strong belief about the possibility of introducing criminal methods into political arena. President and official opposition are profit oriented without any strong political values and beliefs¹⁴. Under Yanukovitch regime former Prime Minister Tymoshenko was jailed after being found guilty of abuse of power while negotiating a gas deal with Russia in 2009. EU considered Tymoshenko to be a political

¹¹ Eastern Partnership, memo, Brussels, 2008.

¹² Delcour, L. (2011) 'The Institutional Functioning of the Eastern Partnership: An Early Assessment', The Estonian Centre for Eastern Partnership, No 1.

¹³ Wallace, H. 2009. The European Union and its Neighbourhood: Time for a Rethink. ELIAMEP Thesis, 4/2009, Athens.

¹⁴ V. Portnikov, Ukrainian state models; corporate versus criminal; <http://www.rosbalt.ru/ukraina/2011/11/02/908178.html>

prisoner. Russia intends to include Ukraine in the Customs union already established by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia. The Ukrainian economy's dependence on steel exports made it particularly vulnerable to the effects of the global financial crisis of 2008, and the country was offered a \$16.5bn loan¹⁵ by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Trade with EU countries now exceeds that with Russia. However, Moscow remains the largest individual trading partner. Not to mention that Ukraine depends on Russia for its gas supplies and forms an important part of the pipeline transit route for Russian gas exports to Europe. In 2006 and 2009 a dispute over gas prices rise prompted Russia briefly to cut supplies for use by Ukraine and raised concerns across Europe. Ukraine was the EU flagship country until Yanukovitch came to power. It has to be said that political instability after 2007 delayed and stopped structural and economic reforms (European Commission, 2008a).

Whether Ukraine will end up under control of Russia or within the EU's sphere of influence can set the fate of the remainder of EaP countries. The most remarkable progress is expected in the field of trade and economic cooperation. Ukraine is currently negotiating Association Agreement¹⁶ with the EU providing for deep free trade. Ukraine initialled today (30 March) a landmark Association Agreement with the EU and a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement. Although this is only a technical step before the official signature, the Commission said the move was important for "keeping the momentum" in relations with Kyiv¹⁷. EU and Ukrainian diplomats will in Brussels on Friday "initial" a political association agreement and trade treaty. The act formally closes negotiations. But the Union said it will not sign it into life - the next step - unless Yulia Tymoshenko is freed in time to compete in October elections.

¹⁵ IMF report

¹⁶ Ukraine is the first country in the ENP to negotiate on a Deeper and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) separately from Association Agreement. The Agreement will open the doors for flows of capital and investment into the economy and will facilitate the Ukraine's integration into the world economy. <http://euobserver.com/>

¹⁷ Paul A., EU initials Ukraine agreement 'to keep momentum', 30 March, 2012

It is worth mentioning here that the fact that the EU became involved in the reform process in Ukraine helped to strengthen the civil society for the commitments taken by the Ukrainian authorities with respect to the EU in terms of domestic reforms served as orientation points for civil society advocacy activities. Therefore, the EU requirements, if they coincide with civil society's domestic advocacy agenda, make the voice of civil society more credible as Europeanisation literature suggested. Moreover, regular consultations with civil society organizations initiated by the EU in order to seek input for its annual progress reports, meetings at the EU Delegation to Ukraine with officials coming from the EU institutions in Brussels, and the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, continue to raise the domestic profile of civil society in Ukraine. The research conducted by country's specialists shows that the EU's impact to some extent depends on the degree and character of pressure for certain reforms in Ukraine by its civil society actors.

Section 4. Belarus Double Political Transformation: Presidential System and Consolidation of its Powers; elite transformation: 1996-2009.

I argue that the regime of Belarusian president and those strongly institutionalized governmental structures of the authoritative regime supporting his power remain the most important serious obstacle for political liberalization, institutionalisation and internationalization of 'liberal democratic' values in Belarus.

Belarus declared its independence in December 1991. In 1994, after Alexander Lukashenka was elected the first President of the Republic of Belarus, the process of democratic and economic transformation was stopped and even reverted. Lukashenka's regime encourages only his own power structures to develop, while not allowing any intra-elite faction to have its own electoral machine. Lukashenko has been successful in repressing any significant development of elite, be it parliamentary, bureaucratic, financial-oligarchic, sectoral-industrial or regional (Maturato Kimitaka, 2004:238) during his first term of the presidency. For this purpose, he always appealed to the masses, trying to provoke their anti-elite emotions and attack the elites from above and below. According to Kimitaka, Lukashenko's populism and anti-elitism appeared to be

much more systematic and institutionalised than in other post-communist regimes. By 2006 generational shift occurred and Belarus had nurtured a new middle class, which became the backbone for the regime. The nature of legitimizing regulatory initiatives changed to rational from charismatic (BISS, II Annual International Conference, November 11-12, 2008, www.belinstitute.eu, p.6).

The new elite sooner or later will need a new strategy along with a new decision-making style and new way of adaptability. Such strategy if offered by the EU may serve a basis for evolutionary, nonconfrontational exit from the status of “Europe’s Last Dictatorship”. The forthcoming dilemma that Belarus will be faced in 2011 will happen when Russia launches the oil and gas pipelines bypassing Belarus (BTS-2 and Nord Stream) thus denying Belarus its subsidies in exchange for the security of Russia’s oil and gas transit.

Government

In 1996 reform of the Constitution was undertaken which led to concentrating powers heavily around the President, democratic conditions were undermined in particular by replacement of the democratically elected parliament with a National Assembly with the one nominated by the President but also through repression of the opposition and the media, and interference with judiciary. Authoritarian/personalist regime was established and control over policy and recruitment was consolidated. In the summer of 1996, 70 deputies of the 199-member Belarusian parliament signed a petition to impeach Lukashenko on charges of violating the Constitution (CNN Concern grows over Belarus power struggle, published 19 November 1996). Shortly after that a referendum was held on 24 November 1996 in which 4 questions were offered by Lukashenko and 3 questions offered by a group of Parliament members. The vote passed, but faced international and internal condemnation (CNN Belarus president convenes new parliament, published 26 November 1996). The United States and the European Union, however, refused to accept the legitimacy of the referendum (BBC, Observers deplore Belarus vote, updated 14 October 2004). By most accounts, the new constitution turned his presidency into a legal dictatorship. Nevertheless, for some time, the EU and Council of Europe considered these

remnants of the old parliament as the legitimate assembly (British Helsinki Human Rights Group, a 1997 report on Belarus).

In October 17, 2004 simultaneously Parliament elections and referendum was held, proposing the removal of the second term limit of the president and change of the constitution to allow him to run for a third term in office in 2006.

Lukashenka blamed foreign governments for conspiring against him and, in April 1998, he expelled ambassadors from the Drazdy complex near Minsk, offering them another building. The Drazdy conflict caused an international outcry and resulted in a travel ban on Lukashenka from the European Union and the United States.^[19] Although the ambassadors eventually returned after the controversy died down, Lukashenka stepped up his rhetorical attacks against the West. He claimed that Western governments were trying to undermine Belarus at all levels, even sporting, during the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan.^[20] The European Union was concerned for the security of its gas supplies from Russia, which are piped through Belarus, and took an active interest in the country's affairs. As of 2004, the EU and Belarus share a border over 1000 kilometers in length with the accession of Poland, Latvia and Lithuania.^[24] In September 2008, parliamentary elections were held. Lukashenka had allowed some opposition candidates to stand, though in the official results, opposition members failed to get a seat out of the available 110. The election was seen as "flawed", and opposition members and supporters demonstrated.^[37] However, according to the CIS election observation mission, the elections in Belarus conformed to international standards.^[38] President Lukashenka later commented that the opposition in Belarus is financed by foreign countries and is not needed.^[39]

Conclusion

This paper attempted to explain why and under what circumstances the EU was able to push for improvements in some areas of development in the Ukraine, while failed in others. To answer the questions, the paper looked at strengths and weaknesses of the EU political conditionality under the Eastern Partnership framework in the case of Ukraine.

History of political culture in East European countries has been very much different from the West with its strong political tradition of the unipolarity of power, a tradition that continued to develop further in communist times and existed in different forms up to present time. The paper examined specific institution-building programs¹⁸ of the Eastern Partnership policy, and attempted to explore specific domestic conditions under which those programs could have worked most effectively considering domestic institutional environment.

The research conducted by country's specialists showed that the EU's impact to some extent also depended on the degree and character of pressure for certain reforms in Ukraine by its civil society actors. It is hard to conduct democratisation reforms at times when Ukrainian society experienced double disappointment caused by post-Soviet democracy period (Yushchenko and Tymoshenko government) – so-called, democracy of irresponsibility of those in power and disappointment caused by strong authoritative and criminal regime (Yanukovitch government). Domestic country analysis showed that political instability in Ukraine further blocked economic development. Many legislative reforms are still required and corruption needs to be dealt with. Consultations with the private sector, foreign investors, non-governmental organisations (NGOS), civil society and academia remain limited and happened only on an ad hoc basis. Although often accused of having a 'democratic deficit' within its institutional system, the EU based itself on the democratic regimes of its member states, while for the post-Soviet space as a whole and for each of its national parts (in my case Ukraine and Belarus), democratization is a promise rather than a reality. In order to fully capture the process of Conditionality effect there is a further need to study the behavior of both EU and ENP (EaP) actors and institutions over time.

¹⁸ Comprehensive Institution Building Programs (CIBP) are expected to develop and improve the capabilities of the partner states' public institutions. CIBP will focus on capacity building in the EaP countries, identifying weak spots and addressing these through training, technical assistance and equipment where necessary. In addition the EaP sets up a network of civil society organisations in the EU and the partner countries.

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