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Learning the wrong lessons from success? Why European Union conditionality can make institutions, but cannot inspire citizens

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Citation

Dimitrova, A. L. (2018). *Learning the wrong lessons from success? Why European Union conditionality can make institutions, but cannot inspire citizens*. Leiden: Universiteit Leiden.
Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/64209>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)
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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

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Learning the wrong lessons from success?
Why European Union conditionality can make
institutions, but cannot inspire citizens.

Inaugural lecture given by

Prof.dr. Antoaneta L. Dimitrova

on the acceptance of her position as professor of

Comparative Governance

at the Universiteit Leiden

on Monday March 12, 2018



**Universiteit
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The Netherlands

Mijnheer de Rector Magnificus, your Excellencies, zeer gewaardeerde toehoorders,

It was December 1989, one of those evenings when darkness seems to come particularly early. Bulgaria's communist party leader of many years Todor Zhivkov had been deposed a few weeks earlier. I had taken a taxi to the so-called tent town of protest outside my university where some lecturers were demonstrating for removal of article one of the Bulgarian constitution, about the leading role of the communist party. Public transport being unreliable and taxis rare, the taxi driver picked another passenger to share the ride. As we approached the university, the other passenger took out something from his bag, which turned out to be a pair of handcuffs. The way he absent-mindedly played with the handcuffs and the fact that his destination was the same as mine filled me with apprehension.

That evening and several after it, we were holding our breath, wondering whether the communist government that had been in power for 45 years would send the army against the demonstrations and protests which I also joined. The knowledge of the suppression of protests at Tiananmen square made us feel that seeing tanks in the streets was a real possibility. The battle to have article 1 of the communist constitution removed was won bloodlessly, but I did not know that, in that November evening. Neither did I ever find out for whom my fellow taxi passenger had prepared the handcuffs. That moment and these historic days left me with so many questions. For me, as for many others who took part in these fateful events, investigating transitions to democracy became an obvious and passionate choice.

Half a year later in an episode much less dramatic, but no less thought provoking, I travelled around Bulgaria interpreting for an economics scholar from Stanford's Hoover Institution, working on an economic reform plan for the Bulgarian government. Being one of the founding fathers of US tax

reform in the 1980s, the professor wanted to know whether the small shopkeepers and café owners we spoke to resented paying taxes. He expected they preferred low taxes, no state interference, no regulation. From their answers, I realized the American professor and the emerging Bulgarian entrepreneurs were worlds apart: they hoped the state would regulate the emerging market economy. I began to get a sense of a mismatch between what external advisors or donors might envisage and what people would want or need. My interest in the tensions between external governance and domestic responses was awakened.

Experiences like these provided the motivation and the starting point of a research programme that focused around the questions: what happened with state, politics and society in the transition from communism in 1989? What role did elites and citizens play? What was the role of external actors and especially the European Union in building market and political institutions?

Today I would like to share some of the answers to these questions which my collaborators and I found in a research programme focusing on democratization and Europeanisation. First, I will tell you about the role the EU played in institution building in Central and Eastern Europe, why the Union became engaged in it and what happened with the institutions after enlargement. Next, I will discuss how citizens perceived institution building and enlargement. In the third part, I will highlight more examples of the transfer of governance from external actors across national borders. In the fourth part, I will explain why I believe the EU has learned the wrong lessons from the success of the Eastern enlargement and governance transfer through conditionality. I will argue that institution building is not enough to make post enlargement EU truly united and conditionality does not work in the same way when citizens are critical. In the end I will raise some interesting questions for future research on governance transfer in a global comparative perspective.

The beginning of my quest to understand the post-communist transformations was the democratization literature that addressed directly the processes unfolding after 1989. This was a hopeful and optimistic literature, even as it was unashamedly elitist. Democracies, scholars like Giuseppe Di Palma and Philippe Schmitter argued, could be built 'from above' by elites willing to make choices for democracy. Democratic institutions could be 'crafted' and even previously non-democratic elites could do this, as Di Palma argued, as long as they saw democratization as their best option. The bulk of this literature, inspired by work on transitions in Spain, Portugal and Greece and before these Latin America, focused on the choices of elites in democratization, the sequencing of these choices, interaction with 'the masses'. It stressed the importance of choosing suitable constitutional arrangements and the effects of different institutional choices on democratization prospects.

4 German sociologist Claus Offe was less optimistic. In a seminal article published in 1991, Offe anticipated the complexity of the choices facing elites in post communism, as market economy, political order and nationhood had to be re-built simultaneously. Offe argued that this simultaneity created a decision overload for elites and mutual effects of obstruction between the processes. Building market economy, democracy and state and identity interfered with each other. He anticipated problems: choice overload would prove too much for elites and citizen would lose patience. This article is still required reading for my students whom I always ask: how come democratization in CEE worked better than expected? The only hope, Offe suggested, was external guidance in making the crucial choices. The external actor providing the guidance in CEE turned out to be the European Union.

Countries from CEE applied to join the EU in the 1990s, as fast as they could get their act together. From 1993 onwards, they had an accession perspective, the late 1990s saw the start of negotiations. These were not negotiations between equals, but about candidates taking on the rules of the club. During the

pre-accession period, the EU *acquis* - the policies of the Union - comprising between 80,000 to 100,000 pages of legislation, were imported into the legal systems of the candidate states.

This method of enlargement whereby countries take the EU's rules was labelled 'enlargement governance'. A key tool of enlargement governance was the exchange of reforms for assistance and progress in negotiations, or 'conditionality'.

Conditionality underpins EU enlargement and neighbourhood policies. Its foundations are legal provisions in treaties defining mutual relations: such as the so-called suspension clauses in the Association agreements with CEE which specified that the agreements would be suspended in case of violation of human rights or democratic principles. But conditionality is much more than these provisions. It is popularly known as the carrot and stick approach. It is more than that too. Today conditionality is both a policy tool and a principle underpinning dealings with candidate states and many neighbours.

How did conditionality come to be so important? The key to grasping this is understanding how it worked in Central and Eastern Europe. With a group of scholars gathered by Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, we compared the effects of conditionality in different countries and sectors and explored explanations for these effects. The resulting 2005 volume, *The Europeanisation of Central and Eastern Europe*, became known as the study of 'Europeanisation East'.

We discovered that the effects of conditionality were unmistakable: the EU was successful in inducing candidates to adopt rules and reforms, although there was variation between countries and sectors. We found that the mechanism behind these effects was best captured by a model called the external incentives model. This model expected that governments would respond to conditionality by making a cost benefit assessment. They would introduce reforms, often domestically

costly, only if the rewards outweighed the costs. The model stipulated that the rewards - accession - as well as the threat of exclusion needed to be credible.

Some scholars noted that there was also a socialization effect: some actors from CEE adopted and made their own the normative underpinnings of EU policy: environmental norms of clean air, reduction of emissions etc. However, the external incentives model - focusing on conditionality - generally seemed to explain the adoption of reforms better.

Having established that conditionality worked, as it often happens in science, new questions arose: what kind of rules did the EU promote and what happened to them after accession?

The rules that the EU promoted targeted not only policy, but the very core of the candidates' institutional and political systems. To do this, the EU defined the so called Copenhagen criteria for enlargement, specifying that to join countries need to have functioning democratic institutions and respect democratic principles and rule of law, have market economies and take on board all existing EU policies. The EU also elaborated and promoted principles for developing administrative capacity.

More specifically, many rules candidates were asked to adopt were institutional: civil service and administration rules, rules creating High Councils of the Judiciary, domestic competition regulators, anti-discrimination commissions. Even more importantly, the EU promoted core principles of democratic governance by encouraging the candidate states to include opposition parties in key parliamentary committees, to broaden citizenship and ensure protection of national minorities. In addition, there were *ad hoc* conditions: requirements for closing nuclear power stations in Bulgaria and Lithuania, actions to improve conditions in orphanages in Romania.

You begin to see, I hope, how, by promoting rules pertaining to core domains of democratic governance and statehood, the EU did what Claus Offe considered necessary for the success of the multiple transformations. It provided a model promoting some choices of domestic elites and constraining others. A model of states and democratic institutions as they exist in continental Europe, different from the neo-patrimonial and oligarchic political systems emerging at the same time in Russia, or Central Asia.

Why did the EU do this and was it successful in creating institutions?

The EU was concerned that the post-communist candidate states would not be ready for membership, for example that they would not have the administrative capacity to make the internal market a success. Therefore, the Union acted as a kind of institutional emergency service. The EU's guidance did not come from a grand plan or blueprint for transformation: many of the reforms and assistance evolved *ad hoc*, during the negotiations, when weaknesses in a certain area came to light.

As we discovered, by and large, the countries did adopt the rules and reforms the EU recommended and required. For example, I assessed compliance with the EU's so-called administrative conditionality requiring candidate states to establish Weberian style, politically neutral administrations, with merit-based recruitment. In the late 1990s and 2000s, most candidate states adopted laws and took measures to ensure that this happened. This was an impressive response to conditionality, especially compared to other cases of its use: IMF or World Bank conditionality had been around for years, but analyses showed that it did not have so much effect in inducing countries to undertake reforms.

Conditionality and enlargement were a success also because the negative outcomes for the internal market or EU decision-making did not materialise. This was one of our findings from

a research project financed by the EU's FP 7 programme, entitled 'Maximizing the Integration Capacity of the European Union: Lessons and prospects for enlargement and beyond', (MAXCAP). In MAXCAP, we found that threats of deadlock in decision making did not materialize, nor did policy compliance suffer, due to the enormous investment from candidate states and EU in enlargement as a political and modernization project.

The EU's approach was seen as so successful that the term 'transformative power' was coined to describe the effect of conditionality on the candidates (Grabbe 2006). The EU Commissioner for enlargement at the time, Olli Rehn, started referring to enlargement as the EU's most successful foreign policy tool.

6 Of course, there were questions about the durability of governance transfer after accession. Both the scholarly and policy communities thought all this was too good to be true.

Were the new rules *Potemkin villages* or, as I called them, 'empty shells'?

LSE colleague Ulrich Sedelmeier hypothesized that if conditionality depended on incentives and sanctions, the moment these stopped, reforms would be reversed. In MAXCAP research, he found that was not the generally case: compliance with EU *acquis* remained high, supported by the institutions developed during enlargement. In fact, the MAXCAP project confirmed what Dimiter Toshkov showed in his doctoral dissertation: implementation of the EU *acquis* was good in CEE states.

Here you must be wondering: but what about current developments in Poland and Hungary, problems with rule of law and the 'illiberal democracy' model that their governments champion with actions that have brought the term 'backsliding' in fashion? These developments certainly overshadow the

success of EU enlargement. At the same time, there is a certain expectation that the EU can fix these backsliding democracies. Because of the success in enlargement we overestimate what conditionality can do. I will revisit this point later and explain why this may be the wrong lesson from the success of conditionality. But let's first examine what happened to the institutions in CEE after accession.

In exploring this question I started from the work by Douglas North and Elinor Ostrom, both Nobel prize winners for their work on institutions. For North, institutions are 'rules of the game in society, the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction' (1990: 3). Ostrom defined institutions as 'the prescriptions that humans use to organize all forms of repetitive and structured interactions' (2005: 3).¹ Ostrom distinguished between formal rules that are enforceable by third parties and 'rules-in-use' - also called informal rules by others - often unwritten and not enforceable by third parties. She suggested in rule of law systems formal and rules-in-use were closely aligned. I defined institutionalization as a process where external imported rules and rules-in-use by domestic actors align closely.

Inspired by this theoretical work, in an article published in the *Journal of European Public Policy* in 2010, I argued that we should research institutionalization by exploring all possible outcomes: namely that rules domestic actors use would align with the imported rules, that actors would reverse imported rules after accession, or de-couple rules-in-use from formal rules. I theorized that the fate of the new institutions would depend on the interests and preferences of sectoral actors as well as government using the new rules.

Subsequently I explored empirically the different scenarios in different policy sectors. Together with other case studies, we found a variety of outcomes: in some cases, formal rules and rules in-use aligned and true institutionalization resulted: for example, in the environmental sector. In other cases, imported

formal rules were reversed: that happened, for example, with provisions for politically neutral appointments at high administrative posts. Sometimes the rules were ignored or there was a de-coupling between formal and informal rules. In case you are wondering what de-coupling is, organisations present different rules to the outside than they actually use. It can be illustrated with the old joke about relations between workers and employers under communism: they are pretending to pay us and we are pretending to work.

The essence of institutions, however, is that they affect people's behaviour. Rules have to be meaningful for citizens if they are to really become institutions. But how did citizens perceive enlargement and the new institutions?

In the MAXCAP project, together with Elitsa Kortenska and several country teams, we empirically identified discourses on enlargement in six countries: two member states, the Netherlands and Germany, two recent members: Poland and Bulgaria, and two candidates, Serbia and Macedonia.

To start with, citizens of the new member states were more aware of requirements and policies of the EU as they experienced the reforms during accession preparation. Many candidate states also held referenda on membership in which political leaders needed to explain the reforms and the choice for Europe.

We found that new member state citizens had expectations for economic improvement, but also for better governance, governance based on impartial institutions. We also documented statements voicing a sense of unrealized opportunities: for example, village respondents in Bulgaria expressed regrets for the lack of economic opportunities for them combined with a strong desire to exclude Turkey from future enlargement.

And how did the citizens of the older member states who were hardly aware of these changes, experience enlargement?

We found that citizens from the Netherlands and Germany objected they had never been consulted on enlargement decisions. They felt insufficiently informed about enlargement. This is not surprising: especially in the West of Europe leaders seem to have made a concerted effort to keep enlargement outside the domain of political debates. For example, former director for accession negotiations in the European Commission Pierre Mirel pointed out there had been only two debates on Eastern enlargement in the French parliament during the whole period of negotiations.

In the Netherlands, perceived or real job losses mattered to the respondents who expressed criticism of enlargement. Exposure to workers from the new member also had an effect. An earlier quantitative analysis by Toshkov and Kortenska showed that there was a link between exposure to CEE migrants and votes against the EU constitutional treaty in the Dutch referendum of 2005.

Enlargement clearly did have consequences. These consequences have become more visible after the transitional restrictions on freedom of movement have been removed. For Central and Eastern European citizens freedom of movement was a crucial gain, not only because of the right to work elsewhere, but because it was what they had missed for so long: freedom. For citizens of the older member states, enlargement and freedom of movement brought changes, which not all citizens were prepared for, due to the lack of political debate and information.

Furthermore, it is possible that citizens that are critical of enlargement in the West of Europe experienced it as a negative aspect of globalization. According to recent findings of an analysis by Catherine de Vries with the Bertelsmann Foundation, the free movement of workers is a key dimension of globalization citizens identify. According to the same Bertelsmann study, 44% of respondents consider globalization a threat. The Bertelsmann report nuances this by pointing

out that, a majority (66%) state they have had quite good experiences with regard to the accessibility of affordable goods and services.²

Results from the regular Eurobarometer surveys paint a similarly contradictory picture: while according to the most recent edition the free movement of citizens and goods gathers the highest support by 81% of EU citizens, enlargement is the least supported among EU priorities; only 42% support future enlargement while 47% are against. The lack of sufficient public support for enlargement persists already for some time. It is likely that both perceived job losses and identity threats play a role in the assessment of potential accession of candidates from the Western Balkans. There is also other evidence - the outcome of the 2016 Dutch consultative referendum - that policies similar to enlargement such as the Association agreement with Ukraine - are increasingly questioned by citizens.

These conflicting trends merit further research and reflection. Current scholarly debates on globalization suggest that it polarizes the population into winners and losers (Teney et al. 2013), losers being those citizens who perceive their chances to be diminished by it. Scholars suggest that objective socio-economic characteristics of losers of globalization (e.g. education, employment, age) are coupled with subjective perceptions of threat to their identity (Kriesi et al. 2013; Teney et al. 2013: 3).

Addressing such subjective perceptions is hard. Furthermore, dealing with the effects of freedom of movement is exacerbated by the fact that debate on policy responses is often taken over by nationalists or populists. If there are pupils in Dutch schools who do not have the opportunity to learn well because they commute from other member states, this is certainly a public policy issue to address, but not via '*meldpunt overlast Central en Oost Europa*', the hotline established by Geert Wilders for reporting problems with Eastern Europeans in the Netherlands.

If declining public support affects only enlargement and enlargement can be taken off the table, why should we care?

The reason why we should pay attention to citizen responses to governance transfer is that there are more occasions of importing rules across national borders. When actors engage in long-term interactions across borders in which institutional rules and policies are transferred, this process can be labeled *governance transfer*. For example, rules enforcing international trade agreements. In my definition, governance transfer involves systematic interactions across borders which involve rules and engage, empower or constitute non-governmental actors next to governments. External actors can interact with civil society, experts, church or community leaders. Interactions and interventions, on the other hand, that are not structural and repeated over time, for example the imposition of sanctions or use of energy for geopolitical ends, are not governance transfer. Thus defined, the governance transfer concept comes close to the external governance defined by Sandra Lavenex and Frank Schimmelfennig. However, in my conceptualization governance transfer is a process that often involves asymmetry of power or expertise. There is also variation in tools and in how successful governance transfer is.

Consider these examples:

First, the eurozone sovereign debt crisis and the work of the so-called Troika of the IMF, the European Commission and the ECB in Ireland and Greece. The EU, together with the IMF, provided assistance coupled with strong conditionality to these countries: the essence of the approach to fix the problems that led to the crisis was the provision of incentives (financial support) in exchange for progress in reform. While the approach worked in Ireland, for Greece, conditionality appeared not to achieve much. EU external guidance bore many of the hallmarks of the approach developed during EU enlargement, but it found little resonance among Greek elites or citizens.

The second example of EU governance transfer is the European neighbourhood policy, created in 2006, following the enlargement blueprint. In Ukraine, one of the countries targeted by the ENP, however, reforms did not proceed with such rapid steps as they had done in Poland or the Czech Republic. Reforms even faltered, as the EU discovered in 2013 when former Ukrainian President Yanukovich refused to sign the long negotiated association agreement with the EU. Even after the dramatic events of the *Euromaidan* and the signing and finally ratification of the agreement, adopted rules are rarely institutionalized, and reforms are only partially implemented in Ukraine. For example, in December 2017, the EU and US had to intervene to prevent the Ukrainian parliament from passing a draft law controlling the National Anti-corruption bureau of Ukraine and firing its head, Artyom Sitnik.

Clearly, the mechanisms behind EU conditionality work less well in the neighbourhood: we explore the reasons why in the Horizon2020 project ‘The EU and Eastern partnership countries: An Inside-out analysis and strategic assessment’ (EU-STRAT). The Leiden EU-STRAT team has been investigating what factors shape citizen perceptions and preferences on regional integration or external cooperation. EU-STRAT also compares Russia’s mode of governance transfer and its tools, which involve less conditionality and more informal connections with societal actors and disinformation tools.³

Third example, back to enlargement, here and now. On 7 November 2017 the chief of the police corps of Rotterdam gave an *Nieuwsuur* interview reporting he visited Albania to discuss cooperation against Albanian criminal networks. The visit was prompted by the realisation that Albanian criminals have been taking over the mafia business in heroin trade in Rotterdam harbour. The chief of police was expecting cooperation because, as he stated, Albanian authorities were working to join the European Union. This is a clear example

of enlargement conditionality used as a tool to achieve specific policy goals by referring to potential accession, even though you will never catch anyone from the Dutch government publicly stating that Albania is a credible candidate for accession. Nor will the government engage in a public debate about the ongoing negotiations with, for example, Serbia.

The process is, however, in motion and recently new steps have been taken. The European Commission proposed a new strategy for the Western Balkans in February 2018, for the first time proposing a target date for some candidates, 2025. The process is defined as merit-based and benchmarks and enlargement conditionality are key tools again.

Let me be clear: I am in favour of accession by Western Balkan candidates for regional stability and peace, but also as it gives the citizens of the region the best chance to realise improvements in governance they badly need. However, based on critical reflection on the evolution of the enlargement method of governance transfer, I do not believe the same method, with even more conditionality, can achieve the needed reform results.

My argument is that we need to consider whether we have learned the wrong lessons from the success of enlargement conditionality in terms of both research findings and current policy.

In terms of research findings, our expectation that the EU can continue to be a transformative power has been a product of findings based on a comparative case research design in which a number of factors influenced outcomes in a similar direction. We analyzed the CEE cases as they became historically available in the 1990s. But the situation in the late 1990s and early 2000s was uniquely favourable, a happy conjunction of historical circumstances. It was also quite different than it is now, in terms of geopolitics, ideas and public opinion.

Geopolitically, in the 1990s, the EU was the only game in town for post-communist states in terms of regional integration and cooperation. Both geopolitical and ideational factors worldwide appeared so favourable that Francis Fukuyama argued that the world was about to reach the end of the road of history in terms of models for development. Liberal democracy had become the final destination.

That clearly did not happen, in fact, at present we witness threats to democracy and stability in Europe to make one wonder if the end of *history of liberalism* is in sight. Backsliding in Central and Eastern Europe, instability and conflicts in the EU's neighbourhood, where, as *The Economist* put it, the EU faces a circle of fire instead of a circle of friends.

In terms of current policy, the politicization of EU policies including enlargement, is, in my view, the most important difference with the 1990s. Political parties on the extreme right or left can and do mobilise citizens feeling as losers of globalisation. It is an illusion to think that such citizens will not find an (electoral) outlet to protest or stop the ratification of potential accession treaties. The position of EU member state governments, that insist on far reaching reforms in candidate states in exchange of (the promise of) accession, becomes less credible or simply hypocritical.

For conditionality to work, both the promised reward and sanctions must be credible. But here the lack of domestic debate and the increasingly unresponsive public opinion come into play. With serious opposition, domestically, in key member states, such as the Netherlands, the credibility of conditionality diminishes.

At the same time, the rise of the ideas and practice of the so-called 'illiberal democracy' in Central and Eastern European EU member states is a major cause for concern. There is a populist turn towards an imagined past, after decades of looking to the future. As Ivan Krastev commented in *The New*

York Times in December 2017, the populists of Central and Eastern Europe aspire to keep society frozen as a reaction to change while their electorate does not seem to care if they fulfil their policy promises. Illiberal civil society seems to rise. As Venelin Ganev wrote recently, *Homo Post-Sovieticus* inherited some features of the *Homo Sovieticus*: uncivil competences and actions.

But can the EU do something about these trends? Many have suggested the EU should develop a much more robust response to the erosion of democratic institutions in Hungary or Poland. We expect the EU to fix these democracies, with the President of the Commission swooping down from the sky like the *Deus ex machina* from ancient Greek tragedies, whereby, as Wikipedia tells us, 'a seemingly unsolvable problem is suddenly and abruptly resolved by the inspired and unexpected intervention of some... character. Its function can be to resolve an otherwise irresolvable plot situation, to surprise the audience, to bring the tale to a happy ending, or act as a comedic device.'

I hope that the EU does not become a comedic device in Hungarian or Polish current government circles.

While I certainly believe that the Union should explore available options for limiting economic transfers and political support for illiberal regimes, the EU should not, in my view, be expected to fix them. The erosion of democracy that these political systems experience is rooted in societal and political economy processes and linked to the rise of specific elites and constituencies. If the EU were to systematically influence such deep societal and political relations, it might destroy the very democracy it tries to rescue, in the sense that its rules would support it from the outside, as an exoskeleton. We can refer here again to Ostrom (2005: 130) citing experiments with groups subjected (or not) to external rules. These experiments established that while groups provided with external rules performed initially better, later, external rules crowded out cooperative behavior and thus impeded internal norm

formation. The period of external governance transfer to CEE should not last forever - societies should make their own steps towards internal norm formation. Citizens in the region should do well to heed German legal scholar Rudolf von Jhering's perspective on the struggle for law, courtesy of Bulgarian scholar and friend Kristian Takov:

A principle of law won without toil is on a level with children brought by the stork: what the stork has brought, the fox or the vulture can take away again. But from the mother who gave it birth, neither the fox nor the vulture can take the child away; and just as little can a people be deprived of the laws or institutions which they have had to labour and to bleed for, in order to obtain. (1915: 19).

Let me re-cap:

The European Union supported institution building in candidate states quite successfully, but governance transfer has reached its internal and external limits. In terms of the ongoing enlargement negotiations, conditionality targeting governments, is simply not meant to inspire citizens. This is a serious problem, since permissive consensus for European integration has been replaced by, in Hooghe and Marks' term, 'constraining dissensus'. Moving further with enlargement without domestic debate in the existing member states or candidates fuels suspicions that EU elites disregard citizens.

Yet for the EU, conditionality's past success has led to a tendency to apply more and more of it externally, towards the next group of candidates. More conditionality without a real promise for accession may be counter-productive and result in a situation similar to that old communist joke I mentioned: candidate state governments would pretend they are reforming and we would pretend that we will accept them.

Internally, in the Union now, the unification of Europe remains incomplete as there has been insufficient debate as to what the

new 'Europe undivided' (Vachudova 2005) means for citizens across east and west, north and south. If we want to keep the EU united, the EU leaders should consider engaging in a communicative discourse of what Europe means as suggested by Vivien Schmidt. The example of *EU-handshakes* process in Sweden is, as commentator Caroline de Gruyter has suggested⁴, one innovative way to initiate a dialogue with citizens about their wishes and ideas on the shape of Europe of the future.

With respect to the newer member states, dialogue with them as equals appears quite limited. Some prominent voices such as former Estonian President Thomas Ylves or Slovak MEP Edward Kukan even speak of a patronizing attitude from the older member states or of being treated as 'second hand citizens'. A patronizing attitude does not support socialization into common norms and values, because these are usually adopted in equal settings. Furthermore, for populists in the newer member states, the sense of being approached as second-class citizens provides a convenient excuse for engaging in nationalistic rhetoric.

We should bear in mind that the Cold War's propaganda stereotypes have not disappeared from public memory. Even students sometimes refer to 'Eastern bloc countries'. Consider the weather report. If the area where recent member states Bulgaria and Romania are located is mentioned at all, it is with a vague wave of the hand and the label '*Griekenland en de Balkan*' - Greece and the Balkans. Other recent member states - for example the Czech Republic or Slovakia - are never mentioned.

Now I am not pleading for special five seconds dedicated to Slovakia in the Dutch weather report. Bulgarian meteorologists are similarly vague on where the rain falls in Western Europe. What these examples suggest is that for many, the other side of the EU is still off their mental maps, like the unknown territories of old, where the map says: 'Here be dragons'.

Enlargement did not ‘make’ Europeans across east and south, north and west in the EU. We should not expect that it would, as it would require societal engineering on a scale comparable to the efforts ‘create’ the ‘socialist man’. But we should certainly consider what - policy measures, initiatives and debates - could replace mutual ignorance.

We should explore under what conditions citizens may activate a European identity next to their national one. Guerra and Serricchio (2014), for example, found that people who have travelled and taken advantage of the EU’s freedom of movement became more pro-European - a phenomenon labelled ‘experienced identity’.

More broadly, we need to investigate different types and effects of governance transfer. Governance transfer may be a disruption to established institutions and policies in highly developed democracies, but it may also improve citizen lives elsewhere. We need to consider how authoritarian actors go about governance transfer? Does governance transfer increase globalization or tame it with rules? Specific external rules such as trade agreements need to be investigated with a view to their effect on domestic institutions and policies. How much *policy space* - a term coined by Harvard economist Dani Rodrik - do regional or global trade agreements leave for national policy makers? What are the citizen responses to governance transfer in different settings? These are important questions and exciting lines of comparative inquiry. I look forward to exploring them.

In science but also in life, there are always more people who make us who we become than we can acknowledge. So, my words of thanks are necessarily limited, but my gratitude and appreciation of people providing inspiration and support, are not.

I would like to begin by thanking the Executive Board of Leiden University for appointing me at the chair for

Comparative Governance at the Institute for Security and Global Affairs. I warmly thank Sandra Groeneveld, Kutsal Yesilkagit and Edwin Bakker who have actively supported this appointment and ensured that it became a reality. I would also like to thank Theo Toonen, who welcomed me to the FSW, David Lowery and Rene Torenvlied from whom I have learned different things about academic leadership. And, one more professor from Leiden University that I have never met, but am grateful for: Sophia Antoniadis: thanks for hanging in there!

Two people who have been examples and mentors deserve special mention: Philippe Schmitter, supported me from the time I was a Master’s student. And my teacher in Europeanization, Adrienne Héritier, an inspiration with her rigour and supportive attitude.

As I mentioned I have been part of an intellectual community of social scientists dedicated to exploring post-communist transformations, I would like to thank many scholars from this community: Venelin Ganev, Ivan Krastev, Rilka Dragneva, Adam Fagan, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, Petr Kopecky, Maria Spirova.

I am grateful for the long-standing collaboration with Frank Schimmelfennig, Ulrich Sedelmeier and Tanja Boerzel, with whom we developed the MAXCAP and EU-STRAT projects. And thanks to Ellen Mastenbroek, who provided support with data collection and the unexpected bonus of a shanty choir.

Scientific work for me is about intellectual exchange and learning new things in collaboration: for this, I would like to thank the team of colleagues in Leiden: Dimiter Toshkov, Honorata Mazepus, Elitsa Kortenska. Looking forward to promising future collaboration, I would like to thank my colleagues at ISGA who have warmly welcomed me: especially Bibi van der Berg, Sanneke Kuipers, Caroline de Ruyter and Madeleine Hosli.

I would like to thank the enthusiastic students of this faculty for the questions they have asked me through the years that have forced me to sharpen my arguments and explain them better.

My final thanks are to my family, which comprises many different people. My father and my mother, who would have been proud in their own different ways, one being more surprised than the other.

My family in the Netherlands, it is so special to have you standing in for my parents here and sharing the joy of this day. My family in Bulgaria, my uncle and close friends and especially the friends who jumped on a plane from Sofia, Dublin, New York, Rennes and Birmingham to be here: your support means a lot to me, now and always!

Scholarship is for me also about the joy of discovery and the challenge of looking for the next one. When it comes to these there is one person I need to thank above all. My partner Bernard. For so much more than I can name here. But, in this setting, for the difficult questions and pushing me not to be satisfied with easy answers. For unwavering support in my journey of discovery and not doubting me even when I doubt myself. For the intellectual partnership and the joy of exchanging ideas.

Last but by no means least, my children, for your support and teamwork, for being here and being who you are. And for sharing the dream of united Europe with me.

Ik heb gezegd.

Notes

- 1 Both North and Ostrom included, over time, additional components next to rules in their conceptualization of institutions. North added informal norms of behaviour and shared beliefs about the world (North Wallis and Weingast 2009: 15). Ostrom integrated experimental findings in her conceptualization. For example, she stressed that in open strategic situations actors would take into account norms such as reciprocity, trust and equity.
- 2 Globalization and citizens: Threat or opportunity. (<https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/topics/aktuelle-meldungen/2018/januar/europeans-see-the-eu-as-a-protective-umbrella-in-the-era-of-globalization/>)
- 3 Complementing this line of inquiry, in the Capturing Bias project part of the NWA, together with Prof. Lora Aroyo's computer science group, we aim to find whether bias in news (potentially influencing citizens in the region) can be identified through computer-human interactions.
- 4 Caroline de Gruyter, 'Kijk die Zweden nu eens!' NRC Handelsblad, 13-14 januari 2018, p. 17.

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