T.C.
ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

# THE EU'S DIFFERENTIATED DEMOCRACY PROMOTION POLICIES IN UKRAINE AND GEORGIA: THE EFFECTS OF RUSSIA AS AN ILLIBERAL REGIONAL POWER

Ph.D. DISSERTATION

**TUĞÇE YILDIZ**

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ANKARA, 2021

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ANKARA, 2021

# APPROVAL PAGE

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……

# DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this thesis has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work; otherwise, I accept all legal responsibility.

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**Signature:**

As I was writing these lines, the whole world and my country were struggling with many tragic disasters from the virus epidemic to earthquakes, from forest fires to floods, which have surrounded us in an abrupt way. And during these days when materiality has lost its meaning completely, I dedicate my thesis to every moral value, to the faith, to the freedoms, to all emotions, to the invisible ties among us and to the love
- unconditional love -.

To the days when we can hug to the fullest nature, animals, and each of us.

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# ABSTRACT

THE EU'S DIFFERENTIATED DEMOCRACY PROMOTION POLICIES IN UKRAINE AND GEORGIA: THE EFFECTS OF RUSSIA AS AN ILLIBERAL REGIONAL POWER

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After the end of Cold War, the EU has ascribed itself the leading role of promoting democracy across the world not only through tying democracy clauses in agreements with third parties but also through allocating huge amounts of funds for promoting European values such democracy, respect for human rights and rule of law. Over time, The EU's institutional transformation due to deepening and widening processes and changing international conjuncture has necessitated the transformation of EU democracy promotion policies. By the mid-2000s, not only normative ideals to export these European values, but also geostrategic and security considerations have been built into the EU democracy promotion policies. Within this new framework, the EU has declared that it would start to apply "tailor-made" democracy promotion agendas towards different countries depending on their domestic conditions. Yet, empirical evidences have revealed that the EU has applied different democracy promotion policies towards the countries with similar domestic conditions. Therefore, this dissertation attempts to answer the following question: What are the determinants of variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion agendas across target states? To answer it, this dissertation uses Wetzel and Orbie's model of embedded liberal democracy as an analytical framework. However, as different from the determinants suggested by Wetzel and Orbie, this dissertation adds a new variable shaping the substance of EU democracy promotion policies: *the illiberal regional power.*

To investigate the role of illiberal regional power on the substance, this dissertation aims to examine the EU's differentiated democracy promotion policies in Ukraine and Georgia based on the assumption that the substance of EU democracy promotion can be shaped directly or indirectly by Russia, who has certain level of leverage over target country at stake. By conducting the content analysis of EU official documents, policy frameworks, reports as well as incorporating relevant studies in democracy promotion literature, this dissertation comes to the conclusion that the EU has changed democracy promotion agendas towards Ukraine and Georgia at critical turning points when the leverage of Russia as an illiberal regional power over Ukraine/Georgia has changed considerably. This study makes an important contribution to existing knowledge in the field on the impact of regional powers over the EU democracy promotion policies.

**Key words**: EU democracy promotion policies, Ukraine, Georgia, Russia, illiberal regional power

# ÖZET

## AB'NİN UKRAYNA VE GÜRCİSTAN'DA FARKLILAŞAN DEMOKRASİ TEŞVİKİ POLİTİKALARI: LİBERAL OLMAYAN BÖLGESEL BİR GÜÇ OLARAK RUSYA'NIN ETKİSİ

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Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesiyle birlikte, Avrupa Birliği, yalnızca üçüncü taraflarla yapılan anlaşmalarda demokrasi maddelerini ekleyerek değil, aynı zamanda demokrasi, insana hakları ve hukukun üstünlüğü gibi Avrupa değerlerini teşvik etmek için büyük miktarlarda fon ayırarak, dünya çapında demokrasiyi teşvik etmenin öncü rolünü kendisine atfetmiştir. Zaman içinde, AB'nin derinleşme ve genişleme süreçleriyle şekillenen kurumsal dönüşümü ve değişen uluslararası konjonktür, AB demokrasi teşviki politikalarının dönüşümünü zorunlu kılmıştır. 2000'lerin ortalarına gelindiğinde, yukarıda bahsedilen bu Avrupa değerlerini teşvik etmek için sadece normatif idealler değil, aynı zamanda jeostratejik ve güvenlik hususları da AB demokrasisini geliştirme politikalarına dahil edildi. Bu yeni çerçeve içinde AB, farklı ülkelere yönelik kendi iç koşullarına bağlı olarak "kişiye özel" demokrasi teşviki politikalarını uygulamaya başlayacağını ilan etti. Ancak ampirik veriler, AB'nin benzer iç koşullara sahip ülkelere yönelik farklı demokrasi teşviki politikaları uyguladığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu nedenle, bu tez şu soruyu yanıtlamaya çalışmaktadır: Hedef ülkeler arasında AB demokrasi teşviki politikalarının özündeki farklılığın belirleyicileri nelerdir? Buna cevap vermek için bu tez, Wetzel ve Orbie'nin "yerleşik liberal demokrasi modelini" analitik bir çerçeve olarak kullanmaktadır. Fakat, Wetzel ve Orbie tarafından önerilen belirleyici faktörlerden farklı olarak, bu tez, AB demokrasi teşviki politikalarının özünü şekillendiren yeni bir değişken eklemektedir: *liberal olmayan bölgesel güç*.

Liberal olmayan bölgesel gücün etkisini araştırmak için, AB'nin demokrasi teşviki politikalarının özünün doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak Rusya tarafından şekillendirilebileceği varsayımına dayanarak, bu tez, Rusya'nın belli bir nüfuza sahip olduğu Ukrayna ve Gürcistan'a yönelik AB'nin farklılaşan demokrasi teşviki politikalarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. AB resmi belgelerinin, politika çerçevelerinin, raporlarının içerik analizinin yanı sıra demokrasi teşviki literatüründeki ilgili çalışmaları da dahil ederek, bu tez, Rusya'nın liberal olmayan bölgesel bir güç olarak Ukrayna/Gürcistan üzerindeki nüfuzunun önemli ölçüde değiştiği kritik dönüm noktalarında, AB'nin Ukrayna ve Gürcistan'a yönelik demokrasi teşviki politikalarının değiştiği sonucuna varmaktadır. Bu çalışma, bölgesel güçlerin AB demokrasi teşviki politikaları üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin alandaki mevcut bilgilere önemli bir katkı sağlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** AB demokrasi teşviki politikaları, Ukrayna, Gürcistan, Rusya, liberal olmayan bölgesel güç

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**AA** Association Agreement

**AAs** Association Agreements

**BSS** Black Sea Synergy

**BTI** Bertelsmann Transformation Index

**CEECs** Central and Eastern European Countries

**CFSP** Common Foreign and Security Policy

**CIS** Commonwealth of Independent States

**CoE** Council of Europe

**CSDP** Common Security and Defence Policy

**CSOs** Civil Society Organisations

**DCFTA** Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

**DCFTAs** Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas

**DCI** Development Cooperation Instrument

**EaP** Eastern Partnership

**EEA** European Economic Area

**EEAS** European External Action Service

**EEC** European Economic Community

**EED** European Endowment for Democracy

**EESC** European Economic and Social Committee

**EIDHR** European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights

**ENI** European Neighbourhood Instrument

**ENP** European Neighbourhood Policy

**ENPI** European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument

**EU** European Union

**Euratom** European Atomic Energy Community

**GDP** Gross Domestic Product

**HR** High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

**IfSP** Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace

**IMF** International Monetary Fund

**IPA** Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance

**NATO** North Atlantic Treaty Organization

**NCSF** Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility

**NED** National Endowment for Democracy

**NGOs** Non-governmental organisations

**NIF** Neighbourhood Investment Facility

**NIS** Newly Independent States

**NREP** Non-Recognition and Engagement Policy

**OAS** Organization of American States

**ODIHR** Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

**OECD** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**OSCE** Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**PCA** Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

**PCAs** Partnership and Cooperation Agreements

**PI** Partnership Instrument

**PHARE** Poland and Hungary Action for Restructuring of the Economy

**RUKH** The People's Movement of Ukraine for Restructuring

**SEA** Single European Act

**SMEs** Small and medium-sized enterprises

**TACIS** Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia

**TEU** Treaty on European Union

**Ukrainian SSR UN** Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic United Nations

**UNDP** United Nations Development Programme

**USA** United States of America

**USAID** United States Agency for International Development

**USSR** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

**WB** World Bank

**WTO** World Trade Organization

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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

Following the end of the Cold War, democracy promotion as the most distinct way has come to the agenda of EU foreign policy. During the 1990s, while the EU has been consolidating its institutional identity and actorness in international affairs as a part of its deepening process; at the same time, it has been trying to develop new strategies and instruments against emerging risks and challenges in its immediate neighbourhood due to new enlargement waves as a consequence of its widening process. Until the mid-2000s, the EU democracy promotion has only been achieved through annexation of democracy clauses in treaties with third parties as conditionality and as a part of its development aid strategies. After the largest round of enlargement in 2004, the need to construct more coherent regional policy has become turned an imperative and the ensuing EU democracy promotion policies and tools have been transformed in parallel with the developments in the EU Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2003. Indeed, commonalities of the partner states in the framework of ENP[1] such as high degree of instability, their transition path to democracy and less developed economies, have paved the way of constructing democracy promotion policies in more comprehensive and institutionalized framework with the aim of building a "ring of friends". By tying political reforms with economic and financial incentives such as increasing funds, deepening trade relations with several sectoral support, and visa liberalization, the EU aimed to promote democracy, respecting human rights and the rule of law in its neighbourhood countries.

[1] ENP includes the EU's Eastern neighbors – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine- and Southern – Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria and Tunisia- neighbours. For further information, please see: "European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)". EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission. Accessed 19 December 2020. https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp_en.

### *1.1.Statement of Problem*

In this new and updated democracy promotion policy framework since the launch of the ENP, security and geostrategic considerations have been intertwined with the EU's declared normative ideals to export so-called European values i.e. democracy, human rights, rule of law etc. abroad. Thus, the EU has started to take both its own geopolitical strategies and the security interests into the consideration in its declared "tailor-made" democracy promotion agendas. What is striking is that even though these "tailor-made" democracy promotion policies are declared as dependent on domestic conditions[2], the differentiation reveals itself in the different substance of EU democracy promotion agenda towards two target states with very similar historical, political and social backgrounds in the same region. Therefore, contrary to widely expressed views in the literature, the EU applies different democracy promotion agendas towards two countries despite they have similar domestic conditions. Thus, this research has arisen out of the question of why the EU democracy promotion agendas differ for target countries in the same region with similar domestic conditions. This question is important to understand that EU's differentiated democracy promotion policies depends on other factors than domestic conditions of target states, which questions the underlying motivations of EU democracy promotion.

### *1.2. Literature Review*

Examining the variation in the substance of the EU democracy promotion models requires first to grasp what the EU promotes and for which motivations. It is clear that lack of a single definition of democracy by the EU confronts the scholars with one of the most emphasized challenges in EU democracy promotion studies in the literature.[3] The fact that the EU promotes "liberal democracy" is not adequate to explain the variation in the EU democracy promotion policies across target countries. Therefore, the need for more

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[2] European Union: Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations*, *Brussels,* 17 November 2009, available at:https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/111250.pdf

[3] Milja Kurki, "Democracy And Conceptual Contestability: Reconsidering Conceptions Of Democracy In Democracy Promotion", *International Studies Review* 12, no. 3 (2010): 362-386., Richard Youngs and Kateryna Pishchikova, "A More Pluralist Approach To European Democracy Support" (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010), https://carnegieendowment.org/files/euro_dem_supp1.pdf., Wil Hout, "Governance And Development: Changing EU Policies", *Third World Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (2010): 1-12.

comprehensive analytical framework is apparent in examining the cross-country variation in EU democracy promotion.

When examined the studies in the democracy promotion literature, it is clear that a bulk of works mainly focuses on either comparative analysis of democracy promoters' tools and strategies or the impact of these policies on the target states' democratization paths as evaluation of possible outcomes.[4] In a same vein, recently, some group of scholars analyze how authoritarian states in the region at stake can undermine the success of democracy promotion efforts and democratization process.[5] The latter studies pay an attention to role of authoritarian actors with countervailing measures in impeding on democracy promotion and democratization paths of target states.

Apart from those studies in the literature focusing on the outcomes of democracy promotion, a few scholars have paid attention on the substance of EU democracy promotion.[6] Examining the substance of EU democracy promotion policies necessitates all-encompassing definition of liberal democracy. One of the most prominent works was done

[4] See for example: Thomas Carothers, "Democracy Assistance: The Question Of Strategy", *Democratization* 4, no. 3 (1997): 109-132., Alison J. Ayers, ""We All Know A Democracy When We See One": (Neo)Liberal Orthodoxy In The 'Democratisation' And 'Good Governance' Project", *Policy And Society* 27, no. 1 (2008): 1-13, doi:10.1016/j.polsoc.2008.07.001., Thomas Risse, "Conclusions: Towards Transatlantic Democracy Promotion?", in *Promoting Democracy And The Rule Of Law: American And European Strategies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 244-271.

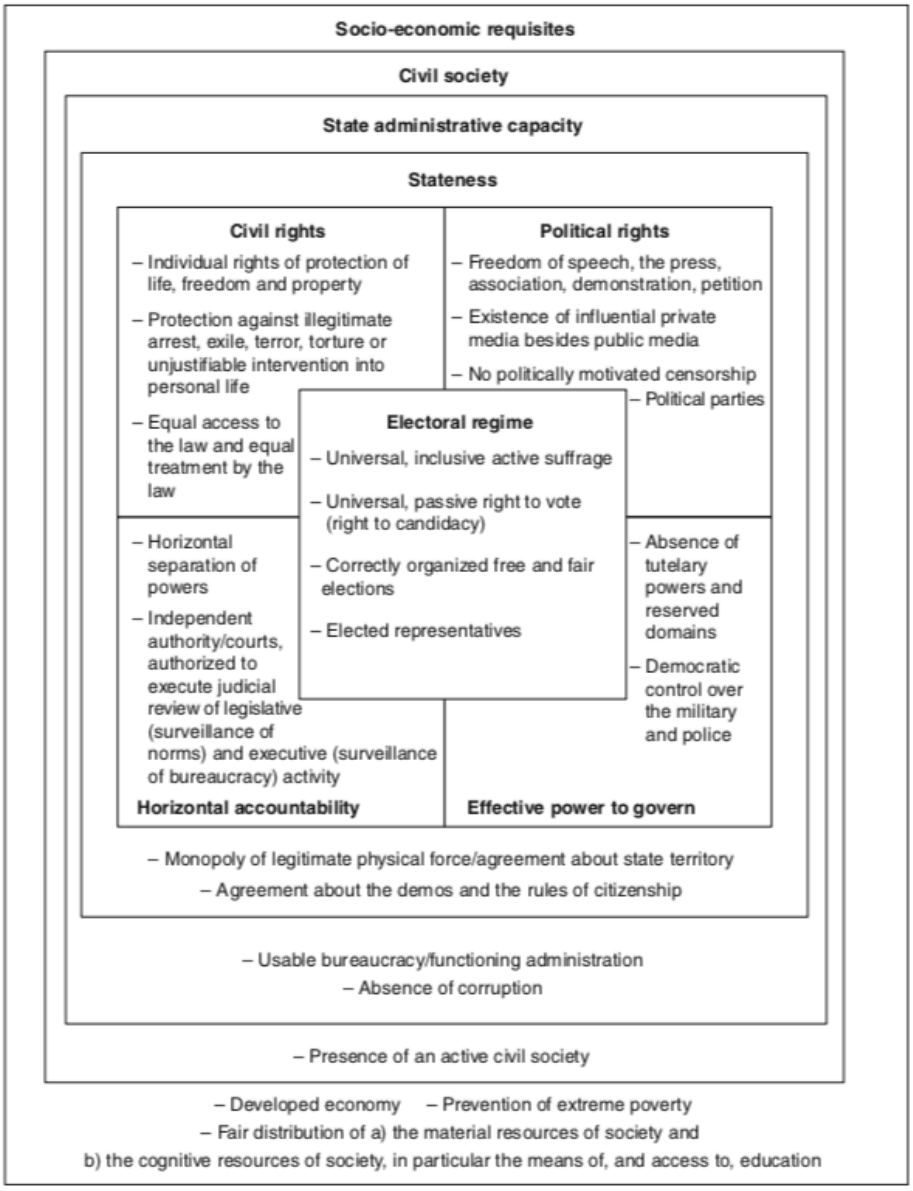
[5] See for example: Thomas Ambrosio, *Authoritarian Backlash: Russian Resistance To Democratization In The Former Soviet Union* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).; Thomas Risse and Nelli Babayan, "Democracy Promotion And The Challenges Of Illiberal Regional Powers: Introduction To The Special Issue", *Democratization* 22, no. 3 (2015): 381-399.; Jakob Tolstrup, "Black Knights And Elections In Authoritarian Regimes: Why And How Russia Supports Authoritarian Incumbents In Post-Soviet States", *European Journal Of Political Research* 54, no. 4 (2014): 673-690.; Dingding Chen and Katrin Kinzelbach, "Democracy Promotion And China: Blocker Or Bystander?", *Democratization* 22, no. 3 (2015): 400-418.; Nelli Babayan, "The Return Of The Empire? Russia's Counteraction To Transatlantic Democracy Promotion In Its Near Abroad.", *Democratization* 22, no. 3 (2015): 438-458.; Rachel Vanderhill, "Active Resistance To Democratic Diffusion", *Communist And Post-Communist Studies* 50, no. 1 (2017): 41-51.; Katsiaryna Yakouchyk, "The Good, the Bad, and the Ambitious: Democracy and Autocracy Promoters Competing in Belarus," *European Political Science Review* 8, no. 2 (2015): 195-224.

[6] Kurki, "Democracy And Conceptual Contestability: Reconsidering Conceptions Of Democracy In Democracy Promotion". See also: Milja Kurki, "Political Economy Perspective: Fuzzy Liberalism And EU Democracy Promotion: Why Concepts Matter", in *The Substance Of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts And Cases* (repr., Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). Anne Wetzel and Jan Orbie, "The EU'S Promotion Of External Democracy: In Search Of The Plot", *CEPS Policy Brief* 281 (2012).

by Linz and Stepan in 1996 with their study titled as "Toward Consolidated Democracies".[7] According to Linz and Stepan, there are three minimal conditions i.e. stateness, a completed democratic transition and a government that rules democratically, for a new political systems to be considered as consolidated democracy. By adapting these minimal conditions, another substantial work was done by Wolfgang Merkel in 2004 with the theoretical framework of "embedded democracy."[8] Merkel suggests that consolidated liberal democracy -embedded democracies as he calls- has five interdependent partial regimes as defining features: electoral regime, civil rights, political liberties, horizontal accountability and effective power to govern. Another significant study was done by Wetzel and Orbie (2015) in which they introduced "model of embedded liberal democracy" by adapting the democracy models developed by Linz and Stepan (1996) and Merkel (2004) as a point of their departure.[9] They gather important features of liberal democracy from each model above in one single framework. While maintaining Merkel's model of embedded democracy[10] including five partial regimes: "a democratic electoral regime, political rights of participation, civil rights, horizontal accountability, and the guarantee that the effective power to govern lies in the hands of democratically elected representatives", Wetzel and Orbie add four external conditions that shape the environment for enabling and stabilizing democratic governance. These conditions are stateness, state administrative capacity, civil society and socio-economic requisites. Table 1.1 shows all components of embedded liberal democracy concept.

[7] Juan Jose Linz and Alfred C. Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracies", *Journal Of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (1996): 14-33, doi:10.1353/jod.1996.0031.
[8] Wolfgang Merkel, "Embedded And Defective Democracies", *Democratization* 11, no. 5 (2004): 33-58, doi:10.1080/13510340412331304598.
[9] Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases*, 4.
[10] Wolfgang Merkel, "Embedded And Defective Democracies", *Democratization* 11, no. 5 (2004): 33-58, doi:10.1080/13510340412331304598.

**Table 1.1** The concept of embedded liberal democracy




**Source.** Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases,* 5.

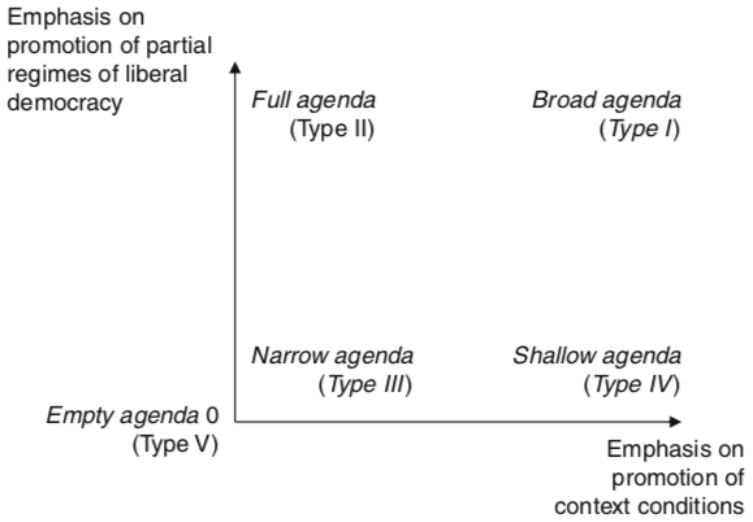
Electoral regime is in the center of five partial regimes, which signifies that it constitutes the necessary main root of liberal democracy but not sufficient solely. In other words, right to vote is critical but there are other political rights and liberties that make a political regime democracy such as freedom of speech, press freedom, the right to association etc. In addition, civil rights are also important for the rule of law, that is, to limit the exercise of the state power, and the equality before the law. Another partial regime is divisions of power and horizontal accountability, which means that the actions of elected

authorities are defined constitutionally and checked by autonomous institutions.[11] The last partial regime is effective power to govern, which implies that elected representatives are subject to democratic accountability. Furthermore, there are also external conditions that shape the "environment that encompasses, enables, and stabilizes the democratic regime."[12] The first external factor in this concept of embedded liberal democracy that enables the consolidation of democracy is stateness, which is defined as "the ability of the state to pursue the monopoly of legitimate physical force" and the "monopolistic control in a basic military, legal and fiscal sense."[13] The second external condition is state administrative capacity, which implies that capable administration including the component of good governance. The third external condition is the presence of civil society, which is highly critical for strengthening democracy in a state. Socio-economic context is another external condition for sustaining democracy. Studies prove that there is a relationship between economic development and the democracy.[14]

According to the different emphasis on these partial regimes and conditions, Wetzel and Orbie have argued that the EU has five different options of democracy promotion agendas. These five options are titled as full agenda, broad agenda, narrow agenda, shallow agenda, and empty agenda that is illustrated in the Figure 1.1. Each characterization of agendas signifies that EU promoted different components of embedded liberal democracy in its democracy promotion strategies. Here, it should be underlined that, as the scholars did, the terms "narrow" or "shallow" does not imply that such EU agendas are worse than the others. Rather, it implies that EU ignores or does not prefer to focus on partial regimes in democracy promotion agendas. For example, in some countries where democracy or at least partial regimes of democracy is advanced such as in Brazil or in Israel, the EU prefers to follow shallow agenda rather than broad agenda.

[11] Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases*, 6.
[12] Merkel, "Embedded and Defective Democracies", 44
[13] Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases, 7.*
[14] Ronald Ingelhart and Christian Welzel, "How Development Leads To Democracy", *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 2 (2009): 33-48.

**Figure 1.1** EU democracy promotion agendas




**Source.** Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases,* 9.

As illustrated in the Figure 1.1, the EU has five possible types of democracy promotion agendas.[15] The first possible type illustrated as "broad agenda (Type I)" is titled as "externally embedded liberal democracy promotion" in Wetzel and Orbie's framework. In this type, the EU supports all partial regimes as well as external conditions i.e. socio-economic development, stateness, state administrative capacity and civil rights. The EU's democracy promotion agendas toward countries in its enlargement process are given as examples to this category. For example, the EU's democracy promotion in Turkey and Crotia starting from the 1990s until 2011 is given as an example of externally liberal democracy promotion by scholars in the edited book of Wetzel and Orbie since the EU has paid attention on both five partial regimes and external conditions.[16] The second possible type illustrated as "full agenda (Type II)" in the figure is called "liberal democracy promotion" signifies the agenda in which the EU promotes all five partial regimes except the context conditions. The EU's democracy promotion in the Eastern enlargement is given as an example of liberal democracy promotion strategy since most of Central and Eastern

[15] For the sake of clarity, the titles of EU democracy promotion agendas in Figure 1.1 i.e. broad, shallow, full, narrow and empty agenda will be used throughout this dissertation.
[16] Canan Balkır and Müge Aknur, "Different Trajectories Yet The Same Substance: Croatia And Turkey", in *The Substance Of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts And Cases* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 85-103.

countries had the basic criteria of liberal democracy when the EU had started to engage with them in the framework of enlargement.[17] The third possible type –narrow agenda (Type III)- is "partial liberal democracy promotion" in which the EU focuses on some parts of partial regimes by neglecting the others, for example 'electoralism'. The fourth possible type – shallow agenda (Type IV)- is defined as "external conditions democracy promotion" or "output oriented" in which the EU pays an attention to the improvement of external conditions while ignoring the partial regimes. Most of the studies on different country cases show that the "default substance" of EU democracy promotion is output oriented. The EU's democracy promotion in Tunisia and Egypt is given as an example of this type because the EU has focused on external conditions such as state administrative capacity and socio-economic development rather than partial regimes.[18] The last possible type – empty agenda (Type V)- is when the EU has no democracy promotion activity either for the partial regimes or for the context conditions. For example, some activities would not be considered as democracy promotion even the EU labels those activities as democracy promotion.

Since the model of embedded liberal democracy of Wetzel and Orbie offers a broader framework of the EU democracy promotion policies across different countries, which enables comparative analysis of the cases, this dissertation will apply this model to examine the variation of EU democracy promotion agendas. Yet, this study has two important shortcomings that this dissertation attempts to overcome with an adapted framework. First, Wetzel and Orbie in their study have applied the model of embedded liberal democracy in 22 different cross-country cases with a comparative manner to find out the substance of EU democracy promotion. In each cross-country analysis, scholars have tried to reveal the general tendencies of EU in its democracy promotion agendas. In other words, they have proposed general labels to EU democracy promotion agendas towards each country cases as mentioned above such as externally embedded liberal democracy agenda towards Turkey and Crotia. However, they have failed to explain the variation in the EU democracy promotion toward each country case over time, which is highly important since there can be changes in EU democracy promotion policies within the countries at certain periods of time.

[17] Eline de Ridder, "Addressing The Remnants Of A Communist Past Through Accession: Slovakia And The Czech Republic", in *The Substance Of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts And Cases* (repr., Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 71-84.
[18] Vicky Reyneart, "Democracy Through The Invisible Hand? Egypt And Tunisia", in *The Substance Of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts And Cases* (repr., Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 149-161.

For example, the EU democracy promotion policies toward Tunisia at pre- and post-Arab Spring periods show differences. Second, Wetzel and Orbie (2015) argues that four factors shape the substance of EU democracy promotion: "a) the differences in power between EU and a target country; b) EU internal institutional factors; c) differences in the target countries' domestic contexts; and d) differences in the inter-organizational field in the third country."[19] As distinct from these four determinants proposed by Wetzel and Orbie, this thesis puts forward a new factor as a critical determinant of EU democracy promotion agendas: *the role of illiberal regional power.* Before suggesting the main hypothesis of this thesis regarding the role illiberal regional power, it is to the point to mention the reasons why these four factors above suggested by Wetzel and Orbie are not sufficient to explain the variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion agendas.

The first factor propounded by Wetzel and Orbie is *power* as one of the most important factors in the democracy promotion literature that gives the systemic explanation to the nature of democracy promotion. They argue that power asymmetries between the EU and the target country determine the substance of EU democracy promotion. Compatible with the rationalist approach to democracy promotion, if the democracy promotion serves the EU's security and strategic interests, the EU chooses democracy promotion as an instrument. Accordingly, the EU's capabilities, the interdependencies between the EU and target country and the EU's security interests determine whether the EU has broader or more shallow agenda as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Wetzel and Orbie argue that the more powerful position the EU has vis-à-vis the target country, the broader agenda the EU follows. Conversely, if the target country is in similar or more powerful position vis-à-vis the EU, it is much possible that the EU follows shallow agenda. However, this does not explain why the EU has chosen different democracy promotion agendas towards two countries, which have similar asymmetrical position in relation to the EU. In addition, power explanation does not fully account the changes over time in the EU democracy promotion agendas toward a single target country.

The second factor -*the EU internal institutional context*- is another factor suggested by Wetzel and Orbie as shaping the substance of EU democracy promotion. They claim that as a field of foreign policy, EU democracy promotion emerges out of the constellation of

[19] Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases,* 2.

interests of various actors such as Member States, European Parliament, and Commission. Thus, the outcome or substance of EU democracy promotion varies according to the policy-makers' templates. This means that if the EU policies are formulated within the "development" background, the EU democracy promotion policies become shallow with the emphasis on the external conditions such as socio-economic development. On the other hand, if the sub-systems in charge have an enlargement background, this leads the EU to pursue broader democracy promotion agendas. In addition, it is suggested in the model that the higher degree to which EU member states are involved in the formulation of policy making if this policy falls into the pillar of Common Security and Foreign Policy, the more the substance will resemble the template suggested/favoured by the most dominant member state(s).[20] However, *EU's internal institutional context* factor is insignificant for analyzing the variation in the substance of democracy promotion towards countries if the same framework has been applied and the same institutions are in charge for formulating and implementing these policies.

*Domestic structure of the target country* is another important factor suggested by Wetzel and Orbie due to the assumption that the EU follows tailor-made democracy promotion agenda shaped by local needs and circumstances. They claim that the EU may define the substance of democracy promotion according to the deficiencies or needs of the target country at stake, or the political will of the target state. Accordingly, it is assumed that the EU implements more shallow democracy promotion agenda to the post-conflict countries with limited statehood as there is danger of war stemmed from the transition from an autocracy to a partly democratic regime. Thus, Wetzel and Orbie claim that the EU follows more shallow democracy promotion agenda in post-conflict states because the context conditions such as state-building and good governance, which enable the settlement and stabilization of the democracy, are given priority.[21] Empirical evidences reveal controversial results on this assumption since there are some incidents that the EU has followed broad democracy promotion agenda towards some countries with high level of conflict intensity as will be examined on the cases of Ukraine and Georgia.

The second assumption regarding the role of domestic conditions is related to the argument that the substance of EU democracy promotion depends on the public will and

[20] Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases,* 17.
[21] Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases,*19.

demand of political elites of the target country intended to do democratic reforms. Wetzel and Orbie suggest that the higher degree of the political will to take democratic reforms, the more the EU follow broader agenda.[22] Even though there is a positive impact of public demands for democracy and will of political elites of target country on the process of democratization, this is not enough by itself to explain why the EU has chosen the specific democracy promotion agenda over the others.

Last factor propounded by Wetzel and Orbie is *the interorganizational field* in which the EU operates in a third country with other democracy promoters. Accordingly, they argue that the substance of EU democracy promotion differs depending on the EU's interorganizational coordination with other democracy promoters operating in a third country. Hence, the dominant democracy promoters -the USA, the EU or any other country- with greatest material and immaterial resources at its disposal determines the substance of democracy promotion. Similar to the shortcomings in the former factors discussed above, *the interorganizational field* does not have enough explanatory power in terms of analysis of the variation in the substance of EU's democracy promotion agendas towards the country cases if similar democracy promoters operate in these countries.

Recognizing the shortcomings in the literature in explaining the variation in the substance of the EU democracy promotion over time and also towards two countries with similar domestic conditions, this dissertation aims to fill the salient gap in the field of democracy promotion with the comprehensive analysis on what the EU promotes abroad within its framework of democracy promotion and how/why these democracy promotion agendas change across different target states in the same region.

### *1.3.Research Argument*

Since this dissertation attempts to examine the variation in EU democracy promotion policies, it suggests that *illiberal regional powers*[23] affect directly/indirectly the substance

[22] Wetzel and Orbie, *The Substance of EU Democracy Promotion: Concepts and Cases,* 19

[23] Regional power is a term used for an actor that has power within a geographic region. This thesis uses Flemes' conceptualization of regional powers which is suggested to have four pivotal criteria: claim to leadership, power resources, employment of foreign policy instruments, and acceptance of leadership. Daniel Flemes, "Conceptualising Regional Power In International Relations: Lessons From The South African Case", GIGA Research Programme: Violence, Power And Security

of EU's democracy promotion, which may be an outcome of clash of interdependent strategic interests of EU, target country and the regional power. Accordingly, the clash of interests of the target country and illiberal regional power at certain crisis periods opens the room for political maneuver for the EU to increase its actorness via democracy promotion policies and to bring the target country into the fold of "ring of friends". The first hypothesis of this dissertation is that:

> *When the relations with target country and illiberal regional power deteriorated and turned into the conflicts due to clash of interests, the EU uses broader democracy promotion agenda toward the target state.*

In a similar vein, since the target country may no longer benefit from the carrots of illiberal regional power at these crisis periods, this makes the country at stake more dependent on the EU incentives, which in turn cause the improvement of relations with the EU. The same logic can be applied to the aid mechanism. The less dependence on EU aid that the target country is, the less leverage that the EU has on the target country. That makes the target country more open to authoritarian pushes from outside. Therefore, the second hypothesis suggests that:

> *The lower leverage that illiberal regional power has on the target country, the more the EU uses broader democracy promotion agenda or vice versa the higher leverage that illiberal regional power has on the target state, the less the EU uses broader agenda (or more shallow agenda).*

In sum, the role of illiberal regional power as a potential factor shaping the EU democracy promotion agendas will be examined as distinct from some previous studies, which emphasized mainly the impact of domestic conditions on the substance of the EU democracy promotion. The analysis of these hypotheses will make an important contribution to the existing knowledge in the field since there has been any study on the impact of illiberal regional power over the substance of EU democracy policies rather scholars have focused

(Hamburg: GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, 2007), https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/47142/wp53.pdf

on how authoritarian powers impede on democratization efforts of democracy promoters with which tools and motivations.[24]

### *1.4. Scope*

To test these hypotheses above, the scope of geographical area of this dissertation is restricted to post-Soviet region for two reasons. First, the EU's approach for democracy promotion in post-Soviet region can be examined into the same framework. In addition, in line with the aims of this research, there is at least one strong illiberal regional power -here Russia is taken as independent variable- in the post-Soviet region whose leverage over neighbor states are non-negligible. Second, in order to propound the differentiated EU democracy promotion agendas and to analyze the determinants for such differentiation, we need to have two most similar country cases which are recognized as target states for the EU to promote democracy. Ukraine and Georgia sharing commonalities in terms of their historical background, socio-economic features and political processes since their independence, are found to be good cases to analyze comparatively in this thesis. Besides, Ukraine and Georgia can be considered as "cross-pressured" states as squeezed between two sides: the EU and Russia.[25] This makes these cases worthy to study for the researcher, who aims to examine the role of illiberal regional power on the substance of EU democracy promotion.

Overall, while the variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion towards Ukraine and Georgia is determined as dependent variable, the role of Russia as an illiberal regional power on this substance as independent variable is added into the analysis of this research. Yet, one limitation of this research is to take Russia as the only illiberal regional power into account while ignoring any other (illiberal) regional powers such as China, Iran, or Turkey, who might be considered as active players within post-Soviet region. The reason to choose Russia only as illiberal regional power in this analysis depends on the

[24] See for example: Thomas Risse and Nelli Babayan, "Democracy Promotion And The Challenges Of Illiberal Regional Powers: Introduction To The Special Issue", *Democratization* 22, no. 3 (2015): 381-399.

[25] "Cross-pressured" states is the concept to denote the states, which are squeezed between the EU and Russia in the post-Soviet area. One prominent study on the importance of geopolitics on democracy is: Laurence Whitehead, "Eastern Europe A Decade Later: Geography And Democratic Destiny", *Journal Of Democracy* 10, no. 1 (1999): 74-79, doi:10.1353/jod.1999.0021.

conceptualization of regional power, which are distinguished by four main criteria: claim to leadership, power resources, employment of foreign policy instruments, and acceptance of leadership.[26] Considering these four features, even though all regional powers at stake may have power resources and ability to employ foreign policy instruments, Russia explicitly declares and claims its leadership position in the post-Soviet space, regarded as "privileged area of interest".[27] Russian politicians and officials have preferred to use the expression of "privileged area of interest" rather than "spheres of influence" as the latter expression has connotations of illegitimacy. In an interview with President Medvedev, he stated that:

> "…as is the case of other countries, there are regions in which Russia has privileged interests. These regions are home to countries with which we share special historical relations and are bound together as friends and good neighbours. We will pay particular attention to our work in these regions and build friendly ties with these countries, our close neighbours. These are the principles I will follow in carrying out our foreign policy."[28]

Based on geographical and historical legacy, Russia claims its leadership and accepts this position by defending its privileged interests in the territory of post-Soviet region even if it is mostly through more coercive and aggressive ways using its existing leverage over former Soviet states.

Second limitation is put on the time frame of the analysis. As the EU's democracy promotion policies has started to be diversified and differentiated with the introduction of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2004, this dissertation takes the year 2004 as the beginning of analysis. Yet, the pre-ENP period should not be ignored to understand the historical background of domestic politics of both Ukraine and Georgia as well as the evolution of EU democracy promotion policies. Therefore, while the examination of historical background for each country case is traced back to the early independence days of

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[26] Daniel Flemes, "Conceptualising Regional Power In International Relations: Lessons From The South African Case", GIGA Research Programme: Violence, Power And Security (Hamburg: GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, 2007), available at: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/47142/wp53.pdf

[27] For some studies in the literature on "privileged area of interest": Dmitri Trenin, "Russia's Spheres Of Interest, Not Influence", *The Washington Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (2009): 3-22, doi:10.1080/01636600903231089. Roger McDermott, "Russia Promotes Its "Sphere Of Privileged Interests" In Kyrgyzstan", *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 6, no. 144 (2009), https://jamestown.org/program/russia-promotes-its-sphere-of-privileged-interests-in-kyrgyzstan/.

[28] Interview given by Dmitry Medvedev to Television Channels Channel One, Rossia, NTV, TV (Sochi, 2008), available at: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/48301

Ukraine and Georgia, main focus of analysis will be on the post-ENP period until 2016 in which Association Agreements (AAs) with Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) with Ukraine and Georgia were entered into the force. The AAs with DCFTA which provides comprehensive agenda for political and economic reforms for Ukraine and Georgia, are important in deepening bilateral relations and increasing the approximation of the countries with the EU rules and standards. In addition, visa liberalization fosters people-to-people contacts, which in turn improves the ties between the EU and Ukraine/Georgia. As Ylva Johansson, Commissioner for Home Affairs, said, the visa liberalization "is a powerful tool to advance transformative reforms, including in the area of justice and security,"[29] which has certain implications for the consolidating democratic achievements in the target country.

### *1.5. Methodology*

In order to answer these research questions and to test the hypotheses above, the thesis uses qualitative research methods. Content analysis of key treaties, EU Strategic Papers towards Ukraine and Georgia since 1990s, Council Resolutions, Council's and Commission's Progress Reports, relevant communications, reports from EP officials, EU official statements as primary sources are analyzed. In addition, news including critical statements of officials from both EU, target country and Russian side during and post-events (Rose Revolution in Georgia, Orange Revolution in Ukraine, August 2008 War between Georgia and Russia, Euromaidan events etc.) and EU Parliamentary debates are also analyzed. Another important contribution comes through discussions with distinguished scholars such as Dr. Susan Stewart and Dr. Jan Orbie, who have significant works in the field of EU democracy promotion. This research will also be supported by all indices such as Freedom House index, World Bank's Governance Indicators, BTI (Bertelsmann Transformation Index), the Organisations for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe (CoE) and other indices used in democracy promotion literature. These indices inform us about the specific features of domestic context such as socio-economic situation, the degree of freedom as well as democracy (-non) in each country, the

[29] "Visa Liberalisation: Commission Reports On The Continued Fulfilment Of Requirements By The Western Balkans And Eastern Partnership Countries", Press Corner- European Commission, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1327.

level of stability of democratic institutions, rule of law and political participation. All these data enable to test our argument that EU follows democracy promotion agenda depending on not the local needs and political will of the target country but rather the changing leverage of illiberal regional power over the target country.

The first attempt is to examine the democracy status of each country case i.e. Ukraine and Georgia by using Bertellsman Transformation Index (BTI) data. Based on the path followed by Merkel and Orbie (2015), this thesis determines the value of **five partial regimes** i.e. electoral regime, civil rights, political rights, horizontal accountability, and effective power to govern, and **four external context conditions** i.e. stateness, state capacity, civil society and socio-economic development according to the BTI index. Accordingly, the following items and questions of BTI surveys are used to assess the single components of democracy.

- For 'electoral regime', the value of Q2.1,
- For 'civil rights', the value of Q3.4,
- For 'political rights', the average value of Q2.3 and Q2.4,
- For 'horizontal accountability', the average value of Q3.1 and Q3.2,
- For 'effective power to govern', the value of Q2.2,
    - For 'stateness', the average value of Q1.1 and Q1.2,
    - For 'state capacity', the average value of Q1.4 and Q15.3,
    - For 'civil society', the average value of Q5.2 and Q16.4,
    - For 'socio-economic development', the value of Q6.1

Based on the results of those questions above in BTI surveys, changes in values of partial regimes and context conditions over time will be gathered in the Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. These values are important not only for the fact that indicates each state's position in the democracy-autocracy spectrum, but also for enabling to test the argument that the EU democracy promotion agendas is driven by local needs and deficiencies. This also gives room for questioning why the EU has chosen a specific kind of (i.e. broader or more shallow) democracy promotion agenda towards a target state at stake even if there is (or not) a need for supporting such components of democracy.

The second attempt is to provide an exhaustive qualitative assessment of the EU's democracy promotion policy by focusing on key documents touching one or more parts of democracy promotion. Benefiting from a qualitative data analysis software, these documents are categorized yearly and evaluated according to their focus on each component of embedded liberal democracy. Firstly, values are assigned regarding the EU's implementation activities or declared objectives in those key documents analyzed in terms of each component of embedded liberal democracy (partial regimes and external conditions) on a scale ranging from 'no or very minor attention' (−), through 'some' (+) and 'focused' (++), to 'major' (+ + +) attention. Secondly, the general framework indicating general tendencies over years in the substance of EU democracy promotion toward one target state is created. These country-specific frameworks facilitate not only to evaluate the differentiation of the EU democracy promotion toward a country over a time span but also to compare two cases and to understand the impact of Russia for these sharp changes.

### *1.6. Thesis Structure*

This thesis consists of seven chapters. The first and the last chapter are devoted to the introduction and conclusion parts of this thesis. The second chapter titled as "Conceptual and Theoretical Debates on Democracy and Democracy Promotion" aims to put forward conceptual and theoretical roots of democracy promotion in International Relations in general and to suggest an eclectic approach to understand the main motivations of EU's democracy promotion in specific. The third chapter titled as "The EU's Democracy Promotion Policies in the Post-Soviet Space: Models and Instruments" aims to present the general framework and the evolution of the EU's strategies, models and instruments used in democracy promotion to post-Soviet space. The fourth and the fifth chapters are devoted to detailed examination of the EU democracy promotion policies towards Ukraine and Georgia respectively. In these case study chapters, firstly, it is aimed to present a general picture of democratization process in each country cases; secondly, it tries to find out the links between domestic conditions shaping progress of each country in the democratization path and Russian historical legacy and present influence over domestic politics; lastly, it is aimed to present the overall framework of changing EU democracy promotion agendas over time towards these cases by critically focusing on critical turning points in which Russian impact on these sharp changes in the EU democracy promotion can be visible. The sixth chapter

titled as “Explaining the Variation in the Substance of EU Democracy Promotion” has two main aims: i) to put forward a general timeline in which the EU has changed dramatically democracy promotion agendas towards both Ukraine and Georgia at certain points by gathering research findings from the previous case study chapters, and how the EU has seen and legitimized these changes by focusing on statements from inside of EU ii) to reveal the links between these sharp changes in the substance of EU democracy promotion and the Russian leverage over the countries at stake in this analysis.

# CHAPTER 2

# CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL DEBATES ON DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY PROMOTION

*"Democracy is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."*[30]

***Abraham Lincoln***

"Liberal democracy" has been at the centre of all academic debates about democratization processes around the world following the end of Cold War. Gaining momentum with the famous article of Francis Fukuyama titled "The End of History and Last Man[31], many scholars have started to advocate that liberal democracy becomes universal value with the collapse of its ideological alternative and universally preferred system of government. In fact, the frequent transitions from non-democratic states to democratic regimes since the late 1970s were supported by an increasing number of actors i.e. states, NGOs and international organizations, which provided financial and technical aid, expert advice, supervision of state-building, monitoring of elections etc.[32] Yet, even the attribution of such increasing importance on democracy promotion have not always brought the expected success, which would be seen with the failed examples of democratization in challenged regions. Indeed, the failure of democracy promotion efforts has revealed itself with the democratic backsliding and the increasing number of semi-autocratic or "hybrid"[33] regimes situated between autocratic and democratic rule.

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[30] See Roy P. Basler, *The Collected Works Of Abraham Lincoln* (repr., United States: Rutger University Press, 1953).

[31] Fukuyama regarded the collapse of Soviet Union as the triumph of capitalism and liberal democracy and the end point of history of humankind. Francis Fukuyama, "The End Of History And The Last Man.", *Constitutional Political Economy* 4, no. 3 (1993).

[32] Sonja Grimm, "External Democratization After War: Success And Failure", *Democratization* 15, no. 3 (2008): 525-549. Peter Burnell (ed.), Democracy Assistance: International Cooperation for Democratization (London: Frank Cass, 2000 Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999).

[33] Larry Jay Diamond, "Thinking About Hybrid Regimes", *Journal Of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 21-35.

The bulk of the research in democratization studies has examined the reasons for success and failure of the democracy promotion.[34] Some deals with local contextual factors as levels of socio-economic development, group polarization, mode of production etc., while others focus on the incapability of democracy promotion efforts of external actors.[35] One critical assumption derived from these studies is that democracy in third countries should be accommodated to local socio-cultural exigencies and circumstances, and second is that there is even no one consolidated definition of "liberal democracy."[36] Indeed, there is a relatively little discussion over the contestability of the notion of "liberal democracy" in the mainstream literature.[37] Very few scholars have examined the contestability of liberal democracy historically or in different regional contexts.[38]

Different understanding of democracy has led to different democracy promotion strategies among different democracy promoters too. One of the most emphasized examples in the literature is the variation between democracy promotion strategies of the United States of America (USA) and the EU. Even though both the USA and the EU share similar goals in promoting and exporting democracy, their approaches, instruments, targets differ significantly. As Baracani says, there is a difference between US and EU models of democracy promoted in a sense that while "the United States pays much more attention to political party, NGO, and union building than the EU, the latter focuses much more not only

[34] See for example: Arthur A. Goldsmith, "Making The World Safe For Partial Democracy? Questioning The Premises Of Democracy Promotion", *International Security* 33, no. 2 (2008): 120-147. Thomas Carothers, "Does Democracy Promotion Have A Future?", Carnegieendowment.Org, accessed 8 January 2021, https://carnegieendowment.org/files/DemocracyDevm-Carothers-sec.pdf

[35] See for example: Sonja Grimm, "External Democratization After War: Success and Failure", *Democratization* 15, no. 3 (2008): 525-549

[36] Jan Hornat, "Democracy Assistance Policies Of The US And The EU: Different Approaches And Their Causes" (Ph.D., Charles University, 2017).

[37] Milja Kurki, "Democracy and Conceptual Contestability: Reconsidering Conceptions of Democracy in Democracy Promotion," *International Studies Review* 12, no. 3 (2010): 316.

[38] See for example: Laurence Whitehead, *The International Dimensions Of Democratization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Frederic C. Schaffer, *Democracy In Translation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Larbi Sadiki, *The Search For Arab Democracy: Discourses And Counter-Discourses* (London: Hurst and Company, 2004);
Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Democratizing Democracy: Beyond The Liberal Democratic Canon* (London: Verso, 2007).

on civil and political rights, but also on social, economic, and cultural rights."[39]

Not only differences between strategies of democracy promoters, but also different strategies of a single democracy promoter towards different geographical places have been acknowledged. At the EU side, it has been declared by EU officials especially following the Arab Spring period starting in the early 2010s that the EU has pursued a "tailor-made" democracy promotion agenda shaped in accordance with local needs and interests.[40] Indeed, new concepts have been suggested to examine democracy promotion policies in one geographical place at one specific period of time as in the case of Arab Spring during which the concept of "deep democracy" was suggested.[41]

The different understanding of democracy and democracy promotion strategies among different actors brings a new field of inquiry to democratization studies. In order to get to the root of the problem, this chapter starts with the general framework of definition and classification of democracy in international relations (IR) literature. Then, it continues with the conceptualization of "democracy promotion" as well as different IR approaches i.e. rationalist, reflectivist and hybrid on underlying motivations of actors to promote democracy abroad.

### *2.1. The Concept of "Democracy" in the International Relations Literature*

Democracy is one of the most contested[42] concepts in politics, which hinders scholars to agree over the single definition of democracy. Intellectuals on different parts of

[39] Elena Baracani, "US And EU Strategies For Promoting Democracy", in *The Foreign Policy Of The European Union: Assessing Europe's Role In The World* (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2010): 312-13.
[40] Joint European Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, "Human Rights And Democracy At The Heart Of EU External Action – Towards A More Effective Approach" COM (2011)886 (Brussels, 2011).
[41] Catherine Ashton, 'The EU wants "deep democracy" to take root in Egypt and Tunisia' The Guardian (4 February 2011) https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/feb/04/egypt-tunisia-eu-deep-democracy. "The events of this year have served to highlight the vital links between human rights and democracy. It has led to a new approach for the EU, which aims to provide greater support to partners engaged in building "deep democracy" "Catherine Ashton EU High Representative For Foreign Affairs And Security Policy And Vice President Of The European Commission Speech On The Annual Human Rights Report", European Commission, 2011, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_11_885.
[42] On the contestability of political and social concepts including democracy, please see: John N. Cray, "On The Contestability Of Social And Political Concepts", *Political Theory* 5, no. 3 (1977): 331-348, doi:10.1177/009059177700500304.

ideological spectrum attribute a different social, political and moral agenda to democracy and define it in consistent with their ideological background. As Sartori said, "what democracy *is* cannot be separated from what democracy *should be.*" [43] A widely acknowledged definition of democracy is "a system of government by whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives."[44] Even this definition leaves some questions unanswered such as: Who are the eligible members? How are the decisions best made? What are the key features of democracy?

The centrality of democracy in democracy promotion studies makes it critical to examine. This subchapter gives briefly the historical background of democracy as well as the ways of how scholars take the definitions of democracy into account. Etimologically, the term comes from the Greek word *demokratia* meaning "the rule by people", which combines the elements of Greek words *demos* (δῆμος, which means "people", "neighbourhood", "district") and *krátos* (κράτος, which means "force" or "power") around the 5th century BC to denote political systems in some city states in Ancient Greece.[45] Yet, there is doubt whether the term of democracy is "not a Greek invention" and early notions of democratic institutions, practices and principles can be found earlier in Sparta and among the Phoenicians as Keane claims that self-government was originated by peoples living in Western Asia, which geographically corresponds today's Syria, Iraq and Iran.[46] Even if this is the case, the existing bulk of scholarship associates the first notion of democracy with the Greek city-states. Since the early appearance of democracy in direct representation system of Ancient Greece, the definition and meaning of democracy has evolved over years. Different actors at different times had different connotations in their mind when they invoked the term. For example, while democracy was meant to racial equality for the activists in the American civil rights movement of the 1960s, opponents in Eastern Europe in the 1980s identified the democracy with market economy.[47] This reveals the importance how the definition of democracy should be handled.

Contemporary understanding of the concept of democracy is not same as in the Greek city-states. Different components have been added in time. As Koen Lenearts, the Vice

[43] Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory Of Democracy Revisited* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1987).
[44] "Democracy", *Oxford Dictionary*, 2020, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/democracy.
[45] "Democracy", *Britannica Encyclopedia*, 2020, https://www.britannica.com/topic/democracy.
[46] John Keane, *The Life And Death Of Democracy* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2009).
[47] George Reid Andrews and Herrick Chapman, *The Social Construction Of Democracy, 1870-1990* (New York: New York University Press, 1995).

President of EU Court of Justice, explains: “democracy is a dynamic concept which evolves hand in hand with societal changes. Whilst some components of democracy are always constant, others have appeared more recently, for example, the birth of non-majoritarian agencies, the democratization of alternative means of policy-making and the principle of transparency.”[48]

In the most basic way, most scholars agree on four main types of definitions of democracy: constitutional, substantial, procedural and process-oriented.[49] Constitutional approach focuses on laws via that a regime determines the way of its political activities. This approach can enable to make variations among constitutional monarchies, presidential systems and parliament-centered arrangements. Yet, it can also give misleading results about the quality of democracy since constitutions can’t indicate the reality of daily practices. For example, even though two countries have ‘democracy clause’ in their constitutions, the level of democracy may differ in practice as in the case of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.[50]

On the other hand, substantive approaches fill the gap that constitutional approach falls short of. Emphasizing the conditions of life and politics, it tries to answer the question whether the regime at stake promotes human welfare, individual freedom, security, and social equity.[51] Here, the most fundamental question is whether one can count a country as more democratic if citizens enjoy equality but regime is poorer than another prosperous country but with unequal regime.[52] In other words, there is a question on whether possible tradeoff between these principles affects the level of democracy.

[48] Koen Lenearts, "The Principle Of Democracy In The Case Law Of The European Court Of Justice", *International And Comparative Law Quarterly* 62, no. 02 (2013): 271-281.
[49] Charles Tilly, *Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007),7
[50] Both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan has “democracy clause” in their constitution as follows:
“The Republic of Kazakhstan proclaims itself a **democratic**, secular, legal and social state whose highest values are an individual, his life, rights and freedoms” (Article 1 of the constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan)
“The Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzstan) is a sovereign, unitary**, democratic** Republic, constructed on the basis of a legal secular state.” (Article 1 of the Constitution of Kyrgyz Republic) However, as Freedom House 2018 data shows, while Kazakhstan is regarded as “not free”, Kyrgyzstan is considered as “partly free”.
[51] Tilly, *Democracy*, 7.
[52] Tilly, *Democracy*, 7.

Procedural democracy characterized as 'electoralism' mainly focus on governmental practices that makes regime democratic such as elections. According to advocates of procedural democracy, there should be competitive and regular elections in which large numbers of citizens participate to change the representatives. For example, at the last parliamentary elections of Kazakhstan in 2016, President Nursultan Nazarbayev's Nur Otan party held the overwhelming majority of seats (nearly 81 percent of the vote) while two uncritical opposition parties Ak Zhol had 7.47 percent and the Communist People's Party of Kazakhstan had 7.19 percent of votes.[53] Indeed, all these three parties have been identified as 'pro-presidential' and these results were much similar of the one held in 2012 parliamentary elections. According to preliminary assessment of Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, there was no genuine political choice and transparent campaign even six parties contested the elections, "political debates were largely absent, and the blurring of the distinction with the State benefited the ruling party."[54] In that respect, having free and fair elections does not mean to have democracy in one country.

Recognizing this dilemma, Freedom House puts some basic and substantial criteria including political rights and civil liberties to procedural approach of democracy such as the presence of competitive, multiparty political system, universal adult suffrage for all citizens with some exceptions, regularly contested elections with ballot secrecy, and substantial public access of major political parties to electorates via media and open political campaigning in order to make assessment more viable.[55] Process-oriented approaches as a distinct from constitutional, substantive and procedural approaches focus on a set of processes and practices that are continuously in motion to make a regime democratic.[56]

Another conceptualization of democracy mentioned frequently in the literature is minimalist and maximalist approaches. According to minimalist conception, democracy is a system of government in which people choose their political leaders through elections.

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[53] Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe, "Observation Of The Early Parliamentary Elections In Kazakhstan (20 March 2016)" (Strasbourg, 2016), https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1150226/1226_1463487851_document.pdf.

[54] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, "Republic Of Kazakhstan- Early Parliamentary Elections: OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report" (Warsaw, 2016), https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/kazakhstan/248781?download=true.

[55] Arch Puddington et al., *Freedom In The World 2014: The Annual Survey Of Political Rights And Civil Liberties* (New York and Washington D.C.: Freedom House, 2004).

[56] Tilly, Democracy, 9.

Schumpeter, who is one the most influential minimalists, defines democracy as: "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote."[57] Advocates of minimalist approach emphasize the analytical usefulness of this conception since having free and fair elections is an objective criterion for classifying a country a democracy or not. It enables to make cross-country studies in an efficient way. Yet, the proponents of maximalist approach, on the other hand criticize the minimalist definition of democracy in a way that there can be fair and free elections in one country case while at the same time have human rights abuses. Therefore, maximalist conception of definition underlines both the minimalist conditions such as elections and political and civil liberties in defining democracy.

Another prominent conceptualization of democracy suggested by Robert Dahl is "polyarchal *(rule of many)* democracy" including six distinct characteristics i.e. elected officials; free, fair and frequent elections; freedom of expression; alternative sources of information; associational autonomy; and inclusive citizenship.[58] It is clear that while on the one hand, Dahl has proposed a kind of checklist, which gives minimum requirements for democracy; on the other hand he underlines the importance of political and civil rights. That makes his study as a kind of compromise between minimalist and maximalist approaches.[59]

All these different conceptualization of democracy gives a new insight into democracy promotion literature. Indeed, *modus operandi* of any actor for democracy promotion depends on not only how they view democracy but also what the underlying motivations they have for democracy promotion. This thesis takes the EU's definition of democracy -if there is any- as the linchpin of this research. Yet, before coming to the EU level, it is crucial to understand main motivations of states to pursue democracy promotion. Next subtitle deals with the concept of "democracy promotion" along with different approaches on why democracy is promoted.

[57] Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism And Democracy* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1962).
[58] Robert Dahl, *On Democracy* (repr., New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1998). And also please see: Robert Dahl, "What Political Institutions Does Large-Scale Democracy Require?", *Political Science Quarterly* 120, no. 02 (2005): 187-197.
[59] Svetlana Osipova, "The Normative Power Of The EU In Neighbourhood Democratization Within The Framework Of The ENP: A Case Study On Armenia" (Master degree, Linköping University, 2010).

### *2.2. The Concept of "Democracy Promotion" in International Relations: Why is Democracy Promoted?*

Democracy promotion is defined in a broad sense all the measures taken by an external actor for "establishing, strengthening, or defending democracy in a given country."[60] It is accepted "as old as the democracy itself."[61] Historically, Ancient Athens is regarded as the most systematic and aggressive democracy promoter of all time with its strategy to overthrow the hostile regimes for the sake of democratic neighbours.[62] Yet, democracy promotion as a foreign policy agenda in the international relations, *stricto sensu*, was first initiated by President Woodrow Wilson who declared clearly his intentions to promote democracy in very different states across the world such as Mexico, Haiti, Czechoslovakia etc. for the sake of security of the world.[63] Until 1970s, the democracy promotion had appeared occasionally in US foreign policy depending on domestic and international context. With the important pressure of human rights activists to uplift human rights issue to the top of agenda, starting from the 1970s –especially following the Helsinki Conference in 1975-, US leaders followed a more concrete foreign policy agenda including democracy and human rights notions. In the 1980s, democracy and human rights policies were institutionalized with the establishment of the National Endowment for Democracy[64] as the main instrument for supporting democracy in Latin America and the Soviet Union.[65]

On the other side, in Europe, democracy was first put as a membership criterion in the European Community (EC) on the eve of political debates on autocratic Spain's membership application. Indeed, since the 1980s, the EC contributed democratic transitions

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[60] Mitchell A. Seligson et al., "Trends In Democracy Assistance: What Has The United States Been Doing?", *Journal Of Democracy* 19, no. 02 (2008): 150-159, 151

[61] Daniela Huber, *Democracy Promotion And Foreign Policy: Identity And Interests In US, EU, And Non-Western Democracies* (repr., Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1.

[62] Huber, *Democracy Promotion And Foreign Policy: Identity And Interests In US, EU, And Non-Western Democracies*, 1.

[63] Nelli Babayan and Daniela Huber, "Motioned, Debated, Agreed ? Human Rights And Democracy Promotion In International Affairs", *Transworld* Working Paper 06 (2012), http://transworld.iai.it/?p=931.

[64] National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is a private, non-profit organization, which was founded in 1983 with the stated goal of promoting democracy abroad. For further information, please see: "National Endowment For Democracy", National Endowment For Democracy, 2020, https://www.ned.org.

[65] Babayan and Huber, "Motioned, Debated, Agreed ? Human Rights And Democracy Promotion In International Affairs"

of its immediate neighbourhood. It is well-accepted phenomenon that democracy promotion has increasingly taken the immense part of foreign policy agendas of the states at the post-Cold War era. Not only the USA and the EU, but also other democracies including newly emerging democracies and international and regional organizations have participated actively in promoting and protecting democracies all over the world since the 1990s.

As a research field, democracy promotion has gained tremendous interest too by scholars, practitioners and politicians in the post-Cold War era along with the evolving strategies in the practice. While practitioners and politicians are dealing with the best strategy available for reaching intended outcomes, scholars focus on the underlying rationale behind those practices. Democracy promotion is examined into two different strands of approaches: international relations research on the one hand, and transition studies on the other. International relations approaches focus on the foreign policy actors involved in democracy promotion activities and try to understand underlying motivations for the certain foreign policy actions at stake. Transition studies, on the other hand, focus on the dynamics of domestic political regime change. In this thesis, democracy promotion is examined within the IR perspective by focusing on the EU itself.

Subject to the vague definitions of democracy, a clear definition of "democracy promotion" in international relations is rather difficult. According to Beate Jahn, the conceptions of democracy promotion mainly based on the different interpretations of history of liberal democracy by political and economic approaches.[66] While political approach focuses on liberal values, individual freedom and specific political culture as necessary conditions for democracy, economic approach gives importance to the economic development. These significant differences between two approaches lead to the different definitions of democracy promotion as well as different and at times contradictory policies. This weakness in the study field of democracy promotion necessitates a broad definition of democracy promotion. One commonly used definition of democracy promotion is "all overt and voluntary activities adopted, supported, and (directly or indirectly) implemented by (public or private) foreign actors explicitly designed to contribute to the political liberalization of autocratic regimes, democratization of autocratic regimes, or consolidation

[66] Beate Jahn, "Rethinking Democracy Promotion", *Review Of International Studies* 38, no. 4 (2012): 685-705, 693.

of democracy in specific recipient countries."[67] Another definition adopted in this thesis is that "democracy promotion is all the processes by which an external actor intervenes to install or assist in the institution of democratic government in a target state."[68] The critical points in these definitions are as follows: firstly, these exclude all actions taken by domestic actors as well as a number of factors in international context such as the international diffusion and regional contagion with its various sub-concepts such as emulation, mimicry, imitation and inspiration; secondly these definitions take the intentional and overt actions of external actor into account and exclude covert and indirect activities of external actor such as quiet diplomatic efforts or activities of secret services.[69] Another crucial point is that the use of physical force for democracy promotion is excluded from the scope of this research. By looking at a whole range of activities such as trade, aid, development, enlargement policies, European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) etc. that the EU has pursued, this thesis takes into account the democracy promotion in general terms as all "non-violent activities by a state or international organization -here the EU- that are intended to bring about, strengthen, and support democracy in a third country."[70]

In democracy promotion literature, there are other concepts such as democracy assistance, democracy aid, democracy support etc., which are frequently mentioned and have led possibly to the conceptual confusion. Peter Burnell, for example regards democracy assistance as one of the instruments of democracy promotion.[71] Jeff Bridoux and Milja Kurki, on the other hand, support the argument that democracy support and democracy promotion signify the same thing and can be used interchangeably.[72] Here, in this thesis, democracy promotion is used as an umbrella term consisting all instruments and concepts in democracy promotion such as assistance, aid and support.

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[67] Philippe C. Schmitter and Imco Brouwer, "Conceptualizing, Researching And Evaluating Democracy Promotion And Protection", *European University Institute*99, no. 09 (1999), 14.
[68] Christopher Hobson and Milja Kurki, *The Conceptual Politics Of Democracy Promotion* (London: Routledge, 2011), 22
[69] Schmitter and Brouwer, "Conceptualizing, Researching And Evaluating Democracy Promotion And Protection," 14
[70] Tina Freyburg et al., "Models Of EU Democracy Promotion: From Leverage To Governance", in *Democracy Promotion By Functional Cooperation: The European Union And Its Neighbourhood* (repr., New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1
[71] Peter Burnell, "From Evaluating Democracy Assistance To Appraising Democracy Promotion", *Political Studies* 56, no. 2 (2008), 417
[72] Jeff Bridoux and Milja Kurki, *Democracy Promotion: A Critical Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 67.

A key question, which underlies the basis of this research, is: why are states or international actors interested in promoting democracy abroad? What are the main motivations for democracy promotion? Different IR approaches give different answers to this question. Each theoretical tradition tries to examine motives and drivers behind democracy promotion according to their lenses to see the world. In fact, in the literature, theoretical works on democracy promotion in the literature are very rare.[73] Considering democracy promotion is a very new field of study, it is not surprising, but the fact that democracy promotion is get stuck into the field of comparative politics signifies an important weakness in the discipline of International Relations.

However, it is self-evident that "Democratic Peace Theory" constitutes the main part of theoretical literature on democracy promotion. Based on the philosophical roots in German enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant's 1795 essay "Perpetual peace: A philosophical study"[74], "Democratic Peace Theory" suggests that perpetual peace in international arena is possible with democratic republics since democracies do not wage wars against each other.[75] Michael Doyle, who follows this Kantian approach, believes that the more democracies there are in the world, the less potential there is for conflicts and wars.[76] In their empirical studies, Doyle and his colleagues tried to reveal to what extent liberal states are at war and against whom. What they find is: first, liberal states can be at war but not among themselves; second, liberal democratization can be a formula for world peace; finally, democracy promotion and democratization processes should be given priority in foreign policy agenda as a key to ensure peace and security.[77] Indeed, this logic can be

[73] Some of works, which have been frequently mentioned throughout this thesis are: Benjamin Miller, "Democracy Promotion: Offensive Liberalism Versus The Rest Of IR Theory", *Millennium: Journal Of International Studies* 38, no. 03 (2010): 561-591.
Jonas Wolff and Iris Wurm, "Towards A Theory Of External Democracy Promotion: A Proposal For Theoretical Classification", *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 01 (2011): 77-96. Thomas Carothers, *Critical Mission: Essays On Democracy Promotion* (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for Int'l Peace, 2004).
[74] Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Peace* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1795).
[75] Michael Doyle, "Liberalism And World Politics", *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 04 (1986): 1151-1169; Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, "Structural And Normative Causes Of Peace Between Democracies", *American Political Science Review* 87, no. 03 (1993): 624-638. For critiques, see Michael E. Brown, Sean Lynn Jones and Steven Miller, *Debating The Democratic Peace* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).
[76] Michael Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies And Foreign Affairs", *Philosophy And Public Affairs* 12, no. 03 (1983): 205-223.
[77] Şaban Kardaş and Ali Balcı, *Uluslararası İlişkilere Giriş: Tarih, Teori, Kavram Ve Konular* (repr., İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2014).

seen from the words of President Clinton's State of Union Address in 1994: "Ultimately, the best strategy to ensure our security and to build a durable peace is to support the advance of democracy elsewhere. Democracies don't attack each other."[78] Democracy promotion has become one of the main determinants of foreign policy not only in the USA since Clinton term, but also in other European countries and the EU itself. Yet, it is not surprising that each actor has divergent motivations for democracy promotion.

The propositions of Democratic Peace Theory give us some clues on potential motivations behind democracy promotion. Wolff and Wurm argue that according to "Democratic Peace Theory", all established democracies should have an interest to promote democracy all over the world not only because democracy is a normative claim but also these democracies have strategic interest in extending democracy for their own benefits in terms of national security, trade etc. and for collective interests such as international peace and security.[79] Based upon utilitarian and normative explanations of democracy promotion, Wolff and Wurm divide international relations approaches to democracy promotion into three groups: rationalist, reflective and hybrid. Rationalist approaches regard democracy promotion as an instrument to reach the foreign policy objectives as well as to maximize the benefits.[80] Reflective approaches, on the other hand, suggest that actors and structures in international relations are shaped by the social context. Indeed, actor preferences and social context operate simultaneously and mutually shape each other.[81] Hybrid approaches, unlike the previous approaches, suggest that democracy promotion policies are fundamentally indeterminate since the policy outcomes depend on the social preferences of interest groups and/or public opinion, the mode of political setting to enunciate these preferences.

Another categorization among approaches is generally done on the grounds of two main IR theoretical traditions i.e. realism and liberalism. Within the context of debates on interests and norms, realism and liberalism diverge considerably on motives of actors to promote democracy. While realists support democracy promotion policies as long as through those policies states can ensure their security, liberals believe that democracy helps

[78] Bill Clinton, "1994 State Of The Union Address", Washington Post, 1994, https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/states/docs/sou94.htm.
[79] Miller, "Democracy Promotion: Offensive Liberalism Versus The Rest Of IR Theory", 79
[80] Wolff and Wurm, "Towards a Theory of External Democracy Promotion: A Proposal for Theoretical Classification," 83.
[81] İbid.

to construct international relations based on mutual trust and cooperation, which in turn brings international peace and economic development. Yet, besides the distinction between these two camps, there is also an internal division in each camp as offensive and defensive.[82] Different camps in each theoretical approach suggest various ways for democracy promotion such as unilateralism vs. multilateralism, use of hard or soft power etc.

Next subsections are devoted to the detailed analysis of three major categories of approaches to democracy promotion as rationalist, reflective and hybrid approaches. In fact, placing IR theories into these categories is not an easy job since boundaries between IR approaches to democracy promotion is not sharply determined.

### 2.2.1. Rationalist Approaches to Democracy Promotion: When Interests Prevail Norms

The last debate/divide in international relations theories occurred among rationalism and reflectivism, which was mentioned by Robert Keohane in his speech at International Studies Association in 1988.[83] This division stems from different methodological assumptions of each approach. While rationalists including realist and liberal paradigms prefer positivist methodology, reflectivists reject the idea that knowledge can be reached outside the social context. Rationalist approaches in general regard actors and by extension states as rational that make decisions rationally within given a set of preferences and constraints. Based on positivist logic, it is suggested that behaviours of actors as concrete entities can be observable, measurable and testable. Non-measurable factors such as values, ideas, norms etc. are neglected from analysis. Through means of quantitative research methods, scholars first draw up falsifiable hypotheses, then make clear and precise arguments on why these certain events have happened and what the future actions will be.

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[82] Miller, "Democracy Promotion: Offensive Liberalism Versus The Rest Of IR Theory".

[83] Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches", *International Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1988): 379-396, doi:10.2307/2600589. The first debate began at post-World War I with the decline of the dominant idealist or liberal paradigm against realism. The second debate, which was emerged in the 1960s, can be identified as the injection of "behavioralist" revolution in social sciences. The roots of this debate rest on the methodological questions. The third 'grand' debate, which shapes the general direction of IR as a field of study, began in the late 1960s among neoliberal and neorealist paradigms. The fourth 'grand' debate emerged among positivists and post-positivists since the mid-1980s.

Rationalist approaches in IR rooted in rational choice theory, dominated the study field since the mid-1980s with the variations of liberalism and realism such as neorealism and neoliberalism. For (neo) realism, international system is anarchical in which unitary and rational states struggle for maximizing their interests. Systemic pressures and relative power of the states shape the foreign policy decisions. Depending on the type of international system such a unipolar, bipolar, multipolar etc. and the relative power of the state in that system, foreign policy decisions can be predictable. For (neo) liberalism, on the other hand, human beings are rational, self-interested and motivated by the profits that they can make. Therefore, individuals can make right decisions for themselves if their individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills are guaranteed within the institutional framework.[84]

Rationalist approaches focus on the utilitarian explanations of the democracy promotion. Accordingly, democracy promotion is regarded as an instrument to pursue national interests of developed democratic states such as security and economic welfare. From the perspective of security-oriented national interests, realists regard democracy promotion as important instrument. Hence, as long as democracy promotion advances threat perceptions and increases cooperation by creating an international system with shared values, common interests, and transparency of state motivations, promoting democracy can be regarded as the one of major national interests. Yet, this depends on the relative power capabilities of 'donor' state as well as the individual 'recipient' country.[85]

In a similar vein, commercial liberalism[86] suggests that fundamental values are important for the economic development and increased economic interdependence among states. A liberal world with democratic market economies is necessary to maximize

[84] Agil Mammadov and Ziyadhan Hasanov, "Neo-Liberalizm Theory In International Relations", *International Journal Of Humanities & Social Science Studies (IJHSSS)* 2, no. 6 (2016): 291-296.

[85] Wolff and Wurm, "Towards a Theory of External Democracy Promotion: A Proposal for Theoretical Classification," 83.

[86] Moravcsik divides the liberal tradition into three types: commercial, republican and ideational. Commercial liberalists focus on economic gains and losses of powerful groups in society, republican liberalism emphasizes the different forms of domestic representation, ideational liberalism, on the other hand, deals with social values, norms and identities, Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory Of International Politics", *International Organization* 51, no. 4 (1997): 513-553. The division among these variations will be apparent in the next sections.

'aggregate welfare gains' and to guarantee 'economic benefits for powerful private actors.'[87] International institutions supporting liberal democratic values are critically important to overcome international anarchy and achieve peace through cooperation. Yet states determine whether or not to choose democracy promotion as a foreign policy in a toolbox of foreign policies according to economic cost-benefit calculations. As an example, Ikenberry argues that American democracy promotion abroad since the end of Cold War is a part of "liberal" grand strategy, which based on the view that political characters of other states have possible impact on the US to ensure its security and economic interests.[88] This 'grand' strategy is completely different from European realist tradition, which emphasizes the balance of power, realpolitik and containment.

Both realist and liberal traditions are diverged in itself in terms of assumptions towards democracy promotion. Benjamin Miller in his study[89] argues that liberal approach to democracy promotion should be examined into two strands: offensive and defensive. This variation stems mainly from different policies towards regime change: while offensive liberals believe in the imposed democratization as necessary for regime change, defensive liberals focus on gradual, partial and peaceful promotion with the close cooperation with like-minded states and international institutions. This variation manifests also itself in the ways of implementing those policies: while offensive liberals support the use of force even unilaterally in certain conditions for state security and world peace, defensive liberals believe in multilateralism and collective security in which international institutions play a role.[90] This reflects a dilemma that liberals confronts when on the one hand, they argue to respect the right of non-intervention in domestic affairs of other states, on the other hand, they believe in advancing human rights and democracy in those states. Yet, cost-benefit calculations of donor state determine the instruments and ways of implementing democracy promotion. From the purely rationalist perspective, given the huge financial costs for armament and war, financial allocations to democracy promotion policies seem to get benefits to the actors.

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[87] Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory Of International Politics", 515.

[88] G. John Ikenberry, "Why Export Democracy? The 'Hidden Grand Strategy' Of American Foreign Policy", *The Wilson Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (1999): 56-65.
[89] Miller, "Democracy Promotion: Offensive Liberalism versus the Rest of IR Theory"
[90] Miller, "Democracy Promotion: Offensive Liberalism versus the Rest of IR Theory", 570.

At the other side of the story, there are some reasons on why states refrain from promoting democracy according to rationalist approaches. First, democratization is a long-term process whose direct benefits cannot be seen quickly by democracy promoter. Second, rewards and benefits are highly insecure and even expected results can be reversible. For example, while expecting the quick transition of target states to democracy, democracy promoter can face with highly unstable countries "undergoing a process of regime change or remaining 'stuck' in a gray zone between autocratic and democratic rule.[91] Third, democracy promoter should have a relative power and capability to impact on political change in recipient country as well as have a potential to sell the tangible results to the public in the respective democracy-promoting country. As a result, states find democracy promotion is rational and chosen if certain conditions such as potential short-term success, low risks, high asymmetries in relative power etc. are met.[92]

### 2.2.2. Reflectivist Approaches: Constructivist Understanding of Democracy Promotion

Reflectivist approaches as the counterparts of rationalist approaches, suggest that positivist methodology is untenable for social sciences since individuals and states and many other variables used in social sciences are socially constructed and cannot be separated from the social world. Thus, reflective approaches rely on how human beings think about world politics and constitute the institutions *vice versa.* Critical theory, constructivism, post-structuralism, post-modernism and feminism can be counted under the framework of reflectivism as rejection of positivism even though each show considerable differences among themselves on their empirical focus.[93]

In contrast to rationalist approaches, reflective approach regard practices and preferences of actors within the social context. It is not possible to make generalizations

[91] Wolff and Wurm, "Towards a Theory of External Democracy Promotion: A Proposal for Theoretical Classification," 80.
[92] ibid.
[93] Milja Kurki and Collin Wight, "International Relations And Social Science", in *International Relations Theories* (repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 14-35.

because values, norms, cultures, can change across time and space.[94] Since the focus of this thesis is democracy and democracy promotion, reflective approaches regard democracy as a normative value for humanity. Therefore, they suggest that established democracies should promote democracy as a normative duty. According to its constructivist logic, actor preferences are socially constructed, which cannot be understood independent from the social context. Indeed, both actor preferences and social context operate simultaneously and mutually shape each other. In other words, reflective approaches suggest that on the one hand, external democracy promotion is the reflection of national self-images, roles and identity within the framework actor-centered constructivism; on the other hand, democracy promotion can be seen as a regulative norm of the international society in which an actor should follow the rules within the logic of appropriateness otherwise has a risk of being classified as outsider.[95] In other words, reflective approaches take the norms –here the notion of democracy- into account in two-fold way. On the one side, domestic political culture of the country first determines whether (or not) a country promotes democracy, then shapes the appropriate aims and means of democracy promotion if it is agreed on. On the other side, following the English School's concept of "international society", reflective approaches suggest that there are some norms and rules in international system in which states need to apply as a condition to be a member of that society. Within the logic of appropriateness, states meet the international expectations through their foreign policies.

Even though normative approach suggest that democratic states externalize the liberal norms as a liberal mission of democratic culture with the aim of global democratization, in some cases states can refrain from promoting democracy. First, democracy promotion is challenged by the idea that spreading the liberal values -whether the force is used or not- necessitates the open intervention in another political regime. This clashes with the norm of self-determination, which is one of the main liberal-democratic norms. Second, democratic states construct the relations with other states based on mutual

[94] Cagla Luleci and I. Erkam Sula, "Survival 'Beyond Positivism?' The Debate On Rationalism And Reflectivism In International Relations Theory", *Politikon:The IAPSS Journal Of Political Science* 30 (2016): 43-55.

[95] A logic of appropriateness regards "human action as driven by rules of appropriate or exemplary behavior, organized into institutions." James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Logic Of Appropriateness", in *The Oxford Handbook Of Public Policy* (repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). It is mostly reflected in English School. On logic of appropriateness, see James March and Johan Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis Of Politics* (repr., New York: Free Press, 1989).

trust and cooperation in order to maintain international peace regardless of the representatives of those states are democratically elected or not. Yet, any strategy in the name of democracy that empowers oppositional groups against the 'partner' government can harm mutual distrust and international peace.[96]

### 2.2.3. Hybrid Approaches to Democracy Promotion: What if Interests Intertwine Norms?

Until this section, IR approaches to democracy promotion are discussed into two categories as the one regarding democracy promotion as a concrete, rational instrument and the other one regarding democracy promotion as a normative liberal mission of democracies. This section critically combines some parts of the assumptions suggested by these two approaches into one framework. Wolff and Wurm, in their study, claim that there are two critical approach, which can be classified as hybrid in terms of motives for democracy promotion: Moravcsik's 'republican liberalism' and neo-Gramscian political economy.[97]

Republican liberalism, compared to other two variants of liberalism in Moravcsik's classification i.e. ideational and commercial, do not focus on interests and societal identities linked to globalization, but deals with the ways of foreign policy formulation in which powerful domestic groups play a critical role. According to Moravcsik, three factors shape the foreign policy of democratic states: the distribution of social preferences in a given society, the capacity of societal groups to articulate those preferences and to capture the state, the specific type of political institutions.[98] Accordingly, it is not determinate to understand whether respective state decides to follow democracy promotion or not since it depends on domestic group preferences as well as the power and pressure capabilities of this group within the political system. And it is not possible to understand the behaviour and preferences of individuals and societal groups as entirely rationalist or reflectivist logic. This has important consequences for the means to democracy promotion because if powerful groups regard democracy promotion as normative goal, paths to follow democracy

[96] Wolff and Wurm, "Towards a Theory of External Democracy Promotion: A Proposal for Theoretical Classification," 81.
[97] Wolff and Wurm, "Towards a Theory of External Democracy Promotion: A Proposal for Theoretical Classification" 86.
[98] Moravcsik, "Taking preferences seriously: A liberal theory of international politics," 530.

promotion differ from that if democracy promotion is regarded as an instrument for achieving other primary objectives.

On the other hand, the Gramscian approach to international relations emerged in the early 1980s with the works of Robert Cox, who applied the Antonio Gramsci's theoretical insights to the field of international relations. Since then, a number of scholars have contributed the so-called "neo-Gramscian approach.[99] Neo-Gramscian approach, unlike traditional IR theories such as liberalism and realism, combines both the domestic and international levels into its unit of analysis as well as accounts political, economic, and ideologies variables into analysis.

Gramsci based its assumptions on the idea of hegemony by describing it as "cultural, moral and ideological leadership of a group over allied and subaltern groups."[100] Hegemony presents its own cultural, social and moral values as common sense and persuade the subaltern groups that there is no genuine alternative to the present order.[101] This approach sees hegemony as a consensual process in which a set of norms and values underpinning a social order are instilled by hegemon. This imposing or instilling process is done in relation to its allies and its local *protégés*. The realization of hegemony depends on the consent of masses. Robinson summarizes this as: "a Gramscian hegemony involves the internalization on the part of subordinate classes of the moral and cultural values, the codes of practical conduct, and the worldview of the dominant classes or groups – in sum, the internalization of the *social logic* of the system of domination itself."[102] In other words, hegemony in Gramscian sense implies the dominant power, which asserts moral and ideological

[99] Some works on this approach are: Ronald W Cox, *Production, Power, And World Order* (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1987); Enrico Augelli and Craig Murphy, *America's Quest For Supremacy And The Third World* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1988; Stephen Gill, *American Hegemony And The Trilateral Commission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); David P Rapkin, *World Leadership And Hegemony* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1990); Stephen Gill, *Gramsci, Historical Materialism And International Relations*(Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994); William I Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US Intervention And Hegemony* (Cambridge, GBR: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[100] Antonio Gramsci, Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and Quintin Hoare, *Selections From Prison Notebooks* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971).
106-120

[101] Stefan Borg, *European Integration And The Problem Of The State. European Integration And The Problem Of The State* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

[102] Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US Intervention and Hegemony*, 21

leadership and legitimizes the dominant groups' interests as the general interest through the internalization process.[103]

Robinson argues that US democracy promotion can be understood within the framework of the idea of hegemony in Gramscian sense.[104] He describes US democracy promotion as 'the promotion of polyarchy' or 'low-intensity democracy'. Accordingly, in order to insert periphery and semi-periphery into the globalizing economic system, limited democratic reforms are required. The promotion of so-called 'low intensity democracy' is necessary to appeal and suppress masses and seen as an instrument to assure stability in international system.[105] In sum, democracy promotion is regarded as a mechanism for stability, yet as distinct from rationalist perspective. Democracy promotion as a hegemonic instrument requires consent of the recipient and a certain amount of credibility in international level. This kind of consensual domination generally requires non-coercive tools.[106]

This section has aimed to find out the conceptual roots of democracy promotion practice in international relations. Three groups of theoretical variants i.e. rationalist, reflective and hybrid approaches suggest different motives of behind democracy promotion. Yet, none of them is adequate to explain the diversity and variation in the complex democracy promotion practice. In that respect, this thesis is not based on one theoretical approach, rather incorporates contributions from different theoretical traditions. Similar to some assumptions of hybrid approaches and especially neo-Gramscian studies, this thesis aims to investigate the complex interaction of normative values and systems with the interests of actors. Yet, neo-Gramscian focus on transnational bloc of ruling elite does not suffice enough to understand a more complicated reality in which different actors – democracy promoters, targets, individuals- play a role. Therefore, this thesis claims that a strongly pluralistic and hybrid perspective is needed to understand complex and multi-faceted nature of democracy promotion practice. The next section is devoted to analyze the main motivations of the EU for democracy promotion within theoretical framework. Yet,

[103] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers, 106-120
[104] Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US Intervention and Hegemony*, 4
[105] Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US Intervention and Hegemony*, 16
[106] William Robinson, "Promoting Capitalist Polyarchy: The Case Of Latin America", in *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, And Impacts* (repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 308-325.

before delving into the crux of the analysis, it is worthwhile to define the EU conception of democracy and democracy promotion. Then, theoretical debates on the EU democracy promotion will be provided.

### *2.3. Democracy and Democracy Promotion in the EU Context*

The EU's definition of democracy is critical to understand what the EU promotes and how. Yet, one of the most emphasized challenges in the EU democracy promotion is the fact that there is no crystal-clear single definition of democracy given by the EU.[107] Unlike the concept of human rights determined within the framework of international human rights law[108], the definition of democracy is vague and ambiguous in EU context. Some scholars argue that lack of clarity in the conception of democracy stems from the inconsistent policies and competing visions of member states.[109] On the other hand, lack of concrete definition can also enable the EU to pursue more flexible democracy promotion agenda that can be shaped in accordance with the specific circumstances and strategic interests.[110] It seems that the EU has intentionally remained the concept of democracy vague. As Kurki argues, the EU recognizes the multiple models of democracy; it does not seek to introduce any specific kind.[111] Acknowledging diversity within itself, the EU conception of democracy in its external action is "diversity-accommodating and complexity-appreciating."[112] Yet, this 'diversity-accommodating' approach is sometimes criticized by being inconsistent and hypocritical as we have witnessed during the Arab Spring period. Thus, conceptual clarification is needed to understand what the EU promotes and to measure what the EU

[107] Dick Toomstra and Thomas Huyghebaert, "Democracy Revisited Which Notion Of Democracy For The EU'S External Relations?" (Brussels: Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy (OPPD) - DG EXPO- European Parliament, 2009).
[108] Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 was a milestone document to set a common standard for all peoples and nations.
[109] This differentiation has been visible in the enlargement process of Central and Eastern Europe. Please see: Eline De Ridder and Dimitry Kochenov, "Democratic Conditionality In The Eastern Enlargement: Ambitious Window Dressing", *European Foreign Affairs Review (EFAR)* 16, no. 5 (2011): 589-605.
[110] Anne Wetzel and Jan Orbie, "The EU'S Promotion Of External Democracy: In Search Of The Plot", *CEPS Policy Brief* 281 (2012). 3
[111] Milja Kurki, "How The EU Can Adopt A New Type Of Democracy Support" 112, no. (2012), https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/143626/WP_112_democracy_support.pdf 3.
[112] Kurki, "How The EU Can Adopt A New Type Of Democracy Support."

achieves from its democracy promotion.

In general terms, scholars have agreed upon that the EU promotes "liberal democracy" abroad.[113] Yet, there is no consensus among scholars on the concrete content of EU democracy promotion. While some scholars argue that the EU's democracy promotion strategies are technocratic[114], others claim that the main thrust for these activities is for the promotion of market economy.[115] As Kurki (2011) argues, the EU's approach to democracy promotion "is uniquely complex as well as uniquely vague and 'non-ideological' in nature." [116] In addition, EU's approach to democracy promotion varies across geographically. For example, while the main objective of the EU democracy promotion in North Africa and Middle East is the state capacity building, the promotion of civil society as well as functioning market economy constitute the main priorities of EU democracy promotion towards Southern Mediterranean. In brief, while the EU aim to support the civil society through democracy promotion in one country case, socio-economic concerns and promoting state capacity for good governance may prevail in another target country. This does not mean that country-specific features are the sole determinant of the substance of EU democracy promotion. Even if two target countries have the similar features such as socio-economic situation, the type of governance etc., the EU may pursue different democracy promotion policies towards these countries. Yet, what this indicates is that the EU has pursued a wide range of activities in different parts of the world under the democracy promotion strategies. In order to analyze and compare these activities, there is a need to have an inclusive the concept of "democracy promotion". Yet, examination of the "democracy promotion" necessitates the exact understanding of the concept of democracy.

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[113] Thomas Carothers, "Democracy Assistance: The Question Of Strategy", *Democratization* 4, no. 3 (1997): 109-132.; Alison J. Ayers, ""We All Know A Democracy When We See One": (Neo)Liberal Orthodoxy In The 'Democratisation' And 'Good Governance' Project", *Policy And Society* 27, no. 1 (2008): 1-13, doi:10.1016/j.polsoc.2008.07.001.; Thomas Risse, "Conclusions: Towards Transatlantic Democracy Promotion?", in *Promoting Democracy And The Rule Of Law: American And European Strategies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 244-271.; Milja Kurki, "Democracy And Conceptual Contestability: Reconsidering Conceptions Of Democracy In Democracy Promotion", *International Studies Review* 12, no. 3 (2010): 362-386.

[114] Richard Youngs and Kateryna Pishchikova, "A More Pluralist Approach To European Democracy Support" (repr., Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010), https://carnegieendowment.org/files/euro_dem_supp1.pdf; Wil Hout, "Governance And Development: Changing EU Policies", *Third World Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (2010): 1-12.

[115] Wetzel and Orbie, "The EU's Promotion of External Democracy: In search of the plot," 2

[116] Milja Kurki, "Governmentality And EU Democracy Promotion: The European Instrument For Democracy And Human Rights And The Construction Of Democratic Civil Societies", *International Political Sociology* 5, no. 4 (2011): 349-366. 351

Another critical fact is that as in the issue of democracy promotion, there is a little consistency on the concept of democracy among the EU Member States and the EU institutions. Clarity what the EU promotes is needed not only for measuring the effectiveness of democracy promotion policies but also for understanding the underlying dynamics of those policies at stake. This is also important for the frequently mentioned fact that consistency among policies of different democracy promoters such as EU individual member states and external powers i.e. the USA, Canada etc. is one of the most crucial factors for the sustainability and increasing effectiveness of democracy promotion policies.

For these reasons, it would be fit well to analyze how the EU regards or interprets the concept of "democracy" by looking at the EU treaties, international conventions, and official documents.

### 2.3.1. The Concept of "Democracy" in the EU Texts

Early notion of democracy was first suggested in the Preamble to the 1986 Single European Act[117] in order to signal the membership requirements in the light of the enlargement of Portugal, Spain and Greece.[118] In a similar vein, prior to the potential enlargement of Central and Eastern European countries, Article F (1) of the Maastricht Treaty (formally known as Treaty on European Union in 1992) stresses that "The Union shall respect the national identities of its Member States, whose systems of government are founded on the principles of democracy."[119] More importantly, Maastricht Treaty integrated the principles of human rights and democracy into the external policies, which fell under the Common Foreign and Security Policy whose primary objective was outlined as "preserving peace, strengthening international security, promoting international cooperation and

[117] "…determined to work together to promote democracy on the basis of the fundamental rights recognized in the constitutions and laws of the Member States, in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Social Charter, notably freedom, equality and social justice" European Union, *Single European Act*, signed June 29, 1986, No L 169, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:a519205f-924a-4978-96a2-b9af8a598b85.0004.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

[118] Stijn Smismans, "The Constitutional Labelling Of 'The Democratic Life Of The EU': Representative And Participatory Democracy", in *Political Theory And The European Constitution, Political Theory And The European Constitution* (repr., London: Routledge, 2010), 122-138.

[119] European Union: General Secretariat of the Council and of the Commission, *Treaty on European Union*, signed in Maastricht February 7, 1992 https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europaeu/files/docs/body/treaty_on_european_union_en.pdf

developing and consolidating democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."[120]

The end of the Cold War has witnessed a steady increase in commitments to such norms including democracy, good governance, human rights, rule of law at all levels within the EU. Those commitments are explicitly mentioned in EU treaties and declarations of EU leaders. The 1993 summit of EU leaders in Copenhagen is critical in that sense. It was the first time that the EU leaders declared that "the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and promotion of minorities" is the primary requirement for countries seeking the EU membership.[121]

Following the Copenhagen Declaration, in 1995, the European Commission declared Communication on the inclusion of respect for democratic principles and human rights in agreements between the Community and Third Countries, which have determined the general conditions of relations with all third countries on respect for human rights.[122] From 1995 on, these so-called "essential elements" are included in every cooperation agreements between the EU and third countries. In addition, in 2006, European Commission published a paper titled "European Consensus on Development" in which democracy, good governance, human rights, and rights of children were declared as fundamental principles in partnership with all countries receiving Community development assistance.[123] Since then, the Commission's Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) have started to indicate the assessment of the situation of human rights, which was critical for the strategies of democracy promotion in such country at stake.[124]

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[120] "Foreign Policy: Aims, Instruments And Achievements", http://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/158/foreign-policy-aims-instruments-and-achievements.

[121] European Union: European Council, *Conclusions of Presidency*, 21-22 June 1993, SN180/1/93, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21225/72921.pdf

[122]European Union: European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Inclusion of the Respect for Democratic Principles and Human Rights in Agreements between the Community and Third Countries,* 23 May 1995, COM (95) 216 final, available at: http://aei.pitt.edu/4097/1/4097.pdf.

[123]European Union: Council of European Union, *Joint Statement of European Parliament, Council and Commission on The European Consensus on Development*, 24 February 2006, C46/01, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ%3AC%3A2006%3A046%3A0001%3A0019%3AEN%3APDF

[124] Todd Landman and Marco Larizza, "EU Policy Discourse: Democracy, Governance, And Human Rights" (Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2010).

The most strategic paper in this regard is the Council Conclusions on Democracy Support in EU External Relations of 2009, which determines the general principles of EU democracy support.[125] One of key points in the document is that the EU emphasizes the need of bottom-up democracy promotion strategy rather than one imposed from outside or top. Another important point is the emphasis on the need for "tailor-made" strategy, which designs financial and political instruments according to the specific situation of each country.

In 2012, the EU Strategic Framework and the second Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019)[126] was published with the aim of empowering local actors and civil society organizations in supporting democracy and human rights in the line with Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Here again, the EU underlines the importance of local stakeholders in democratization process.

The EU democracy promotion has always been one of the important parts of EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and EU development strategy. The external action of the EU is based on the principles set out in Article 21(1) of Treaty of European Union, which states:

> The Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.[127]

The latest attempt -The Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy in 2016 - take democracy as the inseparable part of global peace, security

[125] European Union: Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations*, *Brussels,* 17 November 2009, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/111250.pdf

[126] European Union: Council of the European Union, *EU Action on Human Rights and Democracy*, December 2015, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30003/web_en__actionplanhumanrights.pdf

[127] European Union: *Treaty on European Union (Consolidated Version), Treaty of Lisbon,* 9 May 2008, Official Journal of the European Communities C115/13, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0013:0045:en:PDF

and prosperity. [128] Similarly, the New European Consensus on Development agreed upon in 2017 regards democracy promotion as the key for eradicating poverty and sustainable development and stability.[129]

As it is clear from those EU treaties, international conventions and strategies at stake, some key words such as good governance, human rights, the rule of law, equality and transparency are frequently mentioned along with the concept of democracy. Especially human rights and democracy can be regarded as inextricable concepts in EU context. For example, Article 2 of the Lisbon Treaty (2009) states that:

> The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.[130]

Strikingly, rather than explaining what it is exactly, democracy is used together with other concepts such as good governance, rule of law, human rights etc. It is evident that especially human rights are closely connected with democracy and democratization in EU policy documents as stated:

> Democracy and human rights are inextricably linked. The fundamental freedoms of expression and association are the preconditions for political pluralism and democratic process, whereas democratic control and separation of powers are essential to sustain an independent judiciary and the rule of law, which in turn are required for effective protection of human rights.[131]

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[128] European Union: European External Action Service, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe: A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy*, *June 2016,* available at: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf

[129] European Union: *Joint Statement of European Parliament, Council and Commission on The European Consensus on Development*, 24 February 2006, C46/01, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ%3AC%3A2006%3A046%3A0001%3A0019%3AEN%3APDF

[130] European Union: *Consolidated Versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, (2016/C 202/01), 7 June 2016, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12016ME/TXT&from=EN

[131] European Union: *Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing a financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide*, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32006R1889 , paragraph 8.

As it is clear, the EU's definition and interpretation of democracy is much more than a minimalist definition of democracy, which focuses only on the electoral competition. Yet, any definition of democracy including basic criteria has been given within the EU context. Lack of consistent definition of democracy and inconsistencies of policies in the field of democracy promotion between that of member states and the EU have led to the strong criticisms. One example is the introduction of the concept of "deep democracy" in the light of Arab Spring period in 2011. Yet, this concept has not been mentioned in any further documents including the Strategic Framework adopted in one year later.[132]

What is striking about the EU understanding is that democracy is also frequently mentioned with the term "European" since the early initiatives of European integration in order to strengthen the process of Europeanization. In the most legal documents, democracy is emphasized as a common value of European citizens, which is expected to bound them together at European level and to create the identity of "Europeanness". EU officials often underline these "shared" values. For example, Javier Solana, the former Secretary General/ High Representative for CFSP clearly identifies that fundamental rights, freedoms and the rule of law "not only defines the EU but is also in our interest."[133] This view is compatible with the logic of reflective approaches to democracy promotion, which suggest that democratic foreign policies are the external reflections of self-images, roles, identities and expectations of other actors within a particular sociocultural context. [134] Democracy promotion is regarded as one of the most fundamental components of its political identity along with rule of law, human rights etc.

A large confusion over the term of democracy in EU documents and strategies has led to criticisms, which in turn necessitate the coherent definition of democracy in EU context. The need for an official definition of democracy has led to emerge two different camps of view. On the one side, some scholars argue that EU should adopt a distinct definition of democracy that constitutes the basis of EU external democracy promotion

[132] Felipe Gómez Isa et al., "EU Promotion of Deep Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean : A Missed Opportunity ? EU Promotion of Deep Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean : A Missed Opportunity ?," no. September (2016), https://doi.org/10.1109/TVCG.2009.147.
[133] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30855/qc8308123enc.pdf

[134] Wolff and Wurm, "Towards a Theory of External Democracy Promotion: A Proposal for Theoretical Classification," 84.

strategies as some regional organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS)[135] and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)[136] adopted. On the other hand, some others think the opposite and argue that the EU should rely on the UN-based definition of democracy rather than adopting its own one.[137] According to UN definition of democracy approved by 172 states in 2005, including all EU member states, there are some *'essential elements of democracy,'* which are "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, inter alia, freedom of association and peaceful assembly and of expression and opinion; the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives, to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic free elections by universal and equal suffrage and by secret ballot guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the people, as well as a pluralistic system of political parties and organizations; respect for the rule of law; the separation of powers and the independence of

[135] The Organization of American States (OAS) came into being as kind of International Union of Republics in 1948. It brings 35 independent states of Americas. In Charter of OAS, promoting and consolidating *representative democracy* is determined as one of its primary tasks. Accordingly, it is stated that: "*Essential elements of representative democracy include, inter alia, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, access to and the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law, the holding of periodic, free, and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage as an expression of the sovereignty of the people, the pluralistic system of political parties and organizations, and the separation of powers and independence of the branches of government. Transparency in government activities, probity, responsible public administration on the part of governments, respect for social rights, and freedom of expression and of the press are essential components of the exercise of democracy. The constitutional subordination of all state institutions to the legally constituted civilian authority and respect for the rule of law on the part of all institutions and sectors of society are equally essential to democracy."* The Organization of American States (OAS), "Charter Of The Organization Of American States (A-41)", 2001, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/docs/inter_american_treaties_A-41_charter_OAS.pdf.

[136] The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is an international organization, which helps its participating countries in strengthening democratic institutions, holding genuine and transparent democratic elections and offers assistance and expertise in their democratization process. OSCE clarifies democracy as "*Democratic government is based on the will of the people, expressed regularly through free and fair elections. Democracy has as its foundation respect for the human person and the rule of law. Democracy is the best safeguard of freedom of expression, tolerance of all groups of society, and equality of opportunity for each person. Democracy, with its representative and pluralist character, entails accountability to the electorate, the obligation of public authorities to comply with the law and justice administered impartially. No one will be above the law."* Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, "Charter Of Paris For A New Europe" (Paris, 1990) available at: https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/0/6/39516.pdf

[137] Toomstra and Huyghebaert, *Democracy Revisited Which Notion of Democracy for the EU's External Relations?,* 5

the judiciary; transparency and accountability in public administration; and free, independent and pluralistic media.[138]

The UN General Assembly resolution and the Human Rights Commission's declaration is crucial in a sense that they provide a full and an operational definition of democracy with *'essential elements'* by emphasizing that democracy is a universal value, while recognizing the possibility of other democracy types as well.[139] As it has been examined in the previous subchapter, some EU agreements, treaties, conventions provide the details of understanding of democracy, some of which are included in UN definition of democracy. Yet, it is worth noting again that the EU's definition or understanding of democracy, which constitutes the base of its external actions, is much more than minimalist academic definitions of democracy, such as given by Robert Dahl or Schumpeter. In order to understand which essential elements are included in the EU concept of democracy, one should look at the practice and democracy promotion policies of the EU.

Given the importance of democracy promotion in EU external policies, adopting a definition of democracy has become increasingly necessary in order to have a transparent profile of EU actions. It is the first time in 2006, the Policy Unit of Council General Secretariat declared the need "to develop a clearer profile," in order to have a better-defined approach.[140] The year of 2009 is critical in a sense that the EU has started to discuss whether it should adopt an official definition of democracy that would be a ground of EU democracy promotion policies. For the first time ever, some initiatives have been taken during Czech and Swedish EU Presidencies to create a more coherent and consistent democracy promotion strategy at EU level with the aim of linking governmental activities with that of the social partners. One of them is conference titled "Building Consensus about EU policies on Democracy Support"[141], held in March 2009 in Prague and organized by the Czech Ministry

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[138] United Nations: General Assembly, *Enhancing the role of regional, sub-regional and other organisations and arrangements in promoting and consolidating democracy*, 23 March 2005, UN Doc A/RES/59/201, available at: http://www.worldlii.org/int/other/UNGARsn/2004/201.pdf

[139] Toomstra and Huyghebaert, *Democracy Revisited Which Notion of Democracy for the EU's External Relations,?* 12

[140] Jan Hornat, "Democracy Assistance Policies Of The US And The EU: Different Approaches And Their Causes" (Ph.D., Charles University, 2017).

[141] For the details of conference programme, please see: http://www.demas.cz/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/konference_program1.pdf

of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission in cooperation with the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) and Association for Democracy Assistance and Human Rights (DEMAS). This conference is crucial in terms of not only gathering experts from the member states and EU institutions to discuss the importance of democracy for the EU's external actions but also to create "European Consensus on Democracy" which is important for transparency and clarity on what the EU really promotes. Even though there has not been a consensus on defining a common position of the member states, it could be regarded as the milestone that signifies the cooperation between member states and civil society organizations. The key outcome of these debates is the document titled "Council conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations"[142] in 2009 especially with key principles, which form the basis of The EU Agenda for Action on Democracy Support in EU External Relations, which was agreed on 17 November 2018. Here again, the link between democracy and human rights as well as that with development is underlined. The next subchapter will provide general knowledge on EU democracy promotion and potential motives behind the EU democracy promotion.

### 2.3.2. The Concept of "Democracy Promotion" in the EU context: Why does the EU "need" to promote the democracy abroad?

The principles of human rights, rule of law and democracy have always been intrinsic values of European project since the inception of European integration. In the course of time, democracy promotion has become an integral part of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP, second pillar). By the mid-1990s, the EU has attributed itself as one of the most influential democracy promoters in the world. Incorporating the democracy promotion into the legal framework, the EU has institutionalized it as one of the general objectives of foreign and security policy.

[142] European Union: Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations*, *Brussels,* 17 November 2009, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/111250.pdf

The legal basis of the EU's democracy promotion was laid down in treaties in the 1990s.[143] For the first time, with the Maastricht Treaty[144] in 1993, democracy promotion was recognized as a general objective for security and foreign policy via Article J1 and for the development policy via Article 130u. The Copenhagen criteria adopted in 1993 includes political, economic, and institutional criteria for candidate countries to satisfy for EU membership. Of which, stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities is determined as political criteria that must be satisfied. The successful transition of Central and Eastern European countries to liberal democracy on the path of EU enlargement has become the impulse for the quest for spreading democracy, human rights and other values all over the world.

The EU's democracy promotion policies, which had been pursued in an uncoordinated manner throughout the last part of the 1980s, gained progressively a definite form in the end of the 1990s. Until that time, the EU's budget lines were scattered in different frameworks across various policies to support democracy. For the first time, the EP had started to discuss whether the EU could have a single budget line and organizational scheme like the US National Endowment for Democracy, which would allocate funds to NGOs to support democracy.[145] All the budget lines were gathered under the title of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) in 1994. With the introduction of EIDHR, democracy assistance policies gained a new impetus and started to be applied almost all regions of the world.[146]

It is well accepted that promotion of good governance, democracy and human rights is an important element of the EU's external policy. Yet, theoretical works in the literature on the reason why the EU has put the democracy promotion into the centre of its foreign

[143] Ionel Zamfir, "Democracy Support In EU External Policy", European Parliament Research Service (European Parliament, EU, 2018), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/614717/EPRS_BRI(2018)614717_EN.pdf.

[144] European Union: General Secretariat of the Council and of the Commission, *Treaty on European Union*, signed in Maastricht February 7, 1992 https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europaeu/files/docs/body/treaty_on_european_union_en.pdf

[145] Federica Bicchi and Benedetta Voltolini, "EU Democracy Assistance In The Mediterranean: What Relationship With The Arab Uprisings?", in *Arab Spring Challenges For Democracy And Security In The Mediterranean* (repr., London and New York: Routledge, 2015).**81**

[146] Huber, *Democracy Promotion And Foreign Policy: Identity And Interests In US, EU, And Non-Western Democracies*, 101

policy agenda is very rare. Since state-centric approaches dominate the IR literature, the EU's motivations for democracy promotion are generally analysed from state-centric theoretical frameworks. Nevertheless, theoretical approaches, which use states as the unit of analysis fall short of explaining the EU's motives behind democracy promotion. In fact, this is one of the most frequently mentioned challenges in the EU studies.[147]

There are two fundamental motivations behind the EU democracy promotion. The first motivation is based on normative explanations, which are actually what the EU declares officially. Accordingly, the EU "wants" to promote democracy because the EU as a political entity prefers the political systems in its neighbourhood that have same the principles and values.[148] The second motivation is more about rationalist concerns with security interests. The EU "needs" to promote democracy because being surrounded with democracies gives safety, which is compatible with main assumption of democratic peace theory, suggesting that democratic nations do not go to the war with each other. Moreover, it is assumed that democracies cooperate more, which in turn increases welfare and prosperity.[149]

Whatever the reasons that the EU pursues to promote democracy for, the EU has confronted with external constraints and situational opportunities, which might shape the way of democracy promotion as well as the choice of instruments at stake.[150] First and foremost, while the EU as a unique entity has its own strategic and economic interests, most of foreign policy decisions are taken by qualified majority voting, which means that individual Member States' interests are of particular importance on outcome. The role of Member States on the EU's external relations with a third country is of prime importance. For example, Member State with large international companies or military bases active in

[147] The story of "Blind Men and Elephant" of Puchala is frequently mentioned in the literature on EU studies. Puchala makes an analogy and tells the story that several blind men touch the elephant in order to understand the nature of beast – the elephant-. Yet, each man comes different conclusions according to their experiences and disbelieve the fellows with a lively debate. This is critically important in EU studies. The *sui generis* character of the EU impedes to identify the EU as an actor, the EU policies and integration, and motivations. See also: Donald J. Puchala, "Of Blind Men, Elephants And International Integration", *JCMS: Journal Of Common Market Studies* 10, no. 3 (1972): 267-284.

[148] Peter Kotzian, Michèle Knodt and Sigita Urdze, "Instruments Of The EU's External Democracy Promotion", *JCMS: Journal Of Common Market Studies* 49, no. 5 (2011): 995-1018, doi:10.1111/j.1468-5965.2010.02163.x.

[149] Kotzian, Knodt, and Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion," 997

[150] Ibid.

third country has different stakes than other Member States. For instance, Germany's active involvement and leadership in the process of the EU's external policy making towards Uzbekistan is given frequently in the literature as an example of how individual Member States with strategic interests can be influential to shape the direction of EU external policy. Secondly, external environment including the third country offering "carrots" to target country without demanding political change has an impact on the effectiveness of EU democracy promotion. For instance, China with important economic resources and international business linkages has started to become a good alternative to the EU for a third country to be funded. Needless to say, having such resources and alternatives both in economic and political terms gives some degree autonomous and lessens the pressure associated with the usage of a "stick". Thirdly, the international system, paradigms and changing conditions over time across regions affect the options and instruments that the EU has for democracy promotion towards a third country.[151] The bright era of Western liberal democracy immediately after the Cold War has waned nowadays. The emergence of alternative models and paradigms in other parts of the world such as "China model", "Asian model" etc. has an impact indirectly on the transformation of instruments of EU democracy promotion.

To examine underlying motivations and main drivers and constraints of these actions, this chapter examines theoretical debates in EU democracy promotion literature. On the one hand, there is a bulk of research on the EU democracy promotion policies examined within the framework of Ian Manners' theory "Normative Power Europe."[152] On the other hand, with the apparent failures of EU democracy promotion strategies especially following the Arab Spring, a new debate on "democracy-stability dilemma" has emerged. Following these debates in the literature, it comes to the conclusion that the EU's normative practices are tied in a complex way with the interests of actors within the EU system. This conclusion leads us another path in which these two groups of theoretical traditions answer completely the research question of this thesis: What is the substance of the EU's democracy promotion towards Ukraine and Georgia? In that respect, this thesis follows analytical eclecticism as the third way called "hybrid approaches" since it is not based on one theoretical tradition, rather combines the contributions of different perspectives. Therein, "model of embedded

[151] Kotzian, Knodt, and Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion," 998
[152] Ian Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction In Terms?", *JCMS: Journal Of Common Market Studies* 40, no. 2 (2002): 235-258, doi:10.1111/1468-5965.00353.

liberal democracy" is used as a conceptual framework to reveal the substance of the EU democracy promotion as well as discuss the motives behind it.

#### 2.3.2.1 "Normative Power Europe (NPE)": Reflectivist Approach to EU Democracy Promotion

Examining the underlying motives behind the democracy promotion necessitates the depth analysis on not only how the actor defines itself in international system and constructs its foreign policy according to this self-perception but also its ability to act in that way in the world. In order to understand whether the EU follows democracy promotion strategies for normative aspirations or rationalist interests, it is crucially important to analyse the type of power that the EU has. Indeed, the question of what kind of power the EU is has been around since the very beginning of the EU integration. To identify "nature of beast"[153], several scholars have developed new concepts such as normative, civilian[154], civilizing[155], post-modern[156], ethical[157] and communicative power etc.[158] One of the most striking concepts in the literature is the "civilian power" that in the 1970s, Duchêne used to qualify the European Community as a power well above the traditional military.[159] According to Duchêne, the EC has ability to ensure stability and security through political and economic rather than military means so it represented a "civilian power" which was "long on economic power and relatively short on armed force."[160] In the 1980s, with the return of power politics, Duchêne's suggestion that civilian power was replacing the traditional military/political power in international system was criticized by mainly the English School theorists on the grounds that "the power or influence exerted by the European Community and other such civilian actors was conditional upon a strategic environment provided by the military power

[153] See footnote 114.
[154] François Duchêne, "Europe's Role In World Peace", in *Europe Tomorrow: Sixteen Europeans Look Ahead* (London: Fontana, 1972).
[155] Emanuel Adler, "Europe As A Civilizational Community Of Practice", in *Civilizations In World Politics: Plural And Pluralist Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2010).
[156] John McCormick, *The European Superpower* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007).
[157] Lisbeth Aggestam, "Introduction: Ethical Power Europe?", *International Affairs* 84, no. 1 (2008): 1-11, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2346.2008.00685.x.
[158] For further information on the EU's actorness in its foreign policy: Helene Sjursen, "What Kind Of Power?", *Journal Of European Public Policy*13, no. 2 (2006): 169-181, doi:10.1080/13501760500451584.
[159] Duchêne, "Europe's Role In World Peace", 37.
[160] Duchêne, "Europe's Role In World Peace", 19-20

of states, which they did not control."[161] Yet, the transformation of the EU from economic union to political entity with three pillars along with enlargement process in the 1990s have led the scholars to rethink what kind of power the EU is in world politics.

Manners, based on Duchêne's theory, developed a new concept of "Normative Power Europe" in order to define the EU's normative difference by focusing on the role of ideas and norms on the EU's power on the world stage. By examining empirical cases since the 1980s on the abolishment of the death penalty worldwide, Manners argues that the EU as a normative power was willing "to impinge on state sovereignty"; to intervene "in support for individuals"; and to pursue this kind of policy even in "the absence of obvious material gain."[162]

In fact, he states in his article that his ideas on the EU's normative power are more or less similar with Carr's distinction between economic power, military power and power over opinion as well as Duchêne's suggestion over normative power as an idée force and Galtung's claim of ideological power.[163] Yet, Manners' assumptions on normative power differ from the arguments of his predecessors by taking analysis out of Westphalian conceptions. He argues that the EU's normative difference comes from its unique historical context, its hybrid form of polity, and political-legal constitution. First, the post-war historical context after the devastating wars and genocide paved the way for the EU to pool all resources in order to prevent the emergence of any other destructive war and to preserve peace and liberty. Second, as a 'hybrid polity' including both supranational and international forms of governance, the EU presents a completely different and complex model of governance, which gathers member states around certain common principles. Third, the EU constitution occurred as elite-driven, treaty based, determines the international identity with its norms.[164] He argues that five core norms i.e. peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law, and human rights, along with four other minor values such as social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance constitute normative foundations of the EU. Yet, these norms are not enough to qualify the EU as a normative power. Manners claims that the EU should have an ability to shape "conceptions of 'normal'

[161] Hedley Bull, "Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction In Terms?", *JCMS: Journal Of Common Market Studies* 21, no. 2 (1982): 149-170, doi:10.1111/j.1468-5965.1982.tb00866.x.
[162] Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction In Terms?", 252-253.
[163] Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction In Terms?", 239.
[164] Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction In Terms?", 241.

in international relations."[165] In other words, despite the criticisms on the EU's weakness to influence international politics due to the lack of 'hard' military power[166], Manners insisted on the EU normative ability to 'lead by example.'[167]

The political context of 1990s and early 2000s have paved the way for the placing Normative Power Europe paradigm into the centre of debates on the EU's actorness. For a while, the EU foreign policy in general and democracy promotion practice in particular have been examined within the framework of Normative Power Europe with its practice of external promotion of democracy, human rights, and rule of law.[168] Yet, soon after the EU's contradictory policies and practices vis-à-vis third countries have put important challenges on the primacy of Normative Power paradigm. Consequently, a vast body of research has started to review Normative Power Europe approach and criticize it in some respects. One of the most prominent works is Richard Youngs' study on the link between normative dynamics and strategic interests. Youngs claims that normative and ideational dynamics don't exclude strategic and instrumentalist dynamics. According to Youngs, variation in EU human rights policies stems from the different strategic considerations as well as security-driven choices. Human rights policies emerge from the common boundaries of normative and instrumentalist dynamics.[169] In a same vein, Karen E. Smith links the inconsistencies in the implementation of human rights policies with the importance of the EU's strategic, political, security and economic interests in third country.[170]

Adrian Hyde-Price, on the other hand, takes a neo-realist standpoint and criticizes

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[165] Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction In Terms?", 239.

[166] Robert Kagan, "Power And Weakness", *Policy Review* 113 (2002), https://www.hoover.org/research/power-and-weakness.

[167] Manners argues that as a normative power, the EU has six ways to promote norms abroad: *contagion, informational diffusion, procedural diffusion, transference, overt diffusion and the cultural filter.* Yet, these ways are not examined in a detailed way since this is out of scope of this thesis. Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction In Terms?", 244-245.

[168] Marek Neuman, *Democracy Promotion And The Normative Power Europe Framework: European Union in South Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia* (Cham: Springer, 2018), 163.

[169] Richard Youngs, "Normative Dynamics And Strategic Interests In The EU's External Identity", *JCMS: Journal Of Common Market Studies* 42, no. 2 (2004): 415-435, doi:10.1111/j.1468-5965.2004.00494.x.

[170] Karen Elizabeth Smith and Margot Light, *Ethics And Foreign Policy* (repr., New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).193-198

the liberal and idealist notions of the EU as a normative power.[171] Accordingly, Hyde-Price argues that systemic structures provide a set of options available to states to follow as the foreign policy. Even neo-realism is regarded as a state-centric theoretical account focusing on hard power and the high politics, it can also offer insights on the international role of the EU since it does not differ from other international players. Hyde-Price claims that the EU acts "a vehicle for the collective interests of its member states" and serves as "an instrument of collective hegemony" shaping its neighborhood through some ways such as political partnership, economic carrots and sticks, or the promise of membership etc.[172] In other words, Hyde-Price argues that economic considerations not normative ones drive the EU's foreign policy.

Another often cited work is the one in which Helene Sjursen questions the legitimacy of EU's normative power. She critically asks whether or not there is any criteria or assessment standards that would qualify the EU as normative power.[173] Michael Merlingen also criticizes NPE within Foucauldian perspective and claims that normative power of the EU is policy-oriented and driven by power politics. By giving two empirical cases of Macedonia and Bosnia, he also argues that normative power brings arbitrary domination between the internationals and locals in poor and conflict-ridden societies.[174]

Babayan and Risse on the other hand, argue that the EU pursue a particular combination of democracy and human rights related foreign policy goals on the one hand, and security and stability-related foreign policy goals on the other. This does not mean that the EU is not a normative power, yet the EU like the US is indeed normative power.[175] In a similar manner, Powell draws attention to another point in the assumptions of Normative Power Europe approach. According to Powell, Manners' approach can be correct in underlining the importance of some major norms at a particular point in time. Yet, his model has an important weakness of ignoring the fact that the degree to the norms are prioritized can change over time. In other words, an actor can adjust its policies according to changing

[171] Adrian Hyde-Price, "'Normative' Power Europe: A Realist Critique", *Journal Of European Public Policy* 13, no. 2 (2006): 217-234, doi:10.1080/13501760500451634.
[172] Hyde-Price, "'Normative' Power Europe: A Realist Critique", 227.

[173] Sjursen, "What kind of power?", 236
[174] Michael Merlingen, "Everything Is Dangerous: A Critique Of `Normative Power Europe'", *Security Dialogue* 38, no. 4 (2007): 435-453, doi:10.1177/0967010607084995.
[175] Risse and Babayan, "Democracy Promotion And The Challenges Of Illiberal Regional Powers: Introduction To The Special Issue", 381-399.

circumstances. Powell gives the example of the EU's relationship with Tunisia and claims that stability as a norm is given much more precedence in this relationship over other core norms in Manners' approach.[176]

All these critical studies on the EU's normative power reveal very important question: whether the EU's democracy promotion is regarded as a reflection of its normative power to shape the conception of *'normal'* in international relations as envisaged by Manners or as a *mean* to achieve its economic and strategic interests and a main component of its security strategy. Next section offers insight into the rationalist approaches to EU democracy promotion.

#### 2.3.2.2. Democracy-Stability Dilemma: Rationalist Understanding of EU Democracy Promotion

A vast of empirical evidences in the literature show that the EU has confronted a critical dilemma in challenged regions: on the one hand, in the long run, the EU needs to promote good governance, rule of law, democracy as an inseparable part of its international identity and political legitimacy; on the other hand, in the short-term, the EU seems to prefer the political stability, which local authoritarian governments in target countries often provide. Cooperation with these local (illiberal) authorities in challenged regions for the sake of short-term interests has put serious impediments on the normative nature of EU democracy promotion policies. Not only the thrust for stability but also other material interests of the Member States has questioned Manners' Normative Power Europe thesis.

Vagueness and inconsistencies between rhetoric and action in EU democracy promotion policies have prompted the scholars to question the normative character of EU democracy promotion and to rethink it within the framework of rationalist approaches. Rationalist approaches to democracy promotion suggest that the EU decides on whether or not to follow democracy promotion on the basis of rational cost-benefit calculations. If democracy promotion practice serves the strategic interests of member state(s) and the EU as a general, the EU follows that policy. The critical point here is to what extent the EU's institutional design can allow that member state has a chance to lead the general EU

[176] Brieg Tomos Powel, "A Clash Of Norms: Normative Power And EU Democracy Promotion In Tunisia", *Democratization* 16, no. 1 (2009): 193-214, doi:10.1080/13510340802575924.197

democracy promotion policy according to its own interests. Relative weight of voting power of the member state in decision-making process is critical factor in shaping the outcomes.

There is always ongoing tension between material interests of Member States and normative ideals of the EU. In the external relations, Member States prioritize economic and strategic interests at the expense of EU's normative ethics. This is especially apparent in exporting human rights norms. Erickson in his study examines the questionable relationship between EU norms and arms transfer policy, and tests the endurance of EU normative power when confronted with strong economic interests.[177] Erickson gives the example of Member States' approach to Code of Conduct on Arms Export, adopted in 1998 in order to control arms transfer to third countries engaged in conflict and human rights violations.[178] Accordingly, in line with the EU's declaration as a normative power, it is expected that Code of Conduct on Arms Expert limits the arms transfer to third countries with poor human rights record. Conversely, the result is opposite: poor human rights are linked with increased arms transfer. In other words, Member States' arms transfer is driven by demand and national preferences take precedence over common EU rules. This is just one of the policy areas in which Member States' economic and strategic interests do harm the EU's norms-based policies and normative power.

Inconsistent application of human rights norms to different regions is another factor, which undermines the legitimacy of the EU's normative power. Mayer argues that the EU seems to be more demanding of human rights clauses in trade agreements with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, while human rights issue is less emphasized in its relations with Asia.[179] From rationalist point of view, member states are less willing to enforce EU norms if these measures are in conflict with their economic interests.

Considering both sides of theoretical works on EU democracy promotion, this thesis takes a common stance, which suggests that EU democracy promotion is often motivated by

[177] Jennifer L. Erickson, "Market Imperative Meets Normative Power: Human Rights And European Arms Transfer Policy", *European Journal Of International Relations* 19, no. 2 (2011): 209-234, doi:10.1177/1354066111415883.
[178] Erickson, "Market Imperative Meets Normative Power: Human Rights And European Arms Transfer Policy", 215
[179] Hartmut Mayer, "Is It Still Called 'Chinese Whispers'? The EU's Rhetoric And Action As A Responsible Global Institution", *International Affairs* 84, no. 1 (2008): 62-79, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2346.2008.00689.x.

a blend of normative and material interests in a complex institutional structure. Neither normative motivations nor material interests of Member States are absent in the substance of EU democracy promotion. This stance leads us to the next section.

#### 2.3.2.3. "Model of Embedded Liberal Democracy" as an Eclectic Approach in Analyzing the EU Democracy Promotion Models and Instruments

Democracy promotion is a cross-sectional issue that incorporates various fields of foreign policy such as economic, technical and financial cooperation, development cooperation, humanitarian aid, foreign and security policy. This means that democracy promotion falls under the competences of both the EU and Member States. In other words, the influence of Member States on the outcomes of decision-making process over democracy promotion is substantial.

A potential that the Member States' rationalist considerations might prevail over the EU's normative values necessitates a full theoretical account, which includes both interest-articulation and decision-making at domestic level as well as systemic influences at international level. Yet, as it is clear, no IR theoretical tradition is adequate to encompass the complexities of EU foreign policy in general, EU democracy promotion in particular. Therefore, this thesis takes an analytically eclectic standpoint by developing a set of hypotheses derived from hybrid approaches and examining these hypotheses empirically.

Analytic eclecticism as an alternative way offers powerful insights by incorporating different levels of analysis, concepts and causal mechanisms suggested by different IR theories.[180] EU foreign policy in general, and democracy promotion in particular is a good case for exploring complexity within the framework of analytic eclecticism. A growing number of scholars are benefiting from the advantages and intellectual potential of eclectic research.[181]

In practice, it is clear that based on the EU's various motives regarding democracy

[180] For further information, please see: Jeffrey Checkel, "Theoretical Pluralism In IR: Possibilities And Limits", in *Handbook Of International Relations*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage Publications, 2013), 220-241.

[181] See for example: Benjamin Pohl and Niels van Willigen, "Analytic Eclecticism And EU Foreign Policy (In)Action", *Global Society* 29, no. 2 (2015): 175-198, doi:10.1080/13600826.2015.1029443. Lorenzo Cladi and Andrea Locatelli, *International Relations Theory And European Security: We Thought We Knew* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

and democracy promotion as well as the Member States' interests, the EU follows different types of democracy promotion models. Even if all these models have different targets, channels and instruments, these instruments are not mutually exclusive. It is to the point to review the foreign policy instruments that the EU applies for democracy promotion policies in order to examine the underlying motivations for differentiated models.

As a general, foreign policy instruments can be defined as all tools that the actor uses in a way of conducting its foreign policy. There are three major instruments: diplomacy, foreign aid and military force. This broad classification has been diversified in different subfields of foreign policy literature. In the democracy promotion literature, instruments are generally distinguished along different spectrums: bottom-up versus top-down, state- versus civil-society-oriented,[182] bilateral versus multilateral,[183] demanding vs. supportive, positive versus negative.[184] Yet, some scholars find this kind of classification defective despite its practicability since one instrument can fall into the different places on these spectrums and even on the contrary sides. For example, the supportive declaration of EU Presidency for the democratization developments in a target country is positive (rewarding), bilateral, top-down instrument. Yet, another instrument can also be supporting in a sense that it gives incentives to target country in the way of democratization and demanding because it can be conditioned upon the implication of some criteria as applied towards possible candidate countries within the framework of membership accession process. Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance introduced as a result of the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007, is an example of such kind. Indeed, accession process can be regarded as the most important and effective instrument that the EU has for democracy promotion even though it has less capabilities to promote democracy through coercive means than nation states.[185] In addition, while some instruments are implemented unilaterally without considering them with target states such as humanitarian aid, sanctions, declarations and demarches, some others are bilateral instruments such as technical aid, which requires cooperation between the EU and a target state.

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[182] Carothers, (1999), *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*. Larry Jay Diamond, *Developing Democracy* (repr., Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).
[183] Jon C. Pevehouse, *Democracy From Above: Regional Organizations And Democratization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
[184] Peter Burnell, "Democracy Assistance: The State Of The Discourse", in *Democracy Assistance: International Co-Operation For Democratization* (London: Frank Cass, 2000). Hadewych Hazelzet, *Carrots Or Sticks? EU And US Reactions To Human Rights Violations 1989–2000* (repr., Florence: European University Institute, 2001).
[185] Huber, *Democracy Promotion and Foreign Policy*, 14

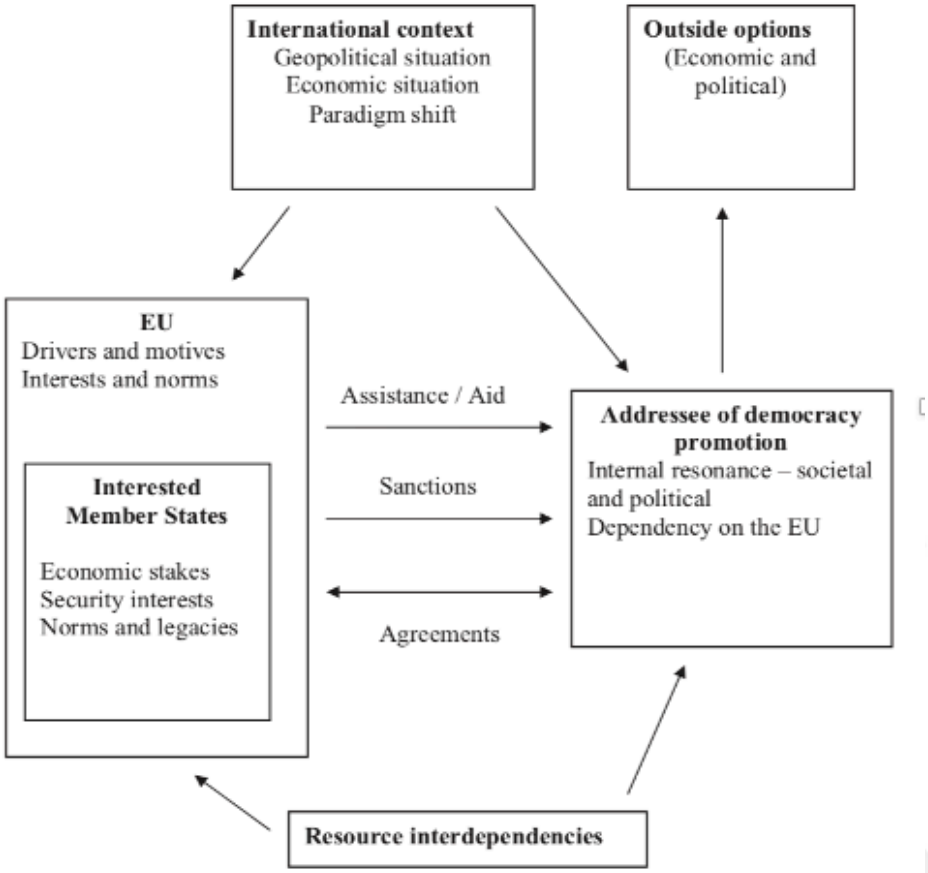
Several EU documents mentions the instruments used for democracy promotion. The most significant one is the report on EU action "Human Rights and Democracy in the World"[186] issued in 2010, which classifies the tools into the following groups:

> "EU guidelines on human rights and international humanitarian law, human rights dialogues and consultations, joint actions, common positions and crisis management operations, démarches and declarations, human rights clauses in cooperation agreements with non-EU countries, activities of the Personal Representative of the SG/HR on Human Rights in the area of CFSP, instruments within the European Neighbourhood Policy, and activities funded under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights."

The choice among these instruments available to the EU for promoting democracy is driven by both internal motives and external conditions. While internal motives should be understood as factors in the EU institutional structure that shape the choice of instruments such as individual Member States' concerns, external conditions can be regarded as factors in the domestic structure of target country that enable or constrain the democratization and the international context. Knodt and Jünemann (2007) develop a theoretical framework to analyze which factors affect the instrumental choice in EU democracy promotion.[187] Figure 1 below shows all factors –internal to the EU, external (international context) and domestic properties of target country-, which shape the EU democracy promotion strategy and tools.

[186] "EU Annual Report On Human Rights In 2010" (European External Action Service, 2011), https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/2010_human-rights-annual_report_en.pdf 11-20
[187] Annette Jünemann and Michèle Knodt, *European External Democracy Promotion* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2007).

**Figure 2.1**. Drivers and Constraints of EU Democracy Promotion




***Source*:** Peter Kotzian, Michèle Knodt, and Sigita Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49, no. 5 (2011): 1000.

Based on this theoretical framework, Kotzian et. al. develops hypotheses and test them in a research, which provides a simultaneous comparison of several factors using basically all countries and comparison of these factors.[188] One main finding in their study is that the progression is a key element for the EU to invest in a promoting democracy in a country. As it is expected, the EU promotes democracy in undemocratic countries. Yet, the study shows that the EU focuses on 'promising' countries that have showed progress in democratization.[189] For example, the EU pays more attention to front-runners in reform, which can be seen from the establishment of Governance Facility to reward those countries and advance their capacity for the development of human rights and democracy.[190] In that

[188] Kotzian, Knodt, and Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion"
[189] Kotzian, Knodt, and Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion," 1009
[190] Huber, *Democracy Promotion and Foreign Policy: Identity and Interests in US, EU and non-Western Democracies*, p.102

respect, the EU increases its financial support and development aid allocated in the framework of EIDHR (European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights –previously known as European Initiative for Democracy-), which constitutes the biggest share among the instruments for democracy promotion.

Another critical finding is the link between economic considerations of Member State and type and the frequency of an instrument used for democracy promotion. Accordingly, they argue that if the Member Country (here donor country) has economic considerations in a target country, the likelihood of agreement including human rights and democracy clauses is lower since economically interested Member State does not want to prefer mixing agreement with political issues.[191] This conclusion is critical because it indicates that democracy promotion is driven mostly by the Member States and their concrete interests not by the EU as a whole.

Economic dependency is another key factor determining the type of instruments for democracy promotion as Kotzian et. al (2011) have found in their study. The more economically dependent country is, the more likely the EU uses this dependency as more pressure and more demands on the way of democratization of that country.[192] In a similar vein, if the target country has economic and political resources, which decrease the dependency on the EU, the EU will choose negative instruments less frequently.[193] The former colonial links between target country and Member State may also affect the instrumental choice of EU for democracy promotion. Yet studies indicate that the EU do not exert the single instrument for the typical situations, but tailors the strategy and instruments according to the situation at hand. Thus, divergent -and sometimes conflicting- motives are present, which shapes the instrumental choice.

The EU may use both instruments simultaneously for the single target country. Starting from this assumption, this thesis uses the model of embedded liberal democracy, which gathers components/channels/instruments of each model into a single framework. Since the main research question is on the differentiated EU democracy promotion policies to Ukraine and Georgia, a holistic framework –the model of embedded liberal democracy-, in which we can grasp the differences not only over time span but also comparatively, is

[191] Kotzian, Knodt, and Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion," 1013
[192] Kotzian, Knodt, and Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion," 1008
[193] Kotzian, Knodt, and Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion," 999

useful to follow. Since the differentiation of EU democracy promotion policies to Ukraine and Georgia stems also from the different application of tools, it is important to examine the whole range of EU democracy promotion instruments.

### *2.4. Conclusion*

This chapter comes to the conclusion with three points. First, in addition to the fact that democracy is well-contested concept, the EU lacks a clear and coherent definition of democracy, which could constitute the basis of its democracy promotion policies. Besides this gives the flexibility in implementation of such policies in accordance with Member States' interests, the EU justifies this as a need for tailor-made democracy promotion policies shaped in accordance with local needs and circumstances. Second, any IR theory is adequate to grasp every aspect of EU democracy promotion policy. This is not because the EU has a more complex institutional structure than a nation state, but also democracy promotion is a cross-sectional issue whose branches fall into the different areas of foreign policy such as development aid, economic and technical issues, foreign and security policy etc. This brings us to the last point that the neither purely normative motivations nor rationalist concerns are sufficient to understand the EU's democracy promotion. For that reason, "model of embedded liberal democracy" as an eclectic approach with its hybrid framework is used as a conceptual basis of this thesis. Following chapter offers general picture of the EU democracy promotion in post-Soviet space in order to perceive differentiated democracy promotion instruments, models and strategies within the region.

# CHAPTER 3

# THE EU'S DEMOCRACY PROMOTION POLICIES IN THE POST-SOVIET SPACE: MODELS AND INSTRUMENTS

The end of the Cold War and the independence of former Soviet states have given the EU necessary impetus to take a proactive stance in supporting the democratization process in the post-Soviet space[194]. Indeed, the EU's proactive stance has already been maintained in its relations with the former communist states from Eastern Bloc in Europe – called as Central and Eastern European states (CEECs)-, some of which declared their willingness to join the EU.[195] The membership conditionality tied to democratization with Copenhagen criteria has worked well and the impressive democratization process of CEECs has been evaluated as the most successful example of democracy promotion ever.[196] In fact, compared to former communist countries in Central Europe and Balkans, post-Soviet ones including Eastern European countries, the Caucasus and Central Asian countries have stagnated at low levels in terms of democratization. The different democratization trajectories of these countries have been examined extensively by scholars, some of whom link this differentiation to various domestic contexts of countries, while others blame lack of "golden carrot" of EU membership in EU policies.[197]

In fact, in academia, the EU policies in the post-Soviet area were largely neglected throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s. Parallel to the design of new instruments and policies vis-à-vis the former Soviet states, research on EU policies in this region has been developed considerably. The launch of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2004 was

[194] Post-Soviet space denotes the former Soviet Republics i.e. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

[195] Sergiu Buscaneanu, *EU'S Democracy Promotion, International Influences, And Domestic Contexts* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

[196] Fukuyama, F., & McFaul, M. (2007). Should Democracy Be Promoted or Demoted? *The Washington Quarterly, 31*(1), 23–45

[197] See for example: Hiski Haukkala, "Explaining Russian Reactions To The European Neighbourhood Policy", in *The European Neighbourhood Policy In Perspective: Context, Implementation And Impact* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 161-177. Stefan Lehne, "Time To Reset The European Neighborhood Policy" (Carnegie Endowment, 2014), https://carnegieendowment.org/files/time_reset_enp.pdf

remarkable in a sense that it has attracted unprecedented interest from academic community. Huge number of studies in the literature have emerged to compare the enlargement process in the 1990s with ENP in terms of tools, policies and incentives. Another huge part of studies analyzes the EU's strategic partnership with Russia as well as divergent actorness of both the EU and Russia. Yet, little attention is paid to the EU's instruments and policies to Central Asia, which is also driving force for this research to fill this gap.

Since the main focus of this thesis is the substance of EU democracy promotion policies to Ukraine and Georgia rather the different levels of democracy in those countries, this chapter, first presents the general framework of strategies, models and instruments used in democracy promotion to post-Soviet area, then examines the evolution of the EU's democracy promotion in post-Soviet space historically. This helps us to understand the complexity as well as the roots of divergent EU democracy promotion policies to post-Soviet countries.

### *3.1. EU Democracy Promotion Models and Instruments in Post-Soviet Space*

Since the 1990s, the EU has included democracy and human rights as essential elements into every cooperation and free trade agreements, which allow the EU take restrictive measures or even suspension of agreements if those values are not upheld.[198] As indicated above, the strategies and attributed importance to democracy promotion has changed since the beginning of 2000s. Even if the EU's objectives for democracy promotion have remained more or less same since the inception of democracy promotion in EU's foreign policy agenda, the instruments available to reach such objectives have been transformed. The historical evolution of EU's instruments for democracy promotion indicates not only the transformation in EU's understanding of democracy promotion and the necessities to adjust itself to the international circumstances but also the increased importance of some regions in EU foreign and security policy due to mainly enlargement. The first formal democracy promotion attempt was made in 1986 when European Parliament

[198] Ionel Zamfir, Gianluca Sgueo and Alina Dobreva, "Promotion Of Democracy And Peace In The World", Briefing: Public Expectations And EU Policies (European Union: European Parliament, 2016), available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/586586/EPRS_BRI(2016)586586_EN.pdf

took a decision to help the NGOs in Chile under the title of "Assistance to NGOs in Chile", which was during military dictatorship yet started the economic liberalization process. Soon later, this attempt was followed by the adoption of new budget lines and programs devoted to the promotion of human rights and democracy in Latin America, post-communist countries, countries in the neighbourhood and those in the rest of the world, which mainly qualify for development aid.

"PHARE"[199] and "TACIS" can be considered as the first instruments aiming democratic transformation in the neighbourhood. PHARE – acronym of Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring of the Economy- programme is designed to provide technical, economic, and infrastructural expertise and assistance to the emerging Polish and Hungarian democracies in 1989. After PHARE program succeeded in its goal to tackle democratic shortcomings in respective countries, the program was transformed into "accession-driven" instrument and the goals evolved to the "to assist the candidate countries in their efforts to strengthen their public administrations and institutions to function effectively inside the Union, to promote convergence with the European Community's extensive legislation and reduce the need for transition periods and to promote economic and social cohesion."[200]

TACIS programme, on the other hand, was established in 1991 in order to help former Soviet Union countries –known as Newly Independent States (NIS)- on the way of their integration into world market economy with the funds available for "policy advice, institution building, design of legal or regulatory framework, and training" as well as necessary equipment.[201] In the beginning, it was designed as technical assistance, yet later its scope was expanded to a wider aspect including political cooperation too.

In the course of time, it has been clear that those programs and policies encompassing a vast region with different countries are inadequate to reach specified goals. In that respect, the EU has declared the need for "tailor made" approach for each country or region based on the specific needs and priorities of that country at stake. Accordingly, the EU has

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[199] See for details: European Union: European Parliament, *The PHARE Programme and the enlargement of the European Union,* available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/briefings/33a1_en.htm

[200] Ibid.

[201] European Union: European Commission, *EC Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia: The TACIS Programme,* (1992), available at: https://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-92-54_en.htm

diversified its tools and aid mechanisms depending on what will work best in each country. Especially following the Arab uprisings starting in 2011, it has become apparent that "one size fits all"[202] approach did not work well, new concepts of democracy and democracy promotion such as deep democracy, sustainable democracy etc. have been emerged with its emphasis on bottom-up approach for democracy promotion. This is also visible in the changing nature of the EU's democracy promotion instruments. For example, until the mid-1990s, election assistance has got the biggest share of democracy funding, which had brought about some criticisms on that the EU has paid the redundant importance to minimal, formal and institutional elements of democracy as well as to the top-down approach.[203] By the end of the 1990s, the EU has increased the share of NGO advocacy in total allocated funds while decreasing the share of election assistance, which indicates the increased importance of bottom-up strategy for democracy promotion including the empowerment of local actors.

In line with the scope of analysis, this chapter focuses on the EU's democracy promotion in post-Soviet space. It classifies the EU democracy promotion policies in the former Soviet area into three groups. First, Russia has always had a specific strategic partnership status in relations, so it needs a special attention in terms of EU democracy promotion activities in post-Soviet space. In addition, Russia as an illiberal regional power might undermine or shape the EU democracy promotion policies in Ukraine and Georgia, which is the scope of interest of this thesis. Therefore, trilateral relationship between the EU, Russia, and the target country (Ukraine or Georgia) needs to be analyzed. Second, the EU has differentiated policy framework within the post-Soviet space for Eastern partner countries included in the framework of ENP (Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan). Since the relations with Russia will be examined distinctively in the first category, this second category will focus on all Eastern ENP countries except Russia. Third category in EU democracy promotion policy framework includes Central Asian countries[204] with the EU's relatively low but increasing role over time. Even though there had been a similar framework of EU policies with marginal differences to these three groups

[202] For further clarification, please see: Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, "One Size Fits All! EU Policies For The Promotion Of Human Rights, Democracy And The Rule Of Law", in *Workshop On Democracy Promotion*, (2004).
[203] Gordon Crawford, "European Union Development Cooperation And The Promotion Of Democracy", in *Democracy Assistance: International Co-Operation For Democratization* (London: Frank Cass, 2000).110
[204] Central Asian countries include Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan.

of states during the 1990s, the EU has differentiated its policy instruments as well as models to them depending mainly on the changing EU's interests and target country's preferences since 2000s.

The EU has applied the following instruments for democracy promotion to countries in post-Soviet space: assistance/aid in the framework of TACIS later on Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), Partnership and Cooperation agreements including human rights and democracy clauses (PCAs), European Neighborhood (Policy) and Instrument (ENI), European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), and sanctions while it neglects the other instruments such as accession conditionality, which makes no sense for the case studies. As it can be seen from Table 3.1, each instrument with various types has different channels, targets, and outcomes. In addition, each instrument corresponds different type of EU democracy promotion models.

**Table 3.1** The EU democracy promotion instruments in post-Soviet space

| Instruments | Channel[205] | Target | Type | Outcome | Conditionality[206] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Technical Assistance to Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS)*** | Transgovernmental | Specific Sector | Positive - Top-down | Democratic governance | Socialization |
| ***Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)*** | Transgovernmental | Specific Sector | Positive - Top-down | Democratic governance | Socialization |

[205] Intergovernmental refers to the relations between the executive officials of the states, such as the European Council, the Council of the European Union (formerly known as Council of Ministers). Transnational denotes "transboundary relations that include at least one non-governmental actor." Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Exploring The Nature Of The Beast: International Relations Theory And Comparative Policy Analysis Meet The European Union", *JCMS: Journal Of Common Market Studies* 34, no. 1 (1996): 53-80, doi:10.1111/j.1468-5965.1996.tb00560.x.
Transgovernmental relations are defined as "sets of direct interactions between sub-units of different governments that are not controlled or closely guided by the policies of the cabinets or chief executives of those governments" Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, "Transgovernmental Relations and International Organizations", *World Politics* 27, no. 1 (1974): 39-62, doi:10.2307/2009925.

[206] The EU adopts conditionality mechanism when it sets the adoption of democratic rules and practices as conditions that the target countries have to fulfill in order to receive rewards or incentives such as membership, financial assistance, preferential trade agreements, visa liberalization etc. This kind of carrots/sticks mechanism lacks when the adoption of democratic practices and institutions are done through socialization or learning. For further information on conditionality vs. socialization, see: Paul Kubicek, *The European Union And Democratization* (London: Routledge, 2003).

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) (with human rights clauses)*** | Intergovernmental | Polity | Positive -Top-down | Democratic institutions | Conditionality |
| ***Association Agreements (AA)*** | Intergovernmental | Polity | Positive - Top-down | Democratic institutions | Conditionality |
| ***European Neighbourhood (Partnership) Instrument (ENI)*** | Intergovernmental | Polity | Positive - Top-down | Democratic institutions | Conditionality |
| ***European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)*** | Transnational | NGOs and civil society | Positive - Bottom-up | Democratic culture | Socialization |
| ***Sanctions*** | Intergovernmental | Specific sector or Polity | Negative - Top-down | Democratic institutions | Conditionality |

Instruments that aim to consolidate democratic institutions are mainly top-down in which the EU uses a various kind of conditionality. Those instruments target the strengthening partial regimes of "model of embedded liberal democracy" i.e. "a democratic electoral regime, political rights of participation, civil rights, horizontal accountability, and the guarantee that the effective power to govern lies in the hands of democratically elected representatives". On the other hand, the EU democracy promotion strategies through transgovernmental networks use socialization and learning mechanisms, which intend to promote democracy through technical assistance. TACIS and later DCI can be given as examples to this strategy. These kinds of instruments are applied to reach the outcome of democratic governance. In the conceptual framework of model of embedded liberal democracy, these instruments can be regarded as tools for improving external conditions that shape the environment for enabling and stabilizing democratic governance. Following sections present the overview of each democracy promotion instruments.

### 3.1.1. Technical Assistance to Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) (1992-2006)

The break-up of the Soviet Union and following independence of its former constituent republics one by one put the region into the instability with huge political, economic and social vacuum behind. As a quick solution to fill this vacuum, the European Union started the TACIS programme in 1991 to support newly independent states in their transition process.[207] Yet, it is clear that unfamiliarity of the region with having no information and no traditional ties, the EU faced with challenges to design and implement successfully the program.[208] Immediate need for economic, social and administrative assistance had paved the way to ignore long-term sustainability, which has affected directly the success of the program.[209]

In the inception of the program, the main objective was to assist the transition to market economy. Few strategic sectors such as Nuclear Safety sector and pipelines sector, were selected as the focal points. With small-scale projects, demands of CIS Ministries had tried to be met by Brussels. The numbers of sectors covered by TACIS program has changed frequently during the initial years. While in 1991 TACIS covered six sectors i.e. public and private-sector management training, financial services, energy, transport, and foodstuffs distribution,[210] in 1992 this number decreased to five with reframing, and in 1993 the number increased to 18.[211] In fact, not only the numbers of sectors covered by program, but also main rationale changed throughout the years depending on the changing domestic and international circumstances. In 1993 and 1999, objectives relating to democracy and rule of law were added.[212] Yet, limited funding allocated to democratization indicates clearly that democracy promotion was never become a main goal of this program.

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[207] TACIS- Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia- aims to support the recipient countries in order to develop well-functioning market economies. The programme has 11 members of CIS – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan- and also Georgia and Mongolia, which became the recipient in 1994.

[208] Alexander Frenz, "The European Commission'S Tacis Programme 1991–2006: A Success Story", 2007, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/tacis_success_story_final_en.pdf

[209] ibid.

[210] European Union: European Council, *Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 2157/91*, 15 July 1991, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31991R2157&from=EN

[211] Sigita Urdze, "The Tool Kit Of EU-Central Asian Cooperation", in *The European Union And Central Asia*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2010). 23

[212] United States General Accounting Office, "Foreign Assistance: International Efforts To Aid Russia's Transition Have Had Mixed Results", Report To The Chairman And To The Ranking Minority Member, Committee On Banking And Financial Services, House Of Representatives (Washington D.C., 2000), https://www.gao.gov/assets/160/156835.pdf

In January 2000, a new Council Regulation (No 99/2000) has changed the nature of TACIS program from demand-driven to dialogue-based one, in which the process is regarded as reciprocal.[213] In addition, the management of the projects in the program has been decentralized. In other words, the project planning, management and supervision are assigned to EC Delegations rather than Brussels. More importantly, from 2000 on, all sectoral programmes have been gathered under three tracks: Regional Cooperation Programme; Regional Support for Programmes Implemented at National Level; and Pilot Poverty Reduction Scheme. The funding has also changed over time. While the budget allocated to TACIS programme for the period 1991-1999 is 4.221 million Euros, the committed TACIS budget has been increased with an additional 3.138 million Euros for the period 2000-2006.[214] With this budget, the EU together with its Member States is the single largest donor of foreign assistance to these countries.[215]

Under the TACIS national programmes, three main priorities for the EU's assistance were identified: (a) institutional, legal and administrative reform, (b) private sector and economic development, and (c) addressing the social consequences of transition. In addition, TACIS was designed to address common regional challenges such as defective infrastructure, environmental degradation, poverty, illegal migration, human and drug trafficking. Four specific projects under the framework of TACIS are directly related to Ukraine: Interstate Oil and Gas Pipeline Management (INOGATE), the Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRACECA), Border Management Programme (BOMCA), Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP).

INOGATE and TRACECA are about the cooperation between the EU, Eastern European countries and Central Asia on the transport of natural resources. These projects seek to improve the infrastructure of pipelines and provide new and alternative strategic routes for oil and gas transportation. BOMCA and CADAP, on the other hand, aim to deal with trans-regional challenges such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism. As a French initiative in 1996 and operated in 2001, CADAP aimed to prevent

[213] United States General Accounting Office, "Foreign Assistance: International Efforts To Aid Russia's Transition Have Had Mixed Results"
[214] Esra Cayhan, "The European Union's Central Asia Strategy", *Bilig* 26 (2003): 11-43. 13
[215] ibid.

the drug flow to Afghanistan, while BOMCA launched in 2003 as a flagship project of the EU in the field of border management through technical and financial assistance.

The fourth TACIS programme covered the years 2000-2006 was aimed to give assistance to the 12 countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia with the similar objectives as in the previous TACIS regulations i.e. transition to market economy, nuclear safety, strengthening democracy and rule of law. From 2000 to the end of 2004, TACIS and its implementation were evaluated for the purpose to present proposals for the future programme.[216] Evaluation Unit reached to the conclusion that even though TACIS was highly relevant for the needs of the region, there were certain drawbacks in the implementation of TACIS. First, TACIS programme, especially in its early years, could be identified as a top-down approach, which had deficiencies in considering the context of partner countries. Therefore, it was recommended to diversify the programme in accordance with individual country needs. Second, related to the first result, it was stated that National Indicative Programmes were highly detailed, which prevented the level of flexibility of projects to be adapted in local situations. Third, it was underlined that TACIS programme included a huge number of 'stand-alone' technical assistance projects, which had a very little impact on the sectoral and national level despite their success at project level.[217]

In 2004, a range of new instruments was introduced for the development assistance. TACIS programme was replaced by European Neighbourhood Instrument for the cooperation between the EU and countries in the framework of European Neighbourhood. Pre-Accession Instrument was introduced for candidate and potential candidate countries. For non-candidate and non-ENP countries, the Development Cooperation Instrument was established by replacing TACIS.[218]

### 3.1.2. European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI)

[216] Anders Hanberger and Sara Bandstein, "Europeaid's Management Response System - Fiche Contradictoire" (repr., Umeå Centre for Evaluation Research, 2008), https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:405581/FULLTEXT01.pdf
[217] Sergiu Buscaneanu, *Regime Dynamics In EU's Eastern Neighbourhood* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2016).9
[218] Alexander Warkotsch, *The European Union And Central Asia* (London: Routledge, 2010). 21

In 2004, European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) was launched with the aim to create a zone of prosperity, stability and security. Within the framework of ENP, bilateral relations with the EU's Eastern neighbors – Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan- and southern – Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Lebanon and Syria- are built on the principles of democracy, human rights, good governance, market economy and sustainable development.[219] The objectives of ENP have been reached through some legal agreements such as Partnership and Cooperation Agreements and Association Agreements, and some instruments such as European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) launched in 2007, Civil Society Facility and some other loans provided by European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

ENI replaced the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) following the substantial considerations over years. ENI as a financial instrument supports agreed policy objectives and policy initiatives of ENP including its two dimensions the 'Eastern Partnership' for Eastern neighbors and 'Union for the Mediterranean' for Southern neighbors. "More for more" approach is embraced to give more incentives (money, market and mobility) to the best performers. A differentiation approach has become the main pillar of ENI. For the first time, this approach is declared as partner country "shall be differentiated in form and amounts according to the partner country's commitment to reforms and its progress in building deep and sustainable democracy, [...] in implementing agreed reform objectives"[220] In addition, measures to impose negative conditionality has been outlined in the regulation for the first time if partner country "fails to observe the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."[221]

For the years 2014-2020, ENI budget is worth over €15 billion. There are 16 Partner countries, which benefit from ENI funds except Russia that has a special status with strategic

[219] "The European Neighbourhood Policy | Fact Sheets On The European Union | European Parliament", Europarl.Europa.Eu, 2020, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/170/the-european-neighbourhood-policy

[220] European Union: European Commission, *Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument*, COM(2011) 839 final, available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/com/com_com(2011)0839_/com_com(2011)0839_en.pdf

[221] Ibid.

partnership covering "four common spaces" and Syria due to current political situation.[222] ENI support is done in three different ways i.e. through bilateral programmes (support to one partner country), through multi-country programmes (including two or more partner countries to address common challenges) and cross-border cooperation programmes (between Member States and partner countries, which share the external border of the EU-including Russia)[223]

To grasp the size and the importance of ENI funds for neighbourhood countries, it is important to look at the share of ENI within the total amount agreed for the EU's external relations package. For the years 2014-2020, it has been decided to allocate the amount for ENP countries as following:[224]

- Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA): €11,699 million
- European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI): €15,433 million
- Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI): €19,662 million
- Partnership Instrument (PI): €955 million
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IfSP): €2,339 million
- European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR): €1,333 million.

It is obviously seen that the share of ENI funds within the whole package allocated to European Neighborhood Policy countries is significant whereas EIDHR has a very small amount of funds. This indicates that the EU prioritizes the projects on cooperation in the non-political subjects such as economic, social, environmental, or energy over projects directly related to the democracy and human rights promotion. In other words, in its relations with ENP countries, the EU focuses on strengthening or improving external conditions, which shape the environment for enabling and stabilizing democratic governance. Underlying motivations for choosing such way to conduct democracy promotion policies will be explored comparatively in the case studies of Ukraine and Georgia.

[222] ENI South including Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and ENI East including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.
[223] "The European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) | EU Neighbours", www.euneighbours.eu, accessed 19 December 2020, https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/policy/european-neighbourhood-instrument-eni#eni.
[224] Ibid.

### 3.1.3. Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)

Development Cooperation Instrument covers a wide range of areas and different programmes to support all the developing countries except the countries eligible for the Pre-Accession Instrument.[225] In addition to its main goal to reduce poverty, it also supports developing countries in the advancement of human rights, democracy and good governance and in strengthening sustainable economic, social and environmental development through these programmes. Hence, unlike TACIS, DCI covers all developing countries and regions i.e. Latin America, the Gulf, South Africa, the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP), and Asia (including Central Asia) and focuses less on countries in transition to market economy, but more on poverty reduction and democratization.

Funds are available for all natural and legal persons of EU Member States, developing target countries, and eligible countries in the developing regions, which are included in the list of aid recipients of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC).[226] After TACIS expired, DCI was initiated as a general development instrument with its specific focus on strengthening public administrations in target states. The underlying reason to support the development of the public sector is to reinforce universal and non-discriminatory access of citizens to basic services such as health, education, social insurance etc. In a similar vein, at least 20% of assistance under the Regulation establishing DCI for 2014-2020 is allocated for "supporting social reforms that increase access to basic social services."[227]

[225] "Funding", International Cooperation And Development - European Commission, accessed 19 December 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding
[226] See the full list in Annex.1
[227] European Union: The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, *Regulation (EU) No 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation for the period 2014-2020*, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014R0233

### 3.1.4. European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)

The progressive evolution of the EU's democratic assistance since the late 1980s has brought a need for more coordinated framework for budget and program. It was the first in the early 1990s that the European Parliament (EP) started to search something similar to the US National Endowment for Democracy[228] in order to fund the civil society for the purpose of democracy promotion. Following the request of the European Parliament, in 1994 the EU launched the European Initiative for Democracy, which gathers all budget headings devoted for democracy promotion under a single budget line.[229] In 2007, the scope of this initiative was expanded with the new title of European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). Since its first launch as an initiative in 1994 as an instrument in 2007, European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) as a civil society focused-democracy promotion tool has been served to promote democracy and human rights all over the world. With its specific focus on democratic principles and global scope, it is regarded as unique.[230] Moreover, in the literature, EIDHR is generally described as the "jewel in the crown" the of EU instruments for external assistance even though very moderate budget is allocated.[231]

EIDHR allocations can be regarded as a way of EU's bottom-up strategy since it supports democratization from within the society in a third country. It is a positive instrument because it allocates money to NGOs on basis of projects in order to achieve something without damaging anyone. Yet, it is intrusive because all this process of allocation of money is realized outside the control of governments. From the eyes of political elites in non-democratic country, there is a risk of being seen as a threat since the EU funds "democracy-oriented" groups that are generally in the political opposition.[232]

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[228] For further information on US National Endowment for Democracy (NED): "About The National Endowment For Democracy - National Endowment for Democracy", National Endowment for Democracy, accessed 19 December 2020, https://www.ned.org/about/

[229] Federica Bicchi and Benedetta Voltolini, "EU Democracy Assistance In The Mediterranean: What Relationship With The Arab Uprisings?", *Democracy And Security* 9, no. 1-2 (2013): 80-99, doi:10.1080/17419166.2012.736313. 83

[230] Annabel Egan and Laurent Pech, "Respect For Human Rights As A General Objective Of The EU's External Action", *KU Leuven* 161 (2015), https://ghum.kuleuven.be/ggs/publications/working_papers/2015/161eganpech 17

[231] Milja Kurki, "Democracy Promotion And The Construction Of Liberal Publics: The European Instrument For Democracy And Human Rights And Neoliberal Governmentality", in *ECPR General Conference*, (repr., 2011), https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/PaperDetails/7362.

[232] Kotzian, Knodt, and Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion," 1003

EIDHR allocates its funds to many local and regional NGOs, except any political parties in beneficiary countries. 90% of EIDHR projects come from civil society and the remaining part are from international organizations. The largest funds are generally allocated to the Council of Europe, UN agencies or big international NGOs for their projects on human rights, media freedom and peacebuilding.

Since EIDHR does not need the consent and the approval of governments in target countries and cooperates directly with civil society organizations such as human rights defenders, it gives more flexibility and more independence of action compared to other external assistance instruments.[233] In 2014, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights for the period of 2014-2020. It is the successor of previous documents titled EIDHR (2007-2013) and European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (2000-2006).[234] For the period of 2014-2010, the budget for the current EIDHR is approximately 1.3 billion euros, which is 21% more than the previous budget.[235] Yet, compared to the amount of financial aid given within the framework of European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), EIDHR budget is a relatively small sum, which is 0.12% of the overall EU budget. Compared to the funding allocated by the United States, the amount of EIDHR aid to civil society is very small. For example, in 2007- 2008, EIDHR aid to €6.9 million is allocated to all the six countries of Eastern Neighborhood, whereas just one US-funded project allocated for enhancing civil society's capacity in the fight against corruption in Ukraine for the years between 2007–2009 amounted to $9.8 million.[236]

EIDHR budget is under heading 4 of multiannual budget titled as "Global Europe", which includes all the EU's external action except European Development Fund (EDF) funded from direct contributions of EU Member States rather than from EU budget. It is

[233] "European Instrument For Democracy And Human Rights (EIDHR)", EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission, accessed 19 December 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/81302/european-instrument-democracy-and-human-rights-eidhr_en
[234] Ibid.
[235] Alina Dobreva, "How The EU Budget Is Spent: European Instrument For Democracy And Human Rights", Blog, *European Parliamentary Research Centre Blog*, 2015, https://epthinktank.eu/2015/10/09/european-instrument-for-democracy-and-human-rights/
[236] Natalia Shapovalova and Richard Youngs, ""EU Democracy Promotion In The Eastern Neighbourhood: A Turn To Civil Society?", Working Paper (repr., Madrid: FRIDE, 2012), https://www.epd.eu/wp-content/uploads/FRIDE-WP_115_EU_democracy_promotion_in_the_Eastern_neighbourhood.pdf

allocated into fiscal periods as indicated above across countries depending on some criteria such as population. Yet, the EU allocates these funds in a free hand manner i.e. while some 'focus countries' can receive substantial funds, others can receive nothing. The funding can be allocated for macro- as well as micro-level projects. EuropeAid is responsible institution for the management of allocations and projects. In the last few years, building and strengthening the democracy 'from below' have been the main focus of the EU democracy promotion system. Civil society, in this sense, has been regarded as the key actor in order to foster the democratic culture 'from below' in a target country.[237] This change in vision is reflected to the increased allocations for projects on strengthening civil society.

### 3.1.5. Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs)

Partnership and cooperation agreements (PCAs) are another important bilateral instrument, which focuses mainly on business, trade and investment between the EU and individual target state. They are not tailored directly was not tailored to democratization but focused on trade and investment promotion and capacity-building.

Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) were signed with the post-Soviet countries during the 1990s. Yet, ratification process took a long time due to burdensome procedure. The first PCAs entered into force in 1998 with Moldova and Ukraine, and those with Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia in 1999. For Central Asian countries, the first PCAs were signed with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in 1994, entered into force in 1999. Trade and economic cooperation were the main objectives. Nevertheless, there were specific clauses concerning human rights and democracy in those PCAs. Both sides proclaim the respect for democracy, principles of international law, and human rights as an essential element of the partnership. In addition, these PCAs constitute the EU the last resort to support the partner countries in consolidating democracy. Association Agreements (AAs), which replaced

[237] Milja Kurki, "Governmentality And EU Democracy Promotion: The European Instrument For Democracy And Human Rights And The Construction Of Democratic Civil Societies1", *International Political Sociology* 5, no. 4 (2011): 349-366, doi:10.1111/j.1749-5687.2011.00139.x

PCAs in the late 1990s, have been concluded with partner countries to enhance political dialogue and to improve deeper cooperation on justice and security issues.[238]

PCAs with human rights clauses are double-edged in its nature. On the one hand, the EU offers favor or incentive such as tariff reduction in trade with the third country. On the other hand, there is a demand imposed on that country. Former colonies are more likely to receive this agreement.

The overall impact of PCAs on democratization is still questionable. The leverage of the EU on the partner country through PCAs depends not only on the issues at stake, but also the credibility of providing or withholding the promised incentives. Lack of strong legal framework indicating obligations and measures makes EU promises and/or threats less credible for their partner. This in turn decreases the possible impact of PCAs on democratization. In this research, PCAs including clauses of democracy, good governance, human rights are incorporated into the analysis.

### *3.2. EU Democracy Promotion in Post-Soviet Space: Historical Background*

When the Soviet Union[239] collapsed, the European Community (EC) faced with two-fold conundrum. First, the EC had to deal with the problem of developing links with these newly independent states owing to the lack of official relations with former Soviet countries until the end of 1980s. Therefore, constructing linkages was highly complicated because this region was a *terra incognita* to Brussels at that time.[240] Second, the dissolution of Soviet Union coincided at the same time period when the EC decided to deepen its own integration. Therefore, the EC faced with the challenges to develop a way of cooperation with this unknown region while it was struggling with other issues of its own deepening and

[238] Shapovalova and Youngs, "EU Democracy Promotion in the Eastern Neighbourhood: A Turn to Civil Society?," 3.
[239] Soviet Union (The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics –USSR-) denoted 15 republics, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, which became independent in 1991.
[240] Laure Delcour, *Shaping The Post-Soviet Space? EU Policies And Approaches To Region-Building* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2013).

integration processes. Therefore, with its limited capabilities, the EC had to design a new approach to the region, which had undergone drastic changes.

In the very beginning, the EU based its policies towards former Soviet Republics on a bilateral approach as the EU on the side, and target country on the other side.[241] Lack of regional approach to post-Soviet space allowed the differentiated treatment of the EU to each former Soviet Republics. This paved the way for a kind of conditionality through which a country with high scores in reform process could get more beneficial treatment than the others. The first example of this differentiated treatment was targeted at three Baltic States - Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia-, which were incorporated by force into the Soviet Union in 1940.[242] Therefore, as compatible with their preferences, the EC/EU incorporated easily its integration policy to these countries.

The EU's differentiated treatment reveals itself in two respects. First, the type of agreements with former USSR excluding Baltic states is diverged from the ones with Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs). While the agreements with former USSR are framed as non-preferential agreements[243] on the issues of economic cooperation and political dialogue, most Central and Eastern European countries were offered association agreements as the first step in the accession process into the Union. Second, there is also difference among the former Soviet republics in terms of design and negotiation of PCAs depending

[241] Karen E. Smith, "The EU And Central And Eastern Europe: The Absence Of Interregionalism", *Journal Of European Integration* 27, no. 3 (2005): 347-364, doi:10.1080/07036330500190255.
[242] Delcour, *Shaping The Post-Soviet Space? EU Policies And Approaches To Region-Building*, 27

[243] Non-preferential trade based on GATT –later WTO- principles of Most Favoured Nation (MFN), which means that in principle, the concerned countries would not get better treatment from the EU than the other GATT members. Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC) draws up its Opinion on relations between European Union and Russia, Ukraine and Belarus as: "The transformation of the political and economic landscape in the former USSR has caused the European Commission to develop a new type of agreement, mid-way between a trade/cooperation agreement and a Europe agreement. The aim is now to conclude partnership and cooperation agreements with the independent states of the former Soviet Union. These non-preferential agreements, which are of a hybrid nature and consequently require ratification, are designed to define a broad range of political, economic and commercial relations between the contracting parties and to replace the 1990 trade and cooperation agreement with the former Soviet Union." European Union: Economic and Social Committee, *Opinion on relations between the European Union and Russia, Ukraine and Belarus,* 95/C 102/11, (1995) available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:51995IE0055&from=FR

on the relative importance of the country at stake. Therefore, in 1992, Commission started the talks for the future agreements with three 'strategic'[244] countries i.e. Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. However, it took a bit more time to start the negotiations with Caucasus and Central Asian countries.[245]

Even though the EC's differentiated treatment was propounded by bilateral agreements, a regional dimension was also *de facto* present in the EC's policy in the 1990s to develop a regional approach for facilitating the integration of former Soviet states to market economy. Technical Assistance programme (TACIS) was initiated immediately after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Therefore, the first Partnership and Cooperation Agreements supporting trade, economic and commercial co-operation were concluded bilaterally with Moldova and Ukraine (1998) and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (1999). Even though the EU's interests such as the respect for democracy, human rights and principles of international law, the integration to world economy, assistance in conflict prevention are proclaimed as common and essential elements of cooperation for the countries in the post-Soviet space, the pace, design and the policy frameworks of these bilateral agreements with former Soviet countries differed. Related to this argument, this chapter claims that this differentiation of EU democracy promotion policies reveals itself into three groups: Russia as a strategic partner, countries in the framework of EaP, and Central Asian countries. Following subsections are devoted to analyzing the EU's democracy promotion policies in three groups historically. This helps us to understand divergent nature of EU democracy promotion frameworks to post-Soviet space.

### 3.2.1. EU-Russia Relations: A Privileged Status

The EU- Russia relations started in 1991 immediately after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Indeed, Russia was the first among former Soviet countries that the EU initiated rapidly a meeting concerning Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The importance of Russia for the EU is clear with the fact that EU's first attempts to develop

[244] Related to the EC priorities in the region as well as the relative importance of the countries at stake, the EU launched the programme for cooperation quickly. Delcour, *Shaping The Post-Soviet Space? EU Policies And Approaches To Region-Building*, 28.
[245] Delcour, *Shaping The Post-Soviet Space? EU Policies And Approaches To Region-Building*, 29.

cooperation during the 1990s had been towards it. This has been described in academia as 'Russia-first' policy.[246] Even though the EU democracy promotion in Russia seems to be out of scope of this thesis, concerning the potential impacts of Russia in shaping the external regional environment and impeding the democratization process in the region, the EU-Russia relations are critically significant.

The EU-Russia relations started with the EU's rapid move for initiating a meeting for Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in March 1991. Yet, despite this enthusiasm on the EU side, it took more than 18 months to negotiate the final draft of the PCA, which was signed in 1994 in Corfu. The signing of PCA coincided with the war of Chechnya, which also caused a delay in ratification process.[247] In December 1997, the first PCA offering legally binding framework of the relations was ratified. In this agreement, political dialogue is emphasized as the main instrument for developing close relations between the EU and Russia. Political dialogue was designed through bi-annual summits between the EU troika and Russian government group including President and responsible ministers. In order to monitor development of the PCA, Cooperation Council in which both sides should meet and discuss the matters of cooperation was established.

What matters for this study is to grasp how this PCA serve the EU's democracy promotion goals. Democracy as a normative value is mentioned in three out of one hundred and twelve articles of PCA.[248] Article 1 provides the objectives of partnership including: "to provide an appropriate framework for the political dialogue between the Parties allowing the development of close relations between them in this field" and "to support Russian efforts to consolidate its democracy and to develop its economy and to complete the transition into a market economy."[249] Article 2 underlines the importance of the respect for democratic

[246] Marius Vahl, "A Privileged Partnership? EU-Russian Relations In A Comparative Perspective", DIIS Working Paper No 2006/3 (repr., Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2006), https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/84582/1/DIIS2006-03.pdf. 9

[247] Ania-Krok Paszkowska and Jan Zielonka, "European Union's Policies Toward Russia", in *Russia's Engagement With The West: Transformation And Integration In The Twenty-First Century*, 1st ed. (repr., New York: Taylor and Francis, 2005). 158

[248] European Union, *Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation establishing a partnership between the European Communities and their Member States, of one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part,* L327/3, 28 November 1997, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:21997A1128(01)&from=EN

[249] Ibid.

principles and human rights defined in the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a new Europe. It is also stated the respect for democratic principles "underpins the internal and external policies of the Parties and constitutes an essential element of partnership and of this Agreement." In Article 6, it is stated that the political dialogue "shall foresee that the Parties endeavor to cooperate on matters pertaining to the observance of the principles of democracy and human rights, and hold consultations, if necessary, on matters related to their due implementation."

In 1999, the EU redefined the framework for partnership with Russia. Even though this new strategy was criticized for being too broad and lacking a coherent substance, compared to previous PCAs, it signals the shift in the emphasis from economic issues to the more political and strategic ones.[250] This new framework titled "EU Common Strategy on Russia", which emphasized more clearly the role of democracy for close cooperation, was published. The EU stated one of its strategic goals as: "a stable, open and pluralistic democracy in Russia, governed by the rule of law and underpinning a prosperous market economy benefiting alike all the people of Russia and of the European Union" and "maintaining European stability, promoting global security and responding to the common challenges of the continent through intensified cooperation with Russia."[251] Here again, it is clear that the democracy promotion is seen as an indispensable part of regional security and stability. With these objectives, the EU presented Action Plan in which it is declared that the EU will support institutional reform, strengthen the civil society, and contribute to the improvement of freedom of media.[252]

In 2003, St. Petersburg summit was another turning point in relations at which the EU and Russia decided to create the "Four Common Spaces" intended to deepen the cooperation in four areas i.e. Common Economic Space, the Common Space on Freedom, Security and Justice, the Common Space on External Security and the Common Space on Research, Education and Culture.[253] The Four Common Spaces came into force in 2005 and

[250] Paszkowska and Zielonka, "European Union's Policies Toward Russia" 159
[251] European Union: European Council, *Common strategy of the European Union on Russia,* 3-4 June 1999, (1999/414/CFSP), available at: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/38943c06-7e5d-4ca3-acc3-c5154bd9c04e/language-en
[252] Ibid.

[253] European Union: Council of the European Union, 15th EU-Russia Summit Press Release, 8799/05 (Presse 110), Moscow 10 May 2005, available at:

brought a new dimension to cooperation by replacing Cooperation Council and establishing Permanent Partnership Council, in which responsible ministers of both sides meet twice a year to discuss the issues at stake in depth. Here, democracy is mentioned as underlying principles of Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice.

"Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013" is another important document in which the EU emphasizes the democracy promotion, the importance of rule of law and good governance as well as human rights and fundamental freedoms in deepening the relations. Unlike the previous documents, the EU uses clearer expression on what the EU expects from Russia in the field of democracy.[254] It is clear that emphasis on democracy and other values has been increased in cooperation matters.

Gradually deepened relations until this period have been interrupted with Russia's intervention in Crimea. In 2014, in response to illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia and crisis in Ukraine, the EU decided to freeze political dialogue and mechanisms of cooperation with Russia as well as financing instruments and channels. In addition, the EU has put some restrictive measures –mainly in the economic sphere but also over actions against Ukraine's territorial integrity – on Russia in order to promote a change in Russia's actions in Ukraine.[255]

The timeline of the EU-Russia relations is critical to understand possible impact of ups and downs in the relations on the temporal changes of EU policies towards other countries in the neighborhood and in the post-Soviet space. The importance of interdependency between Russia and the EU has revealed itself during the crisis times such as Georgian war in August 2008, Ukraine crisis in March 2014 etc. Even though it is propounded by some scholars that "Russia actually needs the EU more than Brussels needs Moscow"[256], the EU has felt the significance of Russian counteraction to its foreign policies

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/84811.pdf

[254] European Union, *Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013 Russian Federation*, available at: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/russia/docs/2007-2013_en.pdf

[255] European Union: Delegation to the Russian Federation, *Restrictive Measures in response to crisis in Ukraine*, available at: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_restrictive_measures_in_response_to_crisis_in_ukraine_eng_web.doc.pdf

[256] Rotaru, Vasile, *Russia, The EU, and the Eastern Partnership. Building Bridges or Digging Trenches?* Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2018, 185pp., €29.90 p/b. p.68

towards the common neighborhood countries. Especially following the critical junctures, the EU has had to take a step back from its ambitious foreign policy priorities especially in the field of democracy promotion to other countries in the region and to redefine them. This will be explored under each section of case studies.

In addition, Russian strategy to promote undemocratic norms to survive its own regime and achieve its geopolitical goals especially since the mid-2000s has also had an impact on democratization processes in the region. In this regard, Putin's concept of 'sovereign democracy'[257] is significant example in two respects. First, it declares that Russian political system is democracy and similar to Western ones; second, it is 'sovereign' meaning that it rejects any interference from outside. While some authors claim that Russia's actions are not deliberately against Western democracy promotion and democratization or intentionally promote autocracy but for protecting its own national interests in the region,[258] a huge bulk of studies examine how Russia undermine the democratization process in the former Soviet space and for what purposes.[259] Since this thesis claims that illiberal regional power has an impact on the substance of EU democracy promotion abroad, it will critically assess the temporal changes of EU democracy promotion to Ukraine and Georgia before and after the breaking points of EU-Russia relations to grasp the role of illiberal regional power.

[257] [257] Kathryhn Stoner-Weiss. Comparing Oranges and Apples: The Internal and External Dimensions of Russia's Turn away from Democracy. in Democracy and Authoritarianism in the Post-Communist World , Cambridge University Press, 2010. p.25

[258] Risse and Babayan, "Democracy Promotion And The Challenges Of Illiberal Regional Powers: Introduction To The Special Issue"

[259] See for example: Thomas Ambrosio, *Authoritarian Backlash: Russian Resistance To Democratization In The Former Soviet Union* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009). Antoaneta Dimitrova and Rilka Dragneva, "Constraining External Governance: Interdependence With Russia And The CIS As Limits To The EU's Rule Transfer In The Ukraine", *Journal Of European Public Policy* 16, no. 6 (2009): 853-872, doi:10.1080/13501760903087894. Jakob Tolstrup, "Black Knights And Elections In Authoritarian Regimes: Why And How Russia Supports Authoritarian Incumbents In Post-Soviet States", *European Journal Of Political Research* 54, no. 4 (2014): 673-690. Peter J Burnell and Richard Youngs, *New Challenges To Democratization* (London: Routledge, 2010). Nelli Babayan, "The Return Of The Empire? Russia's Counteraction To Transatlantic Democracy Promotion In Its Near Abroad", *Democratization* 22, no. 3 (2015): 438-458.

### 3.2.2. The EU Relations with Eastern Partnership Countries: Countries between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'

In the aftermath of the EU's "big-bang enlargement"[260] by moving new countries geographically closer, the EU have faced to the need to extend its democracy promotion agenda to the new neighbors in order to establish a democratically governed "ring of friends".[261] Coincided with the same time period, events such as Georgia's Rose revolution of 2003 and Ukraine's Orange revolution of 2004 sparked the EU's interest to become one of the key democracy promoters in Eastern neighborhood. The EU's hope that democratic transitions in Georgia and Ukraine would spread to other post-Soviet authoritarian regimes, led to take immediate actions. The inception of European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in 2004 was remarkable in a sense that it gave the future direction of the relations between the EU and new neighboring states.

The ENP aims to construct deeper political and economic relationship between the EU and its neighbours, most of which had unstable and fragile political systems with high level of corruption, organized crime and bad economic conditions.[262] The potential instability, which would come out of these new neighbours, led the ENP to be developed into a strategic approach, which determines critically the borders between the 'insiders' -EU members- and new 'outsiders' on the EU borders.[263] Even though lack of membership prospective makes those neighbours 'outsiders', the ENP aimed to build partnership "to avoid new dividing lines in Europe between the new member states and the neighbouring

[260] Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Malta and Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, in what was described as the "big-bang enlargement. This wave of enlargement, known as "the big bang", was followed by the lower key accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 and of Croatia in 2013.

[261] "Speech Of Romano Prodi President Of The European Commission A Wider Europe - A Proximity Policy As The Key To Stability "Peace, Security And Stability International Dialogue And The Role Of The EU"", European Commission - European Commission, 2002, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_02_619

[262] European Union: European Commission, *Communication from the Commission, European Neighbourhood Policy: Strategy Paper,* COM(2004) 373 final, Brussels, 12 May 2004, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52004DC0373&from=EN

[263] Richard G Whitman and Stefan Wolff, *The European Neighbourhood Policy In Perspective: Context, Implementation And Impact* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).4

states."[264]

The main objective was to mitigate possible challenges to European security and stability as well as to promote democratic governance. This objective was emphasized beforehand within the key objectives of European Security Strategy in 2003.[265] Therefore, the ENP can be regarded as the operationalization of European Security Strategy. By including 16 neighbors from east and south -Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine- the EU aimed 'to expand its democratic peace zone'.[266] Since the scope of the research is limited to post-Soviet space, this subchapter focuses on ENP's eastern partner countries rather than southern ones. Therefore, my main focus will be on the European Eastern Partnership (EaP), which was launched as an embedded multilateral initiative under the framework of the ENP.

Successful experience in the transition of CEECs to democracy has led the EU to use the same mechanisms applied in Eastern enlargement for democracy promotion to the neighbourhood. Similar to the experience in Eastern enlargement, the EU put an emphasis on top-down Europeanization approach in the ENP. As long as the ENP states fulfill the objectives set by the EU, they are offered political and economic carrots. Yet, in the absence of membership carrot, the incentives promised such as a stake in internal market and visa liberalization have remained weak for the ENP states to show considerable progress to reform.

The ENP Action Plans (ENPAPs) were signed between the EU and the ENP countries to set out the partner country's agenda for political and economic reforms in the short and medium term.[267] The ENPAPs restated the mutual commitment in cooperation for strengthening democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights. The first ENPAPs were

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[264] Martin Nilsson and Daniel Silander, "Democracy And Security In The EU'S Eastern Neighborhood? Assessing The ENP In Georgia, Moldova, And Ukraine", *Democracy And Security* 12, no. 1 (2016): 44-61, doi:10.1080/17419166.2015.1135744. 49

[265] European Union: Council of the European Union, A Secure Europe in a Better World, 15895/03, Brussels, 8 December 2003, available at: https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15895-2003-INIT/en/pdf

[266] "European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)", EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission, accessed 19 December 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp_en

[267] "ENP Action Plans", EEAS- European Commission, accessed 19 December 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_nn/8398/%20ENP%20Action%20Plans

signed with Moldova and Ukraine in 2005 and then, the other ENPAPs were concluded with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in 2006. The importance of dialogue with civil society in strengthening human rights and fundamental frameworks was also emphasized in these ENPAPs.

In order to measure the domestic political progress of partner ENP state, the EU decides to screen annually the level of progress in democracy, rule of law and human rights. Commission produces 'Progress Reports' to track the record on political reforms in the ENP countries. 'National Indicative Programmes (NIPs)' are set depending on the results of screening process and those Progress Reports.

Starting from 2007 with the launch of new financial instrument 'European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), the EU aimed to tackle common challenges addressed in "Wider Europe Communication (COM 2003)".[268] The first priority was given to the strengthening of democratic structures and good governance and to the support for democratic development in EU's eastern neighbors. Considering the NIPs, the EU allocated funds, which would be spent on the first priority. For the years 2007-2010, the large amount of ENPI funds, however, channelled to governments, while only a small amount allocated to the cross-border and regional cooperation mechanism, which involves local authorities and civil society.[269] The EU's scarce attention paid to civil society in neighbor countries has been criticized. This has led to the creation of thematic programme Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in 2007, which aimed to involve civil society actors in poverty reduction and sustainable development policies.

The need for differentiation between the partner countries within the ENP has come to the EU's agenda six years after the launch of the ENP. In fact, security concerns following the Russia-Georgia war in 2008 exacerbated the need to initiate a new EU-wide policy for Eastern neighbors. In 2009, Eastern Partnership (EaP) was launched with the main objective of developing political and economic integration within the EU. Yet, the underlying rationale behind the EaP was to adopt measures that contribute to EU's security. Visa facilitation,

[268] European Union: European Commission, *Communication from the Commission: Paving the Way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument*, COM (2003) 393 final, Brussels 1 July 2003, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/wider/wider_en.pdf

[269] Shapovalova and Youngs, "EU Democracy Promotion in the Eastern Neighbourhood: A Turn to Civil Society?," 3.

liberalization regimes, deep and comprehensive trade agreements were offered as the main incentives in the framework of EaP. In addition, the EU has concluded more comprehensive agreements called Association Agreements with some countries in order to foster close relationship. As part of these agreements, free trade agreements (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area DCFTA) have been also concluded with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in 2014, and with Armenia in 2017 in order to make easier the access of goods and services as well as to ensure a stable legal environment. Negotiations for a similar agreement started with Azerbaijan in 2017.

Reconsidering the drawbacks and challenges, the EU introduced new tools to intensify the involvement of civil society actors in the planning, monitoring and implementation of Eastern Partnership policy. The goal was to build partnership with societies rather than just governments and to support non-state actors through this new bottom-up and locally-driven democracy promotion strategies. In the same vein, in 2011, the EU introduced a new concept of 'partnership with society', which provides more assistance to non-state actors in neighborhood. Furthermore, the Commission established an EaP Civil Society Forum "to promote contacts among CSOs and facilitate their dialogue with public authorities."[270] The first EaP Civil Society Forum was organized in November 2009 in Brussels and was attended by more than 200 organizations.[271] Since then, the EaP Civil Forum was organized annually and the last one was convened in 2016. Over the years, both the scope of the Forum and funds allocated to it has expanded significantly.

The EU also established European Endowment for Democracy (EED) in 2013 similar to the US Endowment for Democracy in order to provide grants for a broader range of actors including non-registered NGOs, pro-democracy movements, civic and political activists, and independent media platforms and journalists, which works for developing democracy in the European neighborhood, Western Balkans and Turkey.[272] In the aftermath of Arab Spring in 2011, the need for 'rapid reaction' mechanism paved the way for the

[270] "Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Concept Paper", www.eeas.europa.eu, accessed 19 December 2020, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/eastern/civil_society/docs/concept_en.pdf
[271] "Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum- Our History", www.archive.eap-csf.eu, accessed 19 December 2020, http://archive.eap-csf.eu/en/about-eap-csf/background1/
[272] "European Endowment For Democracy - About EED", www.democracyendowment.eu, accessed 19 December 2020, https://www.democracyendowment.eu/en/about/about-us.html

launch of EED. Compared to the conventional support mechanisms, EED is less bureaucratic, more flexible and locally driven.[273]

**Table 3.2** Democracy scores in EaP countries

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Armenia | 5.39 | 5.39 | 5.43 | 5.39 | 5.36 |
| Azerbaijan | 6.25 | 6.39 | 6.46 | 6.57 | 6.64 |
| Belarus | 6.57 | 6.50 | 6.57 | 6.68 | 6.71 |
| Georgia | 4.93 | 4.93 | 4.86 | 4.82 | 4.75 |
| Moldova | 5.07 | 5.14 | 4.96 | 4.89 | 4.82 |
| Ukraine | 4.39 | 4.39 | 4.61 | 4.82 | 4.89 |

Source: Freedom House, Nations in Transit 2013

Note: Democracy levels are rated on a scale of 1 to 7, one being the highest, 7 the lowest.

***Source***: Florent Parmentier, "Put To The Test: The EU And The Eastern Partnership Perspectives On The Vilnius Summit", Jacques Delors Institute, 2013, https://institutdelors.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/easternpartnershipvilniussubmitflorentparmentierne-jdinov2013.pdf

Nevertheless, it is obviously seen from Table 3.2 that democratization in these six post-communist partner states in the framework of the EaP has not progressed despite the EU's increased efforts and ambitions. Two critical issues have been debated widely in the literature. First, since the inception of EaP, a few signs of democratic progress is seen only in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, while there is a reverse trend in democratization in remaining states i.e. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus with growing authoritarianism.[274] In addition, in terms of democracy-stability nexus, the EaP has also failed with growing destabilization in three countries i.e. Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia. It is claimed that the EU's increased push for democracy in the region has faced with the Russia's counteraction for gaining regional hegemonic infl ence. This in turn has led to the instability with the military conflicts in Ukraine[275] and Georgia. In addition, perceived costs of engaging with the EU have caused more caution among other regional states, which increasingly choose

[273] ibid.

[274] All statistical information is taken from Freedom House, *Nations in Transit* dataset. "Nations In Transit", Freedom House, accessed 19 December 2020, https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit.

[275] Geopolitical challenges posed by the Ukrainian crisis on the EU's policies in Eastern Neighbourhood and relations with Russia will be examined in a detailed manner at the case study chapter of Ukraine.

"multi-vectored foreign policy"[276] and more autocratic forms of domestic political power.[277]

Second, the issue of consistency in EU democracy promotion approach to Eastern neighbourhood has come to the forefront of debates as one of the main drawbacks on its success. Even though there is an emphasis on the principle of conditionality in EU democracy promotion approach to ENP regarding the EU's support leading to the 'more to more' principle, which means "the more and the faster a country progresses in its internal reforms, the more support it will get from the EU"[278], aid data statistics indicate that only Georgia and Ukraine have received increased funds thanks to their internal progresses in 2004-2010. Yet, the EU has increased material benefits to the remaining the eastward countries despite of stagnation and opposite trends in their democracy levels.[279]

### *3.2.3.* EU-Central Asia relations: Region as *terra incognita*

Until the turn of 21st century, the European Union's engagement with the post-Soviet Central Asia, which has been regarded as *terra incognita* for a long time, was at a very low level. Relations were sustained bilaterally within the framework of Partnership and Cooperation agreements during 1990s. The EU had neither political interest and nor significant resources to engage with Central Asia since it was preoccupied with managing

[276] Multi-vectored foreign policy is defined as a flexible, pragmatic and non-ideological approach of states, which are motivated solely by the perceived interests in achieving political objectives. States, which are generally lodged between two regional powers, pursue this approach by using a series of asymmetrical bargaining games. Kazakhstan's foreign policy approach is labeled as "multi-vectored" in the literature. See for example: Reuel R. Hanks, "'Multi-Vector Politics' And Kazakhstan's Emerging Role As A Geo-Strategic Player In Central Asia", *Journal Of Balkan And Near Eastern Studies*11, no. 3 (2009): 257-267, doi:10.1080/19448950903152110. Also, see for the ENP countries' multi-vector foreign policies: Elena Gnedina, "'Multi-Vector' Foreign Policies In Europe: Balancing, Bandwagoning Or Bargaining?", *Europe-Asia Studies* 67, no. 7 (2015): 1007-1029, doi:10.1080/09668136.2015.1066313.

[277] Licínia Simão, "POLICY BRIEFING: Democracy Promotion In Eurasia — A Dialogue", EDSN Blog, 2018, https://eurasiademocraticsecuritynetwork.wordpress.com/2018/01/26/policy-briefing-democracy-promotion-in-eurasia-a-dialogue/.

[278] European Union: European Commission & High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – A new response to a changing neighbourhood*, COM (2011) 303, Brussels, 25 May 2011, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0303&from=EN

[279] Sergiu Buşcaneanu, "EU Democracy Promotion In Eastern ENP Countries", *East European Politics And Societies: And Cultures* 29, no. 1 (2014): 248-286, doi:10.1177/0888325414535430. 249

the first wave of Eastern enlargement at that time.[280] Changes in Europe's external environment posed new challenges such as drug trafficking, cross-border (human) trafficking, terrorism and organized crime. The first turning point that paved the way for growing the strategic importance of Central Asia was on September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and subsequent US foreign policy called "War on Terror" in Afghanistan. As a predominantly Muslim region with troubled political systems and economics and neighbouring Afghanistan, Central Asia has had a risk of housing Islamist radicals in it. Security concerns in terms of energy and military constituted the underlying rationale for more cooperation with the region. Indeed, threats of terrorism and organized crime have been identified as the main problems and challenges in the Central Asia Strategy Paper 2002-2006.

Relations gained a new impetus with the 2007 Strategy Paper towards Central Asia adopted at the end of German Presidency. Germany has always been the most pro-active member state, which tries to boost up the EU- Central Asia relations. This strategy paper is important due not only to being the first comprehensive strategy towards Central Asia, which prioritises democracy, human rights, rule of law and good governance but also for ascribing a new and leading role for democracy promotion in the region to the European Union. Unlike the previous strategy papers, 2007 Strategy Paper towards Central Asia combines both pragmatic and idealist goals in one by prioritizing normative values.

Two issues are significant in the Strategy Paper of 2007. First, the potential impacts of developments and instability in Central Asia on European security architecture are emphasized. Therefore, through various aid programmes, the EU aims to help security sector. Necessary mechanisms to combat human, drug and arms trafficking, international terrorism and organized crime are launched. Second, the importance of energy sector in the EU-Central Asia relations is underlined. For the EU, Central Asia as rich region with oil and gas reserves, is critically important to offer energy diversification and to reduce dependence on Russian supplies and pipelines. For Central Asia, the EU is important to diversify trade partners and supply routes.[281]

[280] Warkotsch, *The European Union and Central Asia*, 4.
[281] Nargis Kassenova, "The New EU Strategy Towards Central Asia: A View From The Region", CEPS Policy Brief, 2008, https://www.ceps.eu/ceps-publications/new-eu-strategy-towards-central-asia-view-region/.

The Strategy Paper of 2007 has brought some innovations regarding approaches for relations. First and foremost, intensifying bilateral relations and developing more tailor-made policies and cooperation programmes were decided as the main objectives of the period of 2007-2013. While the EU continued to pursue a regional approach for problems such as organized crime, water management and drug trafficking, which require regional solutions, for the other local problems the EU emphasized the need to deal with issues on a bilateral manner in accordance with different needs and local conditions of Central Asian countries. Second, increased budget for the period of 2007-2013, which was doubled compared to early years of relationship, and the policy areas on which this budget was allocated indicated more attention to the region and more pragmatic ways of engagement.

In 2019, the Council has adopted a new strategy for Central Asia. In this new strategy, the EU reaffirms once more its multi-layered engagement in Central Asia. First, in the economic field, the cooperation for improving investment environment, supporting for regional trade and strengthening private sector are aimed. Second, in the political field, similar as the previous strategy, promotion of human rights, democracy and rule of law as well as the importance of civil society are acknowledged. Last, in the security field, cooperation on border management, migration, mobility and countering terrorism and extremism as well as cooperation in dealing with common challenges such as environmental degradation and climate change are underlined as the strategic goals.[282] It is expected that the new strategy will go beyond the mere declaration of these goals and will put these into concrete action.

Similar to the mechanisms conducted to EaP countries, the EU tries to engage in the region through political dialogue and development cooperation instruments despite the lack of accurate and detailed ways to conduct political dialogue mentioned in any strategy papers. Being vulnerable to the extreme poverty, economic downturns and climate change, engagement with Central Asia has been mostly on the development issues. From 1991 to 2007, the EU assistance was offered under the framework of Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS). Starting from 2007, TACIS was replaced by Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). Education, poverty reduction and good

[282] Sebastien Peyrouse, Sebastien Peyrouse on the EU's New Central Asia Strategy, interviewed by Catherine Putz, (2019) available at: https://thediplomat.com/2019/07/sebastien-peyrouse-on-the-eus-new-central-asia-strategy/

governance were determined as main areas for assistance.

Compared to the democracy promotion instruments applied to ENP countries, the EU has very few *"carrots and sticks"* in its democracy promotion towards Central Asia. Yet, the EU can't offer the most influential positive conditionality i.e. the prospect of EU membership to Central Asian countries as an incentive for reforms as in the case of ENP. As *"carrots"*, the EU can offer is development aid, trade privileges, and closer cooperation, which are not so effective compared the EU membership. As *"sticks",* the EU can rely on negative conditionality instruments such as sanctions and critical statements, which has been used very rarely since the beginning of the relations. The only example of negative conditionality used is EU sanctions toward Uzbekistan after the events of Andijan in 2005.

The EU has faced two dilemmas in its engagement with Central Asia. First, as mentioned above, the lack of intensive 'carrots' and lack of enough leverage, the EU has not achieved even moderate success in its policies of promotion of human rights, rule of law, democracy and good governance in Central Asia located in the authoritarian neighbourhood. Even though the EU introduced new and ambitious policies such as launching Rule of Law initiative, training regional legal experts and holding a regular political dialogue with the partners on human rights and good governance, the commitment to reform a country in a way that the EU supports depends on political will of elites in target country, but mostly on the EU leverage in complex geopolitical environment in which influence of other regional powers –Russia and China- is growing steadily. In such a complex environment, Central Asian states especially Kazakhstan follows multi-vectored foreign policies as balancing act between these competitors in the region.

Second, the EU has great difficulty in balancing the normative goals of the promotion of democracy and human rights and realist interests of securing access to the region's energy reserves. For the sake of preserving the engagement with the region and protecting its non-political and energy interests, the EU has to refrain from pushes on authoritarian leaders for democratic reforms. This makes the EU overlook some human rights violations.

### *3.3. Conclusion*

This chapter sets out to examine the evolution of the EU's democracy promotion policies to post-Soviet space historically and ends up making two arguments. First, the EU has differentiated democracy promotion policies to post-Soviet area in terms of strategies, models and instruments according to three different clusters of countries or sub-regions: (i) Russia with a privileged status, (ii) Eastern Partnership countries i.e. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, (iii) Central Asian countries i.e. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Second, this differentiated democracy promotion models and by extension instruments are resulted from not only domestic conditions of each target country, but also the EU's interests in a complex geopolitical environment in which various regional powers' interests clash with the EU's ambitions. Historical background of EU democracy promotion in post-Soviet space indicates that the EU has transformed its policies into more tailor-made approach in accordance with local needs and interests. Yet, what I argue is that not only local conditions but also the EU's and individual Member States' pragmatic interests has paved the way for the introduction of differentiated and tailor-made democracy promotion policies.

Following chapters are devoted to the analysis of EU democracy promotion to Ukraine and Georgia, which enable to test the hypotheses of this research by focusing on variables with comparative analysis.

# CHAPTER 4

# THE EU DEMOCRACY PROMOTION POLICIES IN UKRAINE

*"Every politician in this country and neighboring countries who turns towards the West is in the danger."*[283]

**Victor Yuschenko**

This chapter is designed to analyze EU democracy promotion policies in Ukraine. It first aims to find out how the EU democracy promotion agendas in the framework of "the model of embedded liberal democracy" to Ukraine are shaped at critical turning points. Second, it tries to search the underlying reasons for choosing such a model at stake. Here, bearing in mind the hypotheses of this research, the EU-Ukraine relations are analyzed into three sections: i) domestic prerequisites/conditions of Ukraine for democracy ii) the role of Russia as an illiberal regional power with its leverage over Ukraine and lastly iii) the EU-Ukraine relations with a special focus on the EU's internal institutional context and decision-making process on democracy promotion to Ukraine. The main intention here is to set the ground for testing explicitly the variables given in the hypotheses and to grasp underlying reasons for different and sometimes changing democracy promotion models for Ukraine. This logic is applied to the Georgian case too, which will be the basis of comparative analysis in the final section.

## *4.1. Domestic conditions shaping the democratization process in Ukraine*

Analyzing the impact of domestic factors on EU's tailor-made or differentiated democracy promotion policies requires in-depth research of Ukraine domestic politics. As a post-Soviet country, Ukrainian politics with features from Soviet legacy such as oligarchic structure, power politics, state-business links etc., resembles other CIS countries. Yet, there are some indigenous features such as regional divisions of national identification among

[283] Kim Sengupta, "Viktor Yushchenko: 'Every Politician In Ukraine Who Turns To The West Is In Danger'", *The Independent*, 2015, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/viktor-yushchenko-every-politician-ukraine-who-turns-west-danger-a6694311.html

Ukrainians, depending on whether it is Eastern or Western Ukraine. Such regional differences have produced different perceptions on Ukraine's foreign policy direction towards either Russia or the West. Indeed, this differentiation manifests itself in voting pattern during parliamentary and presidential elections. This subchapter aims to reveal the state of Ukrainian politics with some key features since its independence and to critically assess how these domestic features may have an impact on the EU democracy promotion policies.

### 4.1.1. Critical junctures in Ukrainian political history since its independence

When Leonid M. Kravchuk[284] came to power following the independence in December 1991, Ukraine was a quasi-state with a few state institutions to be able to run an independent country.[285] There was no political party to govern the country since the Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU) was banned and disintegrated.[286] Therefore, Ukraine was in a very different situation than that the post-colonial states had. In the post-colonial states, after the colonial forces had withdrawn, liberation movements or parties came to power. Yet, in the Ukrainian case, the Soviet legacy with its territory, political culture, state infrastructure, political elites, the oligarchs, and the networks continued its existence as

[284] Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk is the first President of Ukraine who served the country between the years 1991 and 1994. He began his career in the Communist Party in 1960 as a lecturer in the political education branch of the party. From 1989 to 1990, he served as the secretary responsible for ideology of the Communist Party. In 1990, he became the second secretary of Central Committee of Communist Party of Ukraine as well as the chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet in 1990. After the failed coup in Moscow in August 1991, he resigned from Communist Party membership. Kravchuk emerged as the most prominent politician with his skills to compromise and efforts to democratization of Ukrainian society. In presidential elections of December 1991, he got 61.6 percent of votes and became the first president of Ukraine. After the presidency, he took an active role in Ukrainian politics as a leader of Social Democratic Party of Ukraine.

[285] Taras Kuzio describes Ukraine as a quasi-state at the early period of its independence with some inherited attributes of statehood -but not all- such as elites and institutions from Soviet era. Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, And The New Russian Imperialism* (California: Praeger Security International, 2015). 50

[286] In October 1993, the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) was legalized by Ukraine's court and quickly regained a big part of its previous membership as well as former oblast and rayon secretaries. The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), "National Democratic Institute's Pre-Election Report On The March 29, 1998 Parliamentary Elections In Ukraine", 1998, https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/361_uk_preelect98.html

fragmented within the independent Ukrainian politics.[287] The only civil-political movement existed was nationalist *Rukh (The People's Movement of Ukraine for Restructuring).*[288]

In short, building a state of its own was a difficult task for Ukraine, which had never experienced before due to being a part of several empires throughout history.[289] Besides, in the middle of the economic crisis, Ukraine had to build new institutions such as the national army, a ministry of foreign affairs and to establish new links with the outside world without still acknowledging the complex geopolitical restructuration of the world. In addition to all these challenges, the multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual population in Ukraine complicated the situation since local populations as well as elites had different views on the way of restructuring mainly depending on the region they came from.[290] Thus, division of groups was much more than ideological conflict, depending where the group came from i.e. centrists based in Russophone Eastern and Southern and national democrats in Ukrainophone Western and Central Ukraine.[291] Within such complicated situation, Kravchuk tried to gather both reformers and old *nomenklatura*[292] in his administration. However, he was not able to

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[287] Tina Freyburg et al., *Democracy Promotion By Functional Cooperation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).168

[288] The People's Movement of Ukraine for Restructuring (RUKH) was established in 1989 as a mass voluntary organization including all patriotic citizens of Ukrainian for the support for revolutionary restructuring.

[289] In the 9th century, Ukraine was known as Kievan Rus with newly adopted Orthodox religion. Mongol invasions in the 13th century impeded on its rise. Over the centuries, Ukraine had been under the control of competing powers. In the 16th century, major parts of Ukrainian soil were ruled by Poland and Lithuania. The war between the Tsarist Russian Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th century led to the division of Ukraine along the Dnieper River. The east of the Dnieper River known as "Left Bank" –a center of industry and coal- came under the control of the Russian Empire, while the west part of the river known as "Right Bank" was to be ruled by Poland. A small part of the west was left to Austro-Hungarian Empire. Over the years, the control over Western Ukraine was shifted between Poland and Austro-Hungarian empires. Eve Covenant, "How History, Geography Help Explain Ukraine's Political Crisis", *National Geographic*, 2014, https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/1/140129-protests-ukraine-russia-geography-history/.

[290] The early 1930s is important in the sense that Stalin's policy of man-made famine with its results of starvation and death of millions of Ukrainians had critical repercussions for Ukrainian politics in the next periods. Repopulating the eastern area with a large number of Russians and other Soviet citizens with no ties to the region accelerated Russification, which is considered one of the reasons of political divisions between the east and the west today. According to census in 2001, 77.8% of population is Ukrainian while 17.3% is Russian. To grasp regional distribution of population by ethnicity, please see Map 4.1 in Annex.

[291] Taras Kuzio, "Oligarchs, Tapes And Oranges: 'Kuchmagate' To The Orange Revolution", *Journal Of Communist Studies And Transition Politics* 23, no. 1 (2007): 30-56, doi:10.1080/13523270701194839.

[292] *Nomenklatura* refers the members of the old Soviet-era elite.

gather these conflicting ideas within Ukrainian government. With the pressures of the 1993 hyperinflation on the grounds of emerging polity, Kravchuk did not manage to get re-elected in the 1994 elections.[293]

In 1994, Leonid Kuchma, who was a former prime minister in Kravchuk presidency, was elected as the second president of Ukraine. This was indeed the first sign of democratic transition of power in Ukrainian history even though democracy was bewildering to many Ukrainians.[294] The way to conduct relations with Russia was an important determinant for the results of 1994 elections. In contrast to Kravchuk who argued that the "return to Europe" was critically important for independent Ukraine to contain Russia, Kuchma believed that the closer ties with Russia as a significant economic partner would be beneficial for the present disastrous economic situation in Ukraine. The results of 1994 elections indicated clearly that Ukraine's population was deeply fragmented into two sides: one side in nationalist stance regarded Russia as Ukraine's worst enemy and the other side saw Russia as fraternal nation. This fragmentation indicated itself once more as regional divisions within Ukraine. While high proportion of population in Central and Western Ukraine voted for Kravchuk, population in Eastern and Southern Ukraine voted for Kuchma. This split was not a result of ethnic division within Ukraine but a result of historical background of external domination and linguistic differences.[295] The reflections of these regional variations are seen in today's Ukrainian politics, which will be explored in the following sections.

When Kuchma came to power, he adopted Ukraine's first reformist programme with the help of international monetary institutions for the sake of resolving economic crisis. By the end of September 1994, Ukraine signed its first IMF agreement, which would bring

[293] Economic issues were identified as one of the most important reasons for voting against Kravchuk. See: Robert S. Kravchuk and Victor Chudowsky, "Ukraine's 1994 Elections As An Economic Event", *Communist And Post-Communist Studies* 38, no. 2 (2005): 131-165, doi:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2005.03.001.

[294] Many voters did not know to whom they would vote for what reason(s). In addition, they didn't know the differences between projects of candidates, significant proportion of adults had not heard of candidates: Kravchuk (6 per cent), Kuchma (15-20 per cent), Pluishch (28-33 per cent) who was another candidate and parliamentary speaker. Taras Kuzio, "Kravchuk To Kuchma: The Ukrainian Presidential Elections Of 1994", *Journal Of Communist Studies And Transition Politics* 12, no. 2 (1996): 117-144, doi:10.1080/13523279608415306.

[295] Kuzio, "Kravchuk to Kuchma: The Ukrainian presidential elections of 1994", 138. Please also see: Kravchuk Chudowsky, "Ukraine's 1994 elections as an economic event"

financial stabilization.[296] In November 1994, Kuchma took important steps for trade and price liberalization. In August 1996, Kuchma declared the introduction of national currency *hryvnia,* which replaced the existing primitive printed coupon, the *karbovanets*. In the same year, Ukraine adopted its first post-communist constitution.[297] In the first Article, it states the general features of Ukraine as "a sovereign, independent, democratic, social, law-governed state."[298] In addition, Articles 4, 10 and 11 of the Constitution of Ukraine declare that Ukraine is a unitary state with single citizenship and Ukrainian as the official language while guaranteeing the development of Russian and other languages spoken by all indigenous people and national minorities in Ukraine.[299] This new constitution is crucial in respect to guaranteeing basic democratic rights and freedoms as well as establishing Western-style judicial system and division of powers between executive and legislative. However, this new constitution gave extensive power to the president, which undermined the efforts to create a stable political environment for democratic consolidation.[300]

Another crucial reform was done in the electoral system, which was based on the old Soviet-era majoritarian system. In 1997, the semi-proportional electoral law was introduced, which stated half of the members of the Ukrainian parliament were to be elected on a majoritarian basis while the other half (250) was determined by proportional representation.[301] The election threshold was determined as 4% to be able to enter in assembly.[302]

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[296] Anders Åslund, *How Ukraine Became A Market Economy And Democracy* (Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2009). 62

[297] ibid.

[298] Constitution of Ukraine (1996), "Constitution Of Ukraine", Refworld.Org, accessed 19 December 2020, https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/44a280124.pdf

[299] Ibid.

[300] Robert K. Christensen, Edward R. Rakhimkulov and Charles R. Wise, "The Ukrainian Orange Revolution Brought More Than A New President: What Kind Of Democracy Will The Institutional Changes Bring?", *Communist And Post-Communist Studies* 38, no. 2 (2005): 207-230, doi:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2005.03.006. 213.

[301] Anna Makhorkina, "Ukrainian Political Parties And Foreign Policy In Election Campaigns: Parliamentary Elections Of 1998 And 2002", *Communist And Post-Communist Studies* 38, no. 2 (2005): 251-267, doi:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2005.03.005. 254

[302] There were three groups of political parties participating the 1998 elections: The left generally characterized as anti-reformist and pro-Russian and traditionally included the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) and the Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU); the right the pro-reformist national democrats and anti-Russia Westernizers including the People's Movement of Ukraine (NRU or Rukh), Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists (CUN), the Ukrainian National Assembly (UNA), the ''Reforms and Order'' party (R&O), and the Greens; and the emerging center pro-reformist

Following that Kuchma resolved domestic issues especially during his first term, he turned his attention to the foreign policy, which should be multi-vector oriented to both the Europe and Russia, as he believed. To this end, Ukraine became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) – a regional intergovernmental organization formed by Russia and eleven other republics that were formerly part of Soviet Union - as well as the Council of Europe.[303] Kuchma's strategic attempts to deepen the relations with both sides i.e. Russia on the one hand, and the West on the other, will be examined in a detail in the next sections. Nevertheless, these attempts are important in a sense that they reveal Kuchma's desire to make Ukraine as an independent, strategic and democratic country in the world.

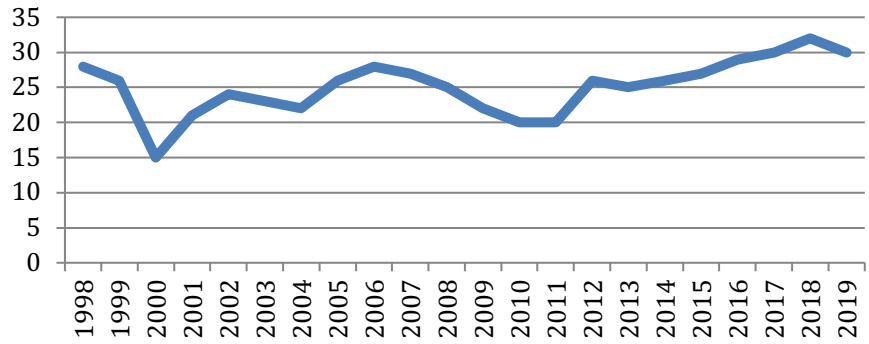
In 1999, Kuchma achieved to be re-elected for another five-year period. Yet contrary to the important democratic developments in the first term, Kuchma's second term can be described as a period of corruption and scandals in which he increased gradually his authoritarian tendencies with frequently changing prime ministers, letting to put strong measures on opposition leaders through periodic arrests and harassments, increasing executive powers. Figure 4.1 below shows the degree of corruption in Ukraine between the years 1998 and 2019.[304] Results are based on a scale of 0-100 where a 0 equals the highest level of perceived corruption and 100 equals the lowest level of perceived corruption.

Westernizers and multi-vectorists was represented by the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine-united (SDPUu), the Popular Democratic Party (PDP), and the Hromada. Makhorkina, "Ukrainian Political Parties and Foreign Policy in Election Campaigns: Parliamentary Elections of 1998 and 2002." During the 1999 presidential elections, Leonid Kuchma had no party affiliation.

[303] Åslund, *How Ukraine Became A Market Economy And Democracy.*

[304] Data was collected from Transparency International database.

**Figure 4.1 Ukraine Corruption Perception Index**




**Source.** Transparency International, https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi#

As it is clear from Figure 4.1, in 2000, Ukraine had witnessed its highest level of perceived corruption in its political history since the independence, which put Ukraine to 87th country out of 90 countries in the world analyzed by Transparency International.[305] Corruption has been evaluated as an endemic problem. This highest level of corruption stemmed not only from Kuchma's authoritarian tendencies but also the rising influence of oligarchs in Ukrainian domestic politics. A new class of oligarchs as owners of big companies and closely tied to President Kuchma first appeared in 1998 parliament and 1999 presidential elections.[306] Following the re-election of Kuchma in 1999, these oligarchic groups consolidated their power within Ukrainian politics. Later on, they have had very important implications for the direction of politics.[307]

[305] Transparency International 2000, https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2000. The following period of the presidency of Yanukovych in 2010 appears to be the second most corrupted era in Ukrainian politics.

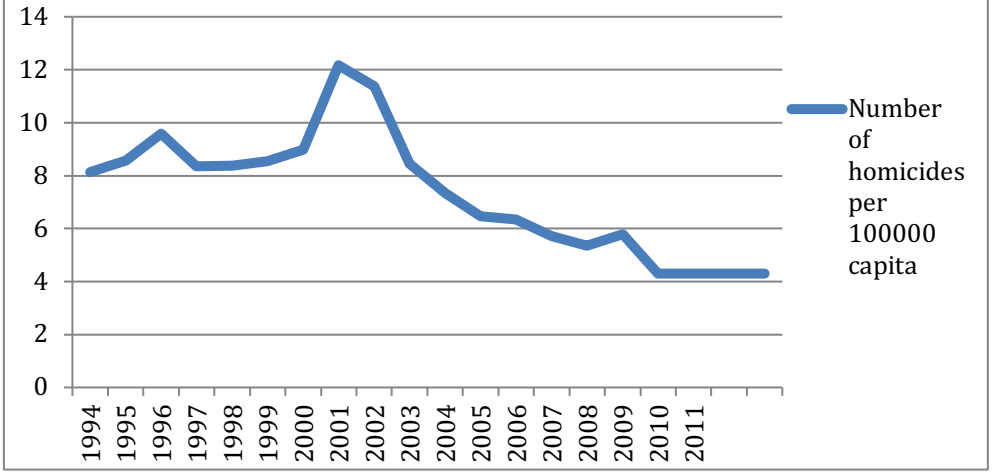
[306] Kuzio, "Oligarchs, Tapes And Oranges: 'Kuchmagate' To The Orange Revolution."

[307] Oligarchy in the politics of post-Soviet states is one of the most controversial and widely discussed issues. Oligarchy is an ancient concept and refers to the kind of power structure in which a small number of people hold the power. In Ukraine, an oligarch was understood as "a very wealthy and politically well-connected businessman, a dollar billionaire, or nearly so, who was the main owner of a conglomerate of enterprises and had close ties to the president". The oligarchs were few whose aim was to make money and they regard politics as a means to reach that goal. Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*. Interestingly, according to the results of survey conducted by Kyiv International Institute of Sociology in 2001, 55 per cent of respondents identified the oligarchs as mainly those who steal from Ukraine with the help of the authorities. Kuzio, "Oligarchs, Tapes and Oranges: 'Kuchmagate' to the Orange Revolution," 32.

Gradually decreasing media freedom was another significant feature of Kuchma's second term, which can be regarded as one of the critical impediments on democratization process. Especially during the 1999 presidential elections, mass media made great efforts to increase the visibility of Kuchma and his colleagues while broadcasting biasedly about opposition candidate. Independent media outlets were put under pressure too.[308]

The degree to use violence against opposition reached to the peak in the Kuchma's second term in office. According to Democracy Barometer data[309], the homicide rate, which is regarded as one of the determinants of individual liberties, peaked up in 2001. Figure 4.2 shows the trend.

**Figure 4.2 Homicide rates in Ukraine between 1994-2011**




The most prominent scandal in this era was "Kuchmagate" –known also as "Cassette Scandal" and "Tapegate"- in which Kuchma was complicit in the murder of opposition journalist, Heorhiy Gongadze in November 2000.[310] Tape recordings made within Kuchma's office between the years 1998 and 2000 were released by Socialist leader Moroz 25 days after the beheaded body of Gongadze was found. With these recordings, it became

[308] "The American organization Committee to Protect Journalists nominated Leonid Kuchma in 2001 as one of the world's ten greatest enemies of the press." "Bertelsmann Transformation Index-Ukraine", Country Reports, 2003, https://www.bti-project.org/content/en/downloads/reports/country_report_2003_UKR.pdf.
[309] "Democracy Barometer - Data And Documentation", Democracybarometer.Org, accessed 19 December 2020, https://democracybarometer.org/data-and-documentation/.
[310] Taras Kuzio, "From Kuchma To Yushchenko Ukraine's 2004 Presidential Elections And The Orange Revolution", *Problems Of Post-Communism* 52, no. 2 (2005): 29-44, doi:10.1080/10758216.2005.11052197.

explicit that Kuchma under his presidency took many illegal acts from the persecution of independent journalists to misuse of public funds.[311] At last, "Kuchmagate", which undermined the legitimacy of Kuchma and ruling elite, was regarded as the critical turning point, which in turn paved the way for Orange Revolution.[312]

The 2002 Parliamentary and 2004 Presidential elections set the stage for the struggles between Yushchenko with his oligarchic allies and Kuchma. March 2002 Parliamentary election was significant in two respects. First, Communist Party of Ukraine lost its leading position in the parliament for the first time and moved to the second place with 14.8% of seats, while "Our Ukraine" won 24.8% of seats.[313] Second, due to the mainly large numbers of broad coalitions[314], foreign policy issues in the electoral campaign resulted in a broad consensus on the importance of Ukraine's economic integration into the European Union. Almost all parties acknowledged the importance of Ukraine's choice to participate in European integration process even Communist Party acknowledged it while prioritizing the development of relations with Russia and CIS.

The year 2004 marked another turning point in the history of Ukrainian democratic transition. During the 2004 presidential elections, two crucial events i.e. the attempt to poison the most important opposition candidate -Victor Yushchenko- in September 2004 and the manipulation of election results sparked the emergence of reactions in the society. Especially Russian overt and covert interventions in elections via political technologists[315]

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[311] Kuzio, "Oligarchs, Tapes and Oranges: 'Kuchmagate' to the Orange Revolution," 32.

[312] Orange Revolution was named for the campaign color of the opposition leader, Viktor Andriyovych Yuschenko. Kuzio, "From Kuchma to Yushchenko: Ukraine's 2004 Presidential Elections and the Orange Revolution."

[313] Makhorkina, "Ukrainian Political Parties and Foreign Policy in Election Campaigns: Parliamentary Elections of 1998 and 2002."

[314] For example, "Our Ukraine" coalition bloc compromised ten political parties: CUN, LPU, YPU, NRU, FU, R&O, Solidarity, ChPU, RCP, and UNR.

[315] Political technology is described as "a euphemism commonly used in former Soviet states for what is by now a highly developed industry of political manipulation." Political technologists refer the people, who seek to help those authoritarian regimes, who would like to stay in power through political manipulation. Political technologists generally manipulate media, create virtual objects such as politicians and parties via media tools and usually demonize the opposition candidate. Russia is famous for exporting the political technology not only in former Soviet space but also across Africa, Europe and the wider West. For further information on the role of political technology in 2004

such as election falsifications, poisoning of Yushchenko and in the prevented attempt on his life in the Election Day on December 21 were at the center of electoral fraud.[316] In addition, Kuchma's decreased legitimacy contributed to revive and bolster civil society and opposition.

The first and second rounds of elections were held on October 31 and November 21, 2004. According to the results of the first round of elections, Yuschenko and Yanukovych as two main candidates went head to head with the votes when the former gained 39.9% of votes while the latter got 39.26% of votes. At the second round, the official results showed that Yanukovych got 49.46% of votes, while Yuschenko got only 46.61% of votes. Immediately after the results were announced, The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Coordinator Bruce George declared that the second round of 2004 Presidential Elections fell short of international standards for democratic elections.[317] On the contrary, CIS election observers reported that elections were "legitimate and of a nature that reflected democratic standards."[318] Indeed, just before the declaration of official results, Russia's President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko congratulated Viktor Yanukovych for his victory. Three or four days after the second round of the elections, a million Ukrainians, who refused the election results, were on the streets of Kyiv. The ensuing 'Orange Revolution' in autumn 2004 in which democratic opposition fought for free and fair elections on the streets in Kiev and other cities lasted for several weeks. It signified a new era in Ukrainian politics. After 13 days of street protests, some reforms on election law and constitution[319] were made along with the decision

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Ukrainian presidential elections, please see Andrew Wilson's articles on Andrew Wilson, "The Russians Are Coming (Again): The Role Of 'Political Technology' In The 2004 Election", Blog, *Wider Europe*, accessed 19 December 2020, http://wider-europe.org/files/UkraineandENPWilson.pdf. and Andrew Wilson, ""Political Technology": Why Is It Alive And Flourishing In The Former USSR?", Blog, *Open Democracy*, 2011, https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/political-technology-why-is-it-alive-and-flourishing-in-former-ussr/.

[316] For further information, see also: Taras Kuzio, "Russian Policy Toward Ukraine During Elections", Blog, *Taras Kuzio*, accessed 19 December 2020, http://www.taraskuzio.com/International%20Relations_files/russia_elections_ukraine.pdf.

[317] https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/56894

[318] Taras Kuzio, "International Community Denounces Mass Election Fraud In Ukraine As CIS Upholds Official Results", Blog, *Eurasia Daily Monitor (Vol 1, Issue 134)*, 2004, https://jamestown.org/program/international-community-denounces-mass-election-fraud-in-ukraine-as-cis-upholds-official-results/

[319] Under the new constitutional provisions, the role of the parliament was expanded with the role of appointment and dismissal of not only ministers but also other administrative officials.

on the early repeat of the second ballot. On December 26, 2004, the repeat vote was conducted in free and fair manner thanks to the parliament's passage of bill regulating the election procedure and great efforts of a large number of international and domestic observers that came to Ukraine from the United States, Canada, Poland, and many other democracies.[320]

Not surprisingly, Yuschenko won the elections by 51.99% per cent to 44.2% per cent. It became obvious that Ukraine was in completely different situation than a decade prior to the Orange Revolution. As Yuschenko described, his victory was "definitive end to its post-Soviet period," which also represented the extension of democratic transformation to Ukraine.[321] The Orange Revolution was regarded as the return of democracy. In other words, institutional changes[322] done in Ukraine's constitutional framework and electoral law had important implications not only for the separation of powers and the responsiveness of the government to electorate but also for the Ukraine's transition to democracy.[323]

What the Orange Revolution brought as a novelty is much more than the election of Yuschenko as a leader, but the emerging of powerful civil society and free media. Although changing political institutions as well as leaders signified an important progress in the path of democratization, some structural inheritances from the Soviet legacy remained. One of the most prominent obstacles on democratic progress was the regional division between the east and the west, which became more noticeable during the Orange Revolution. Another problem was the proliferation and fragmentation of political parties endured. The effective number of electoral parties has been one of the highest until 2006 in Ukraine among other

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[320] Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, "The Ukrainian Orange Revolution Brought More than a New President: What Kind of Democracy Will the Institutional Changes Bring?" 224.

[321] Viktor Yuschenko, "Ukrainians Have Won The Right To Choose Their Destiny", *Financial Times*, 2004, https://www.ft.com/content/5f17fb96-5841-11d9-9940-00000e2511c8.

[322] In December 2004, prior to the final run-off, Kuchma and Yushchenko agreed on a deal whereby the powers of the presidency would be weakened. According to this agreement, from 2006 onward, the parliament would have extensive power in naming the prime minister and the government would be representative of the majority in parliament. Moreover, Ukraine turned to the purely proportional representation system, with 3% of election threshold needed for a political party to enter into the assembly. Paul Kubicek, "Problems Of Post-Post-Communism: Ukraine After The Orange Revolution", *Democratization* 16, no. 2 (2009): 323-343, doi:10.1080/13510340902732524.

[323] Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, "The Ukrainian Orange Revolution Brought More than a New President: What Kind of Democracy Will the Institutional Changes Bring?"

CIS countries.[324] Higher number of parties made party identification of voters more complicated and lower. Citizens faced difficulties to identify party programmes and choose one that represented their interests. Moreover, Ukraine's move to lower election threshold (from 4% to 3%) to enter the assemblies led to more proliferation of parties, which made the formation of majority more difficult in the parliament.[325] Difficulties in managing coalition politics, the entrenched corruption within the system and the political environment in which old elites could find easily a room to gain a control over parliament led to fade the optimism over the Orange Revolution. Starting from the year 2006, the Orange Coalition was broken up and divided into two camps as the pro-Yushchenko and the pro-Tymoshenko[326] camps, which were fighting against one another.[327] Yuchchenko faced with a dramatic fall in public support. With the negative impacts of world economic crisis in 2009 on the country, popular anger and frustration hit the peak.

In the 2010 presidential elections, Yanukovych - the leader of Party of Regions- who presented himself as a moderate and democratic person during the election campaign, won with a slightly more vote than Tymoshenko.[328] Immediately after the election, all expectations that Yanukovych would work for economic stability and political reform let down with his authoritarian actions.[329] It is safe to assert that following the election of Yanukovych as president in 2010, Ukraine witnessed a retreat from democracy towards an autocracy. The constitution was amended once more to give extensive competences to President Yanukovych. Entrenching *the family* structure composed of people he trusted most

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[324] Max Bader, *Against All Odds: Aiding Political Parties In Georgia And Ukraine*(repr., Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010).82. Karen Dawisha and Stephen Deets, "Political Learning In Post-Communist Elections", *East European Politics And Societies: And Cultures* 20, no. 4 (2006): 691-728, doi:10.1177/0888325406293290. See also database "Who Governs Europe" https://whogoverns.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/enp-electoral-fragmentation-2018.png

[325] Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, "The Ukrainian Orange Revolution Brought More than a New President: What Kind of Democracy Will the Institutional Changes Bring?," 225.

[326] Yuliya Tymoshenko is one of the important figures in Ukrainian politics. She is the leader of Fatherland Party. She was the first woman Prime Minister in Ukraine, who served between 24 January to 8 September 2005 and 18 December 2007 to 4 March 2010.

[327] Slawomir Matuszak, "The Oligarchic Democracy. The Influence Of Business Groups On Ukrainian Politics.", OSW Studies (repr., Warsaw: Centre for Eastern Studies, 2012), https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-studies/2012-10-16/oligarchic-democracy-influence-business-groups-ukrainian-politics.

[328] Yanukovych won the elections 48.95% of votes against 45.47% of votes that Tymoshenko got.

[329] Alexander J. Motyl, "Ukrainian Blues: Yanukovych's Rise, Democracy's Fall", *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 4 (2010): 125-136.

of all in various state structures[330], use of security apparatus and judiciary to prosecute opposition leaders as in the case of Tymoshenko and high level of corruption[331] marked this era.

In November 2013, under the Russian pressure, Yanukovych decided to suspend signing of free trade and association agreement with the European Union (EU). Several activists and students gathered on Ukraine's main square - *Maidan Nezalezhnosti* (Independence Square)-, which turned immediately into anti-government protests due to violent police attacks. The "Euromaidan"[332] protests became another critical juncture in the development of democracy in Ukrainian politics.[333] As a result of violent protests during Euromaidan in February 2014, Yanukovych and some members of his government fled Kyiv to Russia. The Ukrainian Parliament voted to remove him from office and formed a new government. A few days later, with the invasion of Crimea by Russian troops, crisis moved up into a more complicated issue. The aftermath of Euromaidan has left the new government in a situation to resist a Russian aggression and to deal with economic recession while at the same time meeting the public demands for structural reforms.

Rather than questioning whether the Euromaidan revolution has become successful or not, what kind of political system Euromaidan has brought afterwards is still one of the most debated issues in the literature. For the sake of brevity, this subchapter does not go in further details of discussions and concludes that Ukrainian political system had undergone very important changes since the presidency of Kuchma albeit preserving some of the structural inheritances i.e. regional divisions, the level of corruption, role of oligarchs, state-business links etc. The important point here to grasp how the EU has responded to such political changes through its democracy promotion policies. In order to examine the possible impacts of domestic conditions of Ukraine on the EU's differentiated democracy promotion

[330] Yanukovych appointed many government officials from his home region –highly Sovietized Donbass region-.
[331] See for the level of corruption perception index in Figure 4.1.
[332] Activists used this name to express their desires to become a European country.
[333] Even though Euromaidan is presented as a democratic revolution, which overthrow the authoritarian government of Yanukovych with means of a mass peaceful protests, cases of violence including massacre of some protesters overshadowed. Yet, it was claimed that these violent acts were performed by the *titushki* describing agents in civilian clothes and performing such illegal acts such as street beatings, carjackings and kidnappings, who supported the Ukrainian police force and hired by Party of Regions. See also: Serhy Yekelchyk, *The Conflict In Ukraine: What Everyone Needs To Know* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). 109

agendas, the following subchapter tries to put Ukrainian "democracy" under the scope of analytical framework of embedded liberal democracy.

### 4.1.2. Ukraine as a hybrid state in the path of democratization[334]

The political regime of Ukraine has been defined with different concepts such as delegative democracy[335], partial delegative democracy[336], electoral authoritarianism[337], competitive authoritarianism[338], oligarchic democracy[339] etc. While these concepts differ, the substance of their arguments is similar. All these concepts point to the hybrid regimes where "formal democratic institutions are viewed as a means of obtaining and exercising political authority", yet "where incumbents violate those rules so often and to such an extent, however, that the regime fails to meet conventional minimum standards for democracy."[340] Ukraine is a hybrid state including both the features of democracy and authoritarianism inside. Hybrid states are inherently unstable as there has been always a struggle between

[334] Some authors question the phrase of "the transition to democracy" by arguing that transition paradigm assumes that "any country moving away from dictatorial rule can be considered a country in transition toward democracy." Thomas Carothers, "The End Of The Transition Paradigm", *Journal Of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5-21, doi:10.1353/jod.2002.0003. The transition from communism to democracy is considered as a linear process, which has a beginning and an end. Yet, empirical reality shows that transitology paradigm is unable to account well the countries, which are in the middle of "political grey zone" being neither a fully democratic nor an authoritarian. Indeed, only less than one fifth of transitional countries are moving to the consolidated democracy. Remaining trapped in a gray zone characterized by "dominant power-politics and/or feckless pluralism." Christensen, Rakhimkulov, and Wise, "The Ukrainian Orange Revolution Brought More than a New President: What Kind of Democracy Will the Institutional Changes Bring?," 209.

[335] Paul Kubiček, "Delegative Democracy In Russia And Ukraine", *Communist And Post-Communist Studies* 27, no. 4 (1994): 423-441, doi:10.1016/0967-067x(94)90006-x.

[336] Taras Kuzio describes the political regime of Ukraine as "partial delegative democracy" unlike the one suggested by Paul Kubicek (see note 46). He argues that delegative democracy donates the political regime with a ruling elite and a passive civil society that does not feel itself to have a power to change something. However, in Ukrainian case, the situation is different as it is mainly Russophone eastern Ukrainians who are inactive between elections. Delegative democracy can not be applied to Western and central Ukraine as civil society is active there. Taras Kuzio, "Regime Type And Politics In Ukraine Under Kuchma", *Communist And Post-Communist Studies* 38, no. 2 (2005): 167-190, doi:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2005.03.007.

[337] Paul D'Anieri, "Democracy Unfulfilled: The Establishment Of Electoral Authoritarianism In Ukraine", *Journal Of Ukrainian Studies* 26, no. 12 (2001), https://cius-archives.ca/items/show/1153.

[338] Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, "The Rise Of Competitive Authoritarianism", *Journal Of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 51-65, doi:10.1353/jod.2002.0026.

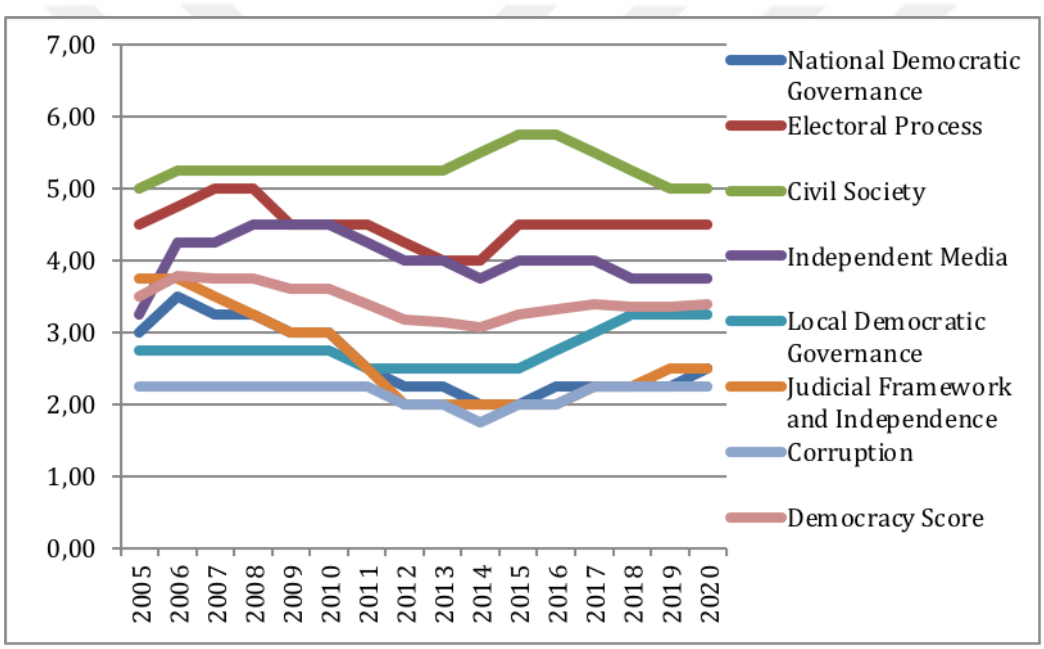
[339] Sławomir, "The oligarchic democracy. The influence of business groups on Ukrainian politics,"

[340] Way and Levitsky, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," 52.

authoritarian incumbents and the opposition or democratic reformers. Yet, neither side is powerful enough to either impose a fully authoritarian regime or a consolidated democracy in the aftermath of regime change.[341]

The Freedom House's annual survey titled as "Nations in Transit" collects data from 29 post-communist states and surveys the progress or setbacks in their democratization process. The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the lowest and 7 the highest level of democracy.[342] Figure 4.3 indicates the domestic political changes, which affect the level of democracy in Ukraine since 2005.

**Figure 4.3. "Nations in Transit": Ukraine (scores yearly)**




Source: Freedom House, Nations in Transit, https://freedomhouse.org/reports/nations-transit/nations-transit-methodology

[341] Kuzio, "Regime Type and Politics in Ukraine under Kuchma."
[342] The scores are identified as follows: i) 5.01–7.00 Consolidated Democracies, ii) 4.01–5.00 Semi-Consolidated Democracies, iii) 3.01–4.00 Transitional or Hybrid Regimes, iv) 2.01–3.00 Semi-Consolidated Authoritarian Regimes and v) 1.00–2.00 Consolidated Authoritarian Regimes. https://freedomhouse.org/reports/nations-transit/nations-transit-methodology

As shown in the table above, the sharp declines in almost each component except civil society correspond the years between 2012-2014 during which Yanukovych had increased its authoritarian tendencies, which is discussed previously in a detail. Democracy score of Ukraine has ranged between 3 and 4 points, which classifies Ukraine as transitional or hybrid regimes. Revival of civil society, on the other hand, has started from 2012, which reached its peak at the end of 2014 and continued at the same level until the mid-2016. In addition, only in the field of local democratic governance, there is a significant improvement since 2015 compared to the level of previous decade. As seen in the following subchapters, the EU's increased contribution to decentralization and local governance may have an impact on this improvement.

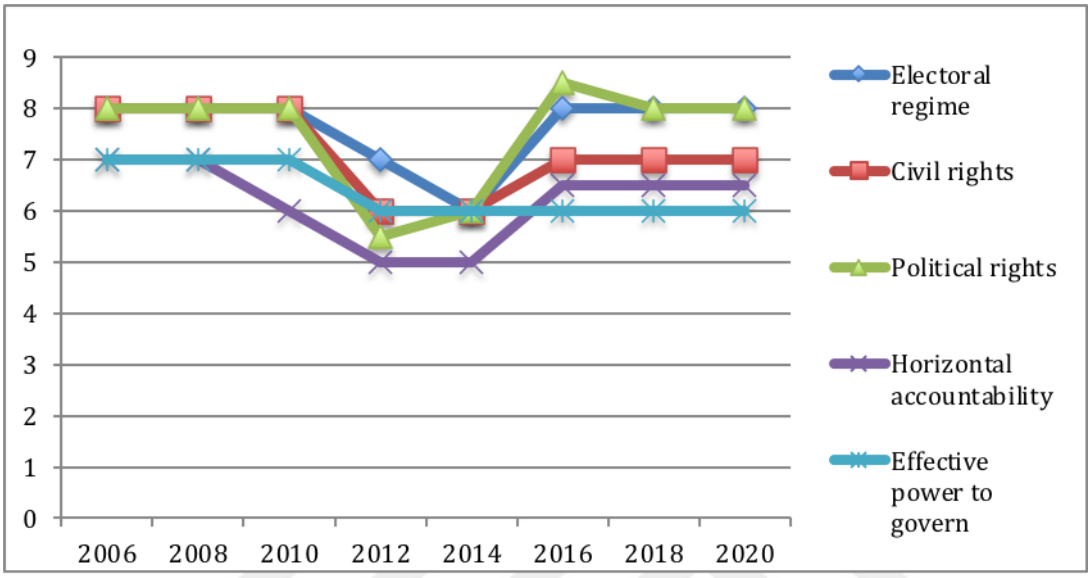
The Freedom House's "Freedom in the World" index assesses annually political rights and civil liberties of 195 countries based on the measure from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Accordingly, after the Orange Revolution from 2005 to 2009, Ukraine was classified as "free" rather than "partly free" as formerly described, which makes it the first CIS country except the Baltic states to have this status.[343] However, the victory of Yanukovych changed the situation and Ukraine was classified again as "partly free" in 2010-2013.

In order to grasp the possible impact of domestic context and conditions on the EU's differentiated democracy promotion agendas, this thesis applies Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) to the Ukrainian case since 2006. BTI covers all components in the analytical framework of this thesis –model of embedded liberal democracy-. These components are determined in the model as five partial regimes i.e. electoral regime, political rights, civil rights, horizontal accountability and effective power to govern, and four external conditions i.e. stateness, state administrative capacity, civil society, and socio-economic requisities. This enables to test the claims the EU tailors its democracy promotion agendas depending on the domestic situation of the country in the question (democracy level, socio-economic situation etc.) the shortcomings in the country (whether it is a post-conflict country or not) and the degree of political will of the government to undertake these democratic reforms. Figure 4.4 below shows the bi-yearly changes in partial regimes of embedded

[343] On the other hand, since 2004, Russia was classified as "not free" – non-democratic-, which was "partly free" before according to Freedom House index.

liberal democracy in Ukraine. Compared to the results derived from other indices, BTI index indicates the same trajectory of democracy in Ukraine. Critical turning points for democracy are underlined as the years between 2010-2016.

**Figure 4.4 Partial regimes of "embedded liberal democracy" in Ukraine**[344]




**Source.** Bertelsmann Transformation Index

Electoral regime and political rights as two closely connected partial regimes include not only free and fair elections with universal and active suffrage but also right to political communication and association as well as press freedom. Both partial regimes have declined considerably from 2010 to 2012. In fact, in the Final Report of OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission submitted on 29 October 2012, it is stated:

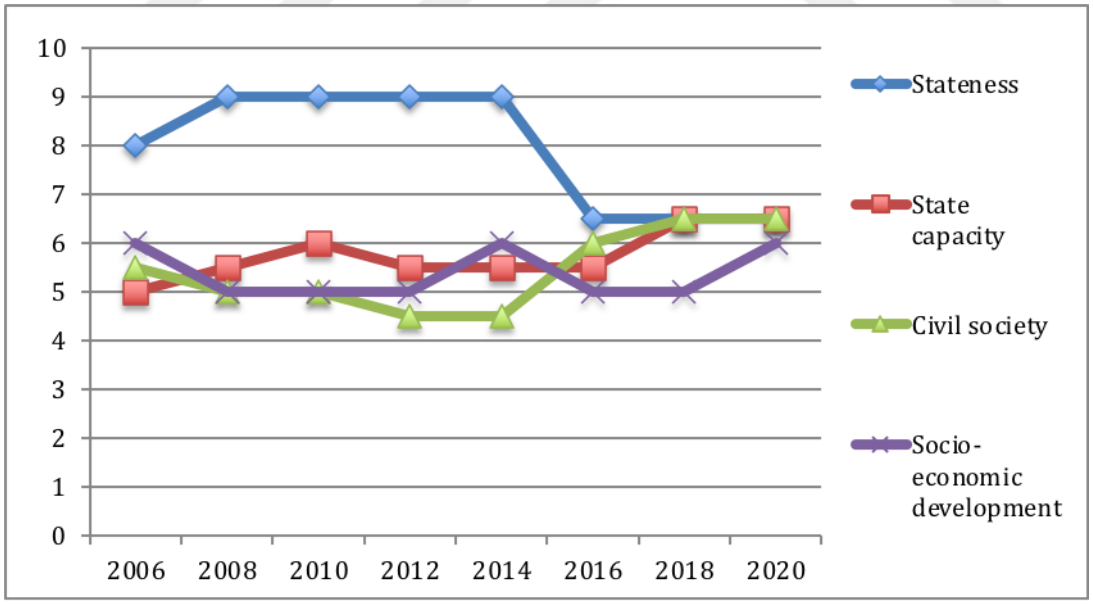
> "…while voters had a choice between distinct parties and the election day was calm and peaceful overall, certain aspects of the pre-election period constituted a step backwards compared with recent national elections[345]. In particular, these elections were characterized by the lack of a level playing field, caused primarily by the abuse of administrative resources, lack of transparency of campaign and party financing, and the lack of balanced media coverage."[346]

[344] Scores are evaluated as: 1-3= - - - (very defective), 4-6= - - (some defective), 7-9= -(little defective), 10= + (no defective)
[345] It refers the parliamentary elections of October 2012.
[346] "Ukraine Parliamentary Elections 28 October 2012 OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report" (Warsaw: OSCE-Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2013), https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/c/98578.pdf.

In addition, it is asserted in the report that there had been some instances of manipulation of the results and other irregularities, which were not corrected by Central Election Commission (CEC) or the courts. Similarly, the level of civil rights and horizontal accountability, both of which include individual liberties and equality before the law, have declined significantly and sustained their lowest score until 2014. In the aftermath of Euromaidan, it can be said that there has been a steady increase in each component of partial regimes except effective power to govern, which suggest that elected representatives are democratically accountable to the public. The level of effective power to govern has remained same since 2012.

In terms of external conditions –stateness, state administrative capacity, civil society and socio-economic requisities- that enable to secure the embedded liberal democracy, both state capacity, civil society and socio-economic development indicate more or less similar pattern of scores as shown in Figure 4.5 below.

**Figure 4.5 External conditions of "embedded liberal democracy" in Ukraine**[347]




**Source.** Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) 2006-2020

[347] Scores are evaluated as: 1-3= - - - (very defective), 4-6= - - (some defective), 7-9= -(little defective), 10= + (no defective).

The level of socio-economic development rose in 2014 to the level of 2006 and dropped to the levels of previous years between 2016 and 2018. The possible explanation of such increase is a very substantial increase in the development assistance from both OECD and the EU, which is almost doubled compared to the level of 2013.[348] In addition, active participation of civil society in public sphere was also strengthened through the increased number of the EU's particular programs aiming to enhance the civil society since 2014. The positive impact of such policies is visible from the scores in the table, which indicate the improving condition for civil society from the level of some defective to the one with little defective. In a same manner, the EU's increased focus on "good governance" promotion in Ukraine mostly since 2016 has revealed itself with the increasing levels of state administrative capacity. The link between these external conditions and the EU's changing policies toward Ukraine will be explored in the following sections.

Lastly, the score of stateness preserving the highest value from 2008 and to 2014, from has dropped sharply from that time. This disruption of Ukrainian state's monopoly on the use of force throughout the territory can be linked to two events i.e. during the Euromaidan protests in February 2014 and Crimean annexation by Russian forces in March 2014. Bearing in mind the non-negligible impact of Russia with its regional and geopolitical interests in Ukrainian politics, the following subchapter tries to analyze the role of Russia in changing patterns of EU democracy promotion agendas towards Ukraine.

### *4.2. Relations with Russia as an illiberal regional power*

Relations with Russia have always been critically important for the domestic political trajectory of Ukraine since they share a common history, economic, political, cultural and linguistic ties. Indeed, Russia as an illiberal regional power has been considered as a spoiler of democratization and has a significant impact on the democratization process in Ukraine. Russia's impact depends on its threefold leverage: i) normative leverage based on the existence of pro-Russian political elites as well as pro-Russian segments in the public, and the level of public pressure for government to adhere democratic norms, ii) economic

[348] While in 2013, Ukraine got over 790 million dollars as a net official development assistance, this amount increased sharply to 1.404 billion dollars in 2014. World Bank Database, Net Official Development Assistance, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.CD?locations=UA

leverage linked to the intensity of economic ties between two actors, and iii) political leverage based on the level of political and security-related vulnerability of Ukraine to the challenges from Russia. In this subchapter, it is sought to analyse the critical turning points in the relations when Russian leverage with one or more of three ways has increased so considerably that undermine the EU's democracy promotion efforts in Ukraine.

In the very beginning of independence of Ukraine, there were two vital issues among these actors to be resolved: the division of the Black Sea Fleet –the dominant Russian maritime force- and the status of its headquarters, Sevastopol, on Crimea.[349] On May 28, 1997 the Ukrainian and Russian prime ministers signed three intergovernmental agreements on the division, basing, and cost of the Black Sea Fleet. Following to these agreements, Ukraine and Russia signed another significant agreement titled "Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership" on May 31, 1997, which led Russia recognize Ukraine's borders at last. These steps were highly important for Ukrainian-Russian relationship. Indeed, Kuchma's multi-vector and pragmatic foreign policy approach was successful as long as it did not threaten the status quo in the post-Soviet area. Thus, until 2004 elections, Ukraine-Russian relations were in a full spate.

The presidential elections of 2004 witnessed the implicit Russian influence via mainly political technologists.[350] The so-called "Russian trace" could be recognized not only within the elections through election falsifications, poisoning of Yushchenko etc. but also disseminating biased information on elections via mass media organs.[351] Strikingly, Russian support to Yanukovych was so explicit that squares in Moscow were dressed up with billboards carrying Yanukovych's photo and the slogan "Vote for President Yanukovych."[352] In addition, Russia met the huge proportion of campaign expenses of

[349] Aslund, *How Ukraine Became a Market Economy and Democracy*, 101
[350] Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005). 118–21. For further information, please see footnote 33.
[351] More critical claim was done by Ukrainian Ambassador to Turkey on Russian trace: "All conflicts in the post-Soviet space invariably imply the Russian trace as a prime cause or the direct participation of the Russian Federation, as in the war in eastern Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea." "Ukraine's Ambassador To Turkey: All Conflicts In Post-Soviet Space Have Russian Trace", Ukrinform.Net, accessed 19 December 2020, https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-polytics/3027307-ukraines-ambassador-to-turkey-all-conflicts-in-postsoviet-space-have-russian-trace.html.
[352] Volodymyr Paniotto, "Ukraine: Presidential Elections 2004 And The Orange Revolution", Blog, accessed 19 December 2020, https://www.kiis.com.ua/materials/articles/president%20election%20in%20ukraine%202004.pdf

Yanukovych.[353]

The relations were strained dramatically after the Orange Revolution. The newly elected Yuschenko's westward-leaning foreign policy underlining economic reforms, the quest for EU accession, and membership in NATO contradicted Russian interests in the near abroad. Ukrainian officials declared that Russia was "a strategic partner in the political, economic, and military fields" yet Ukraine's aspirations for the EU membership remained unchanged. In addition to possible NATO expansion[354], the EU expansion via Eastern Partnership was regarded as the threat to Russia's sphere of influence. In fact, the main challenge for Russia was the sparking of democratization process in the post-Soviet space, which came to the climax with color revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine. These events were regarded as the existential threat to the survival of Russian regime.[355] Thus, any democratization efforts by the EU were counterweighted by creating instability and resurfacing some of the frozen conflicts in the neighbourhood.[356] Indeed, much later, to underline how Russia actively and aggressively involved in Ukrainian politics to bring it

[353] Derek Fraser, "Taking Ukraine Seriously: Western And Russian Responses To The Orange Revolution", in *Europe's Last Frontier?: Belarus, Moldova, And Ukraine Between Russia And The European Union.* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[354] NATO's post-Cold War enlargement is regarded as the last point that Russia has got alarmed according to some scholars. In 2004, NATO added seven new members including the former Soviet Baltic republics (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), and four years later in 2008, NATO declared its intention to bring Ukraine and Georgia into the fold. This step was regarded as an "hostile act toward Russia" by President Vladimir Putin during the NATO's 2008 summit. See also: Jonathan Masters, "Ukraine: Conflict At The Crossroads Of Europe And Russia", Blog, *Council On Foreign Relations*, 2020, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/ukraine-conflict-crossroads-europe-and-russia.

[355] Lebanidze, *Russia, EU and the Post-Soviet Democratic Failure*, 175

[356] In the literature, some scholars argue that the Russian reaction to democracy promotion by Western powers does not stem from due to the ideological competition between two but because this is seen as a Western expansionist agenda in the post-Soviet space, which clashes with its geostrategic interests as well as a threat to its own regime survival. In other words, Russia is seen as a non-ideological pragmatic actor rather than a normative one seeking to promote any kind of political regime. See for example: Laure Delcour and Kataryna Wolczuk, "Spoiler Or Facilitator Of Democratization?: Russia's Role In Georgia And Ukraine", *Democratization* 22, no. 3 (2015): 459-478, doi:10.1080/13510347.2014.996135. Janusz Bugajski, ""Russia's Pragmatic Reimperialization"", *Caucasian Review Of International Affairs* 4, no. 1 (2010): 3-19. Lucan A. Way, "The Limits Of Autocracy Promotion: The Case Of Russia In The 'Near Abroad'", *European Journal Of Political Research* 54, no. 4 (2015): 691-706, doi:10.1111/1475-6765.12092.

into its orbit, Yuschenko declared during the interview that "Every politician in this country and neighboring countries who turns towards the West is facing that kind of danger…"[357]

Displeased by the anti-Russian moves, Russia responded with its coercive measures such as trade and energy wars against Yuschenko's government. Kremlin changed remarkably its former energy policy on which it was agreed to subsidize gas prices for Ukraine in 2004. Between 2005 and 2010, gas prices increased fivefold.[358] Following that Ukraine declined the proposal for the new gas agreement, Russia responded by declaring that it would invalidate the existing agreement with Ukraine. Both sides blamed each other for this confrontation, which would eventually turned into the crisis. On January 1, 2006, Russia cut off gas supplies to Ukraine.

The 2008 Russia-Georgia War was another critical turning point, which escalated the tension between Ukraine and Russia following Yushchenko openly sided with Georgia in against Russia. Russia's use of energy policy as a geopolitical tool continued during the year of 2009. In January 2009, both Russia and Ukraine failed again to reach an agreement on the gas sales-purchase price. As a result, Gazprom cut off once more all gas flows to Ukraine for a period of two weeks, which had a severe impact on consumers in Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and the Balkans and other countries downstream from Ukraine gas flow. Since both conflicts over the price of gas in early 2006 and again in 2009 affected severely not only Ukraine but also EU member states, it became clear to the EU that an energy policy targeting energy diversification and reducing dependency on Russian gas should be prioritized for the following era.[359]

The election of pro-Russian Victor Yanukovych in the 2010 presidential elections changed the direction of relations to the positive side. Yanukovych pursued a rather balanced foreign policy between Russia and the EU by making important concessions to Russia. In return to the extension of the rent contract for the naval base in Sevastopol for an additional

[357] Kim Sengupta, "Viktor Yushchenko: 'Every Politician In Ukraine Who Turns To The West Is In Danger'", *The Independent*, 2020, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/viktor-yushchenko-every-politician-ukraine-who-turns-west-danger-a6694311.html.
[358] Lebanidze, *Russia, EU and the Post-Soviet Democratic Failure*, 175
[359] The EU aid allocated to the strengthening energy policy, energy generation and supply in Ukraine increased to 130.6 million (EUR) in 2012, while it was 71.5 million (EUR) in 2009. Data accessed from: "Recipients - EU Aid Explorer European Commission", European Union: European Commission, accessed 21 December 2020, https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu/content/explore/recipients_en.

25 years, Russia agreed to reduce gas prices. This is one example, which indicates the complex sectoral interdependencies between Russia and Ukraine.

Another important step taken during Yanukovych presidency was to reawaken language question, which had created tensions since the independence. In 2012, a very controversial law "On the principles of State Language Policy", which gave the Russian language regional and official status was passed. Accordingly, in regions where at least 10 per cent of population spoke a minority language – in the east and south of Ukraine this language was Russian-, this law gave more extensive rights to be used in official documentation, education, the judiciary system, mass media etc.[360] This was a significant step bearing in mind that Russian would be an official language in nearly half of Ukraine's regions.

Above all, on 21 November 2013, Yanukovych took a very salient step by freezing the preparations for the Association Agreement (AA) with the EU at the very last minute. In fact, this step would not be expected after years of preparations to replace the old Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. Before taking this decision, a secret meeting between Yanukovych and Putin was held on 9 November.[361] Following this, another critical meeting between Mykola Azarov – Ukrainian prime minister- and his Russian counterpart, Dmitry Medvedev was held in St. Petersburg. Critically important, Azarov declared after this meeting "…the Russian government made it clear to us that signing of an agreement means it would be subsequently impossible to discuss trade and economic relations."[362] Amid a severe economic crisis, it would not be difficult for Russia to persuade Yanukovych not to sign the Association Agreement. On December 17, 2013, the Russian government agreed to buy $15 billion worth of Ukrainian bonds and reduced the price of natural gas shipped to Ukraine by a third.[363]

The postponement of AA was followed by pro-European and anti-governmental street protests branded as "Euromaidan". During the demonstrations, the use of force against

[360] Natalia Knoblock, *Language Of Conflict: Discourses Of The Ukrainian Crisis* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020). 158
[361] Oksana Grytsenko and Ian Traynor, "Ukraine U-Turn On Europe Pact Was Agreed With Vladimir Putin", *The Guardian*, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/26/ukraine-u-turn-eu-pact-putin.
[362] Ibid.
[363] Nadia Diuk, "Euromaidan: Ukraine's Self-Organizing Revolution", *World Affairs* 176, no. 6 (2014): 9-16. 9

the demonstrators increased the tensions. The violence climaxed when on February 20 snipers on rooftops opened fired on protesters, which resulted in killing fifty people.[364] Shortly afterwards, Yanukovych fled to Russia. This was followed by the emergence of Russian so-called "hybrid war" in which both military and non-military means were used. In addition to the seizure of Crimea, Russia supported separatist movements in southeastern Ukraine, a region with historical links to Russia. Indeed, these developments coincided with Putin's third term, which can be described as the radicalization of its foreign policy with his desire for greater geopolitical rivalry with the EU in the post-Soviet space.

There have been certain implications of Russian intervention in Ukraine in terms of the EU democracy promotion. Firstly, the EU has faced with the fact that it is not the only player in the town to change with its "carrots and sticks" the political regime of any neighboring country without taking into the consideration of geopolitical realities. Therefore, in the face of Russia's increasing assertiveness, the EU has started to refrain the explicit use of "democracy promotion" as a priority area in its relations with Ukraine since any attempt to support democratization in the post-Soviet area has been recognized by Russia as not only the existential threat for the stability of the regime but also the challenge to its geopolitical interests. However, the EU has transformed its democracy promotion policy from top-down to the bottom-up democratization such as supporting civil society and local governments to undertake reforms and implementing policies to increase public awareness for the democracy. In other words, the EU has prioritized the strengthening of social, cultural and economic linkages with Ukraine.

Secondly, Russia has impeded the democratization of Ukraine by weakening the statehood, which in turn weakened the ability of Ukrainian government to undertake the EU reforms in the whole country as effective as Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) did during their accession talks in the late 1990s. Yet, Russia's actions have had counterproductive and unintended effects as uniting the national elites and population around the issues of sovereignty, democracy and integration with the West.[365] This can be recognized from a drastic rise in pro-European sentiment in the Ukrainian society that

[364] Damien Sharkov, "Ukraine Has Found The Weapon Used In The 'Maidan Massacre", *Newsweek*, 2016, https://www.newsweek.com/ukraine-claims-find-sniper-maidan-massacre-480406.

[365] Delcour and Wolczuk, "Spoiler or Facilitator of Democratization?: Russia's Role in Georgia and Ukraine."

supported European integration rather than Eurasian since the outbreak of Euromaidan events in February 2014. Even though the number of EU supporters has always outnumbered the opponents since 2002, the increase in the share of European integration supporters in the eastern Ukraine in which high proportion of population has pro-Russian tendencies historically is significant.[366]

### *4.3. The EU-Ukraine relations: Embroiled between norms-values and pragmatic interests*

As one of the EU's largest and politically one of the most important direct neighbours, relations with Ukraine have been pursued in a delicate balance. It is safe to assert two facts on the EU-Ukraine relations: first, relations can be described as a pendulum, which swings on each side of spectrum based on either norms and values or pragmatic interests depending on the geopolitical realities; second, since the independence, the EU- Ukraine relations have been dominated by the EU's reluctance to offer Ukraine a membership despite Ukrainian officials' insistence on being a fully-fledged EU member albeit varying degree from time to time. These two facts have certain implications on each time-periods of democratization process in Ukraine. This subchapter tries to examine the EU democracy promotion towards Ukraine with its changing agendas at critical turning points.

#### 4.3.1. Pre-ENP Period: "A Declaratory Europeanization"[367]

In the early years of independence, the major goal of Ukraine was to establish a fully independent Ukraine with complete independence from Russia. Therefore, until the late

[366] According to results of sociological studies conducted by Razumkov Centre since 2002, Russian aggression against Ukraine since February 2014 has significantly changed the attitudes of Ukrainians toward Eurasian integration. It is striking that while the share of Eurasian integration supporters was about a third of respondents between the years 2011-2013, this number decreased drastically to 15.9% in 2015, and to 7.8% in 2017. Yuriy Yakymenko and Mykhailo Pashkov, "Ukraine On The Path To The EU: Citizens' Opinions And Hopes" (Razumkov Centre, 2018), https://razumkov.org.ua/en/articles/ukraine-on-the-path-to-the-eu-citizens-opinions-and-hopes.

[367] Kataryna Wolczuk, "Ukraine's Policy Towards The European Union: A Case Of 'Declarative Europeanization'", accessed 19 December 2020, https://www.batory.org.pl/ftp/program/forum/eu_ukraine/ukraine_eu_policy.pdf.

1994, Ukraine was isolated itself from both Russia and the Western side.[368] Indeed, from the EU side, the 1991-2004 period can be described as the EU's tendency to regard relations within the *Russia-first* policy with lack of strong focus on relations. The main driving factor in the EU-Ukraine relations was denuclearization; while other issues were marginal.[369] Indeed, at this early period, the EU position towards Ukraine was shaped by the ties of strong member states i.e. Germany, France and Italy with Russia and their dependence on Russian gas.[370] In fact, differences between member states over EU policy toward Ukraine hampered the development of a coherent and collective EU policy towards Ukraine.

The first high-level meeting between the EC and Ukraine took place in September 1992 between the European Commission President, Jacques Delors, and Leonid Kravchuk to start formal negotiations on Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.[371] In 1994, Ukraine became the first CIS to sign Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA). However, it took four more years for the EU to ratify this agreement. In 1998, it was officially entered into the force. Such a long time period indicates low priority attached to the relations with Ukraine. Indeed, the EU's priority in the post-Soviet space was the strengthening relations with Russia.

The PCA signed with Ukraine has four main objectives: (1) to provide a framework for political dialogue between the EU and Ukraine, (2) to promote trade, investment and economic relations to foster the sustainable development, (3) to enhance cultural, economic, social, financial, civil, scientific, and technical cooperation, (4) to support the consolidation of democracy and the transition to a market economy.[372] In the article 6 of the Agreement, it is stated that political dialogue "shall strengthen the links of Ukraine ... with the

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[368] Paul D'Anieri, "Ukrainian Foreign Policy From Independence To Inertia", *Communist And Post-Communist Studies* 45, no. 3-4 (2012): 447-456, doi:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2012.06.008.

[369] Felipe Gómez Isa et al., "Challenges To The Effectiveness Of EU Human Rights And Democratisation Policies", Frame: Fostering Human Rights Among European Policies (repr., European Commission, 2016), http://www.fp7-frame.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Deliverable-12.3.pdf. 63

[370] Rosa Balfour, *Human Rights And Democracy In EU Foreign Policy* (repr., Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013) 56

[371] Mikhail A. Molchanov, "Ukraine And The European Union: A Perennial Neighbour?", *Journal Of European Integration* 26, no. 4 (2004): 451-473, doi:10.1080/0703633042000261661. 457

[372] European Union: Council of the European Union, *Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, and Ukraine (PCA Ukraine),* signed on 14 June 1994, Luxembourg, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=217

community of democratic nations …shall bring about an increasing convergence of positions on international issues of mutual concern... shall foresee that the Parties endeavor to cooperate on matters pertaining to the strengthening of stability and security in Europe, the observance of the principles of democracy, the respect and promotion of human rights, particularly those of minorities..."[373] These objectives signify not only the importance of developing economic and trade relations between Parties but also the establishing political links based on common values such as democracy and human rights. The important point is that the PCA made any reference to possible the EU membership and remained as an economic and trade cooperation agreement unlike PCAs, which had been concluded with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe during that time.[374]

The declared objectives in the PCA were realized through both macro-financial assistance programs as well as bilateral programs under TACIS.[375] The first TACIS was channeled as the transfer of expertise and policy learning to the programs for economic reform and private sector development, energy, nuclear safety and environment. For example, TACIS-funded Ukrainian European Policy and Legal Advice Center (UEPLAC) was created to help the senior officials of Ukrainian government in this process.[376] Another significant point is that there had been no direct reference to democratization in 16 specific areas for cooperation in Joint PCA Work Programme[377], which was adopted in the first EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council in 1998.

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[373] European Union: Council of the European Union*, PCA Ukraine*, Art. 6.

[374] Iryna Solonenko, "The EU's "Transformative Power" Beyond Enlargement: The Case Of Ukraine's Democratisation", European Research Working Paper Series (Birmingham: European Research Institute, 2007), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/200674781_The_EU%27s_%27Transformative_Power%27_beyond_Enlargement_the_Case_of_Ukraine%27s_Democratisation.

[375] Elena Baracani, "The European Union'S Democracy Promotion In Romania, Serbia, Turkey And Ukraine", in *ECPR Joint Sessions Of Workshops* (ECPR, 2007), https://ecpr.eu/Filestore/PaperProposal/7e0a3c16-9d5e-458b-a361-21f4cda72202.pdf.17

[376] Neuman, *Democracy Promotion and the Normative Power Europe Framework: European Union in South Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia,* 8

[377] Although one of the main objectives declared in the general framework of Partnership and Cooperation Agreement is to consolidate democracy, it was refrained to make a direct reference to democratization as the cooperation areas in Joint PCA Work Programme, which can be seen from: "Press Corner -First Meeting Of The Cooperation Council Between The EU And Ukraine", European Commission - European Commission, 1998, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_98_217.

From Ukrainian side, this early period can also defined as "binding in rhetoric but shallow in action"[378] as what Wolczuk describes "declarative Europeanization"[379] since Ukraine has not consistently implemented the PCA while insisting on upgrading the relations to the level of EU membership.[380] In line with this strategic goal, in March 1998 Ukraine issued a presidential decree "Strategy of Ukraine's Integration in the European Union" to declare its intention to seek EU membership. To meet this intention to some degree, the EU decided to upgrade the relations to the upper level but not offering membership. In December 1999, Common Strategy on Ukraine was initiated with the specific emphasis on the support for democracy as one of the EU's main strategic goals "to contribute to the emergence of a stable, open and pluralistic democracy in Ukraine, governed by the rule of law and underpinning a stable functioning market economy which will benefit all the people of Ukraine."[381] A separate section was also dedicated to the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and public institutions.[382] In this section, it was emphasized that the EU gave importance to the independent judiciary, the development of free media, the transparency, efficiency and democratic character of public institutions and civil society as prerequisities for democracy. The National Indicative Programmes and Country Strategy Papers for Ukraine for 2000–2006 underlined the same objectives as strengthening democracy and civic institutions such as mass media, the judiciary and public administration. The EU's increased attention to the support for institutional, legal and administrative reform can also be seen from the allocated TACIS funds to Ukraine among various sectors for the years between 2002-2005.

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[378] Elena Korosteleva, *The European Union And Its Eastern Neighbors: Towards A More Ambitious Partnership?* (New York: Routledge, 2012). 83

[379] Wolczuk, "Ukraine's Policy towards the European Union: A Case of 'Declarative Europeanization"

[380] Baracani, "ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops Promotion in Romania, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine."

[381] European Union: European Council, *European Council Common Strategy of 11 December 1999 on Ukraine,* (1999/877/CFSP), available at: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5dfc1114-75d5-4e56-9981-d1d2e18677da/language-en

[382] Lyubov Zhyznomirska, "Normative Power Europe And The Ukrainian Case In EU Democracy Promotion", in *Democracy Promotion And The Normative Power Europe Framework: The European Union In South Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, And Central Asia* (Cham: Springer, 2018), 137-160.

**Table 4.1** Main sectors of EU assistance allocated to Ukraine, through TACIS National Programme 2002-05 (million euros)

| *Sector* | *2002* | *2003* | *2004* | *2005* | *Average* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Institutional, legal and administrative reform | 21.5 | 22 | 31 | 35 | 27.37 |
| Support to the private sector and assistance for economic development | 8 | 8 | 15.5 | 41 | 18.12 |
| Support in addressing the social consequences of transition | 6 | 7 | 13.5 | 5.5 | 8 |
| Small projects programs and reserve | 11.5 | 13 | 10 | 6.5 | 10.25 |

***Source**:* Elena Baracani, "EU Democratic Rule Of Law Promotion", in *International Actors, Democratization And The Rule Of Law: Anchoring Democracy?* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008).

When one examines allocation of TACIS funding, it is clear that main beneficiary during the period 2000-2006 was state institutions while there was no support provided to political parties, journalists and free media, and NGOs. In addition, the EU has conducted EIDHR micro-projects in Ukraine between the years 2002 and 2004 with the aim of contributing democratic development and civil society building in Ukraine. However, the impact of these micro-projects should be considered as very small since the EIDHR contribution is the lowest one among other grant/aid/loan items.

In sum, this early period until 2004 can be described as the period in which EU's technical assistance to Ukraine was directed to fund the transition to a market economy with very limited focus on democratization. The EU's political rhetoric and activities on the importance of a free and fair elections, the development of free media, the strengthening of human rights and the protection of minorities were directed at state institutions rather than civil society.

### 4.3.2. EU Democracy Promotion to Ukraine within the framework of European Neighbourhood Policy

Timely coinciding with the democratic boost in the aftermath of Orange Revolution, the EU introduced the European Neighbourhood Policy to Ukraine in order to upgrade the bilateral relations with increased incentives offered compared to PCAs. However, as previously underlined, the main feature of ENP discussed extensively in the literature is that while ENP partners are expected to commit themselves to the Union's common values such as democracy, the respect for human rights the rule of law etc., they are not offered the incentive of EU membership, which decreased the EU's leverage and credibility in shaping democratization process of the ENP partners. Following the Orange Revolution in 2004, Yushchenko's election and his efforts for enhanced cooperation were greeted well on the EU side.[383] Yet, contrary to the expectations, the EU resisted the Ukraine's membership aspirations and chose to conduct relations within the framework of ENP. Indeed, over four years after the Orange Revolution, Ukraine's political crises and difficulties in consolidating democracy increased concerns about Ukraine's future, which led the EU refuse to offer the prospect of future membership.

The inclusion of Ukraine in the framework of the ENP with three-year Action Plan adopted in February 2005 has brought some important domestic developments for the first time in Ukraine.[384] In this Action Plan, there were some key priority areas that aim not only the democratic development but also strengthening of the cooperation in the field of Justice and Home Affairs.[385] Thus, for the first time, the EU decided to take important steps to contribute the domestic change in Ukraine, which envisaged approximation of Ukraine to the standards of the Union. Again, in this period, main beneficiary for allocated funding was state institutions. Yet, these steps did not meet the expectations of Yuschenko, which were

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[383] European Union: European Commission, *Joint Statement EU-Ukraine Summit,* Kiev, 1 December 2005, 15222/05 (Presse 337), available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_05_337

[384] Kataryna Wolczuk, "Implementation Without Coordination: The Impact Of EU Conditionality On Ukraine Under The European Neighbourhood Policy", *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, no. 2 (2009): 187-211, doi:10.1080/09668130802630839.

[385] *Revised EU-Ukraine Action Plan on Freedom, Security and Justice,* available at: http://ukraine-eu.old.mfa.gov.ua/mediafiles/files/plan18062007.pdf

so clear in his address at the plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe in February 2005 stating that:

> "We welcome the intention of the European Union to develop a new strategy of relations with Ukraine. This is an important signal. I am convinced that the new paper should contain a prospect of membership. We believe that the EU-Ukraine Action Plan should be reviewed."[386]

In 2007, a new turning point in relations emerged when the EU and Ukraine opened negotiations for a new contractual agreement so called New Enhanced Agreement, which was based on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement of 1998. While from the Ukrainian side, this new agreement could mean the possibility for the country to become a member in the future, the Council and the Commission declared with an emphasis that "through this Agreement, the European Union aims to build an increasingly close relationship with Ukraine, aimed at gradual economic integration and deepening of political co-operation" and "a new enhanced Agreement shall not prejudge any possible future developments in EU-Ukraine relations."[387] Indeed, the EU's ambiguous policy to Ukraine could be examined as an attempt not to close the doors but to remain distant to the future Ukrainian membership. In sum, high expectations in the aftermath of Orange Revolution under Yuschchenko's Presidency to boost democratization process were not met and Ukraine's aspirations for the EU integration remained at declaratory level with weak implementation efforts –mostly remained in the field of formal (institutions and legal framework) rather than substantive democracy-.[388] In addition, political turmoil after the collapse of a proposed coalition of the so-called Orange parties in the parliament and the EU's top down approach in democracy promotion with weak incentives impeded on democratic progress in Ukraine at this time period.

In 2009, the limitations of a single ENP framework including countries from two different geographical regions were recognized. As a response, under the leadership of

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[386] "Address Of The President Of Ukraine Viktor Yuschenko At The Plenary Session Of The First 2005 Part-Session Of The Parliamentary Assembly Of The Council Of Europe", Assembly.Coe.Int, accessed 20 December 2020, http://assembly.coe.int/Sessions/2005/Speeches/Yuschenko_250105_E.htm

[387] European Union: Council of the European Union, Press Release- 2776th Council meeting General Affairs and External Relations, 5463/07, Brussels, 22 January 2007, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/92493.pdf

[388] Tom Casier, "The EU's Two-Track Approach To Democracy Promotion: The Case Of Ukraine", *Democratization* 18, no. 4 (2011): 956-977, doi:10.1080/13510347.2011.584734.

Sweden and Poland, a new framework –the Eastern Partnership (EaP)- was built on May 2009. The main objective was to deepen and strengthen the relations between the EU and six Eastern European countries.[389] Another strategic goal of EaP is to advance the economic integration and political association with partners. In other words, the EaP aims to bring these countries closer to the EU standards and practices. The EaP framework changed the EU rhetoric from "neighbourhood" to "partnership, which had no sense for Ukrainian officials with the lack of membership promise.

In addition to this, following the Arab Spring, the EU reviewed the ENP with increased attention on democratization in 2010-2011 and added a new principle as "more-for-more", which indicates "the greater the progress towards democratic reforms in the receiving country, the stronger the cooperation with the EU and the higher the incentives the EU offered".[390] In other words, the EU recognized the need for positive conditionality in the framework of ENP to encourage the reform-willing partners to pursue more ambitiously their reform agenda, while decreasing the support to reform reluctant states. In addition, depending on the developments and current challenges, apart from democracy, the respect for human rights, good governance etc., the EU added new priorities related to the stabilization in politics, economy and security.

Within the same period, the election of Yanukovych as a new president changed the nature of EU-Ukraine relations. In the very beginning, Yanukovych's pre-election campaign with the promises to strengthen the strategic partnership with the EU gave the signals of improving the EU-Ukraine relations. However, overall record of Ukraine in terms of approximating the EU rules and standards was negative. The selective rule transfer in a few sectors in which reforms couldn't undermine the power of ruling elite, hampered the substantive democratic development.

Despite given the size of incentives during the EaP period, democracy level in Ukraine between 2010 and 2014 did not improve even deteriorated significantly as indicated in Figure 4.3 and 4.4. There had been no sign of progress in corruption levels in that period

[389] Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

[390] "The European Neighbourhood Policy | Fact Sheets On The European Union | European Parliament", www.europarl.europa.eu, accessed 20 December 2020, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/170/the-european-neighbourhood-policy.

either. The investigation of some opposition leaders including Tymoshenko and Lutsenko led the EU take a critical stance and made the signing of Association Agreement conditional upon actions to remedy the shortcomings in the legal processes and media freedom. In 2012, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso explicitly declared "Signing and ratifying the Association Agreement and the DCFTA will not be possible unless Ukraine urgently addresses this stark deterioration of democracy and the rule of law. In the immediate term, this applies to the above cases of selective justice and politically motivated prosecution. Solutions need to be found, enabling Ms. Tymoshenko, Mr.Lutsenko and others to regain their freedom and fully participate in political life."[391]

Yet, interestingly somehow, the EU's counterbalance efforts for democracy promotion increased in that period despite Ukraine's unwillingness to get reforms. Contrary to its "more-for-more" approach, the EU increased its support for democracy to different levels of society such as government officials, business representatives, local authorities and civil society. The importance of civil society as a crucial component of democracy was emphasized with the increased funds and new frameworks for projects strengthening the role of civil society.[392] The main leverage of the EU in this period was Yanukovych's pledge to sign Association Agreement, which he believed to bring him an international reputation and the chance of being reelected.[393] Even though Ukraine did not meet some preconditions to sign Association Agreement and establishing The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) such as releasing Yulia Tymoshenko, overcoming the shortcomings in the recent elections and accelerating Association Agenda reforms, the EU pushed on to sign Association Agreement in 2013. [394] These attempts were regarded as the EU's countermeasures since it was concerned about Ukraine's flown towards Russian sphere of

[391] "EU-Ukraine-Russia Relations: Interviews With Foreign Diplomats", *Razumkov Centre-National Security And Defence*, no. 4-5 (2012): 66-67, https://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/eng/NSD133-134_2012_eng.pdf.

[392] Also, the Civil Society Facility has been established, through which 4 million Euros were given to Ukrainian CSOs in 2012-2013.

[393] Elena Kropatcheva, "The EU's Policy Of Democracy Promotion And Ukraine's Bumpy Path To The Association Agreement - Amidst A Major Crisis In Europe", in *European Engagement Under Review: Exporting Values, Rules And Practices*(repr., Stuttgart: İbidem Verlag, 2016), 11-40. 15

[394] "Remarks By Štefan Füle, Commissioner For Enlargement And Neighbourhood Policy, To The Press After The Meeting With Members Of The Ukrainian Government", European Commission - European Commission, 2013, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_13_80

influence.[395] Russia's increased pressure on Ukraine throughout 2013 led the EU take an urgent step to push Ukraine to sign Association Agreement at Vilnius Summit and give up the conditionality mechanism. Thus, the EU's normative agenda with conditionality politics mixed with geopolitical interests. In fact, the Yanukovych regime, which abandoned plans to sign an association agreement with the EU, became an example of the failure of the normative power of the European Union.[396]

In brief, during Yanukovych presidency, while the EU took a critical stance toward the central government by suspending the budget programs due to the lack of progress in transparency of the management of state finances[397], it continued to support projects whose main beneficiaries were regional governmental institutions, local governments and civil society. The EU's bottom-up support to civil society had revealed its importance in the wake of Euromaidan.

### 4.3.3. The Euromaidan events

In November 2013, Yanukovych decided to postpone the signing of the AA with a goal to get promised Russian support in the form of bail-out to rescue Ukraine from economic and financial trouble.[398] This decision led to the emergence of protest of Ukrainians gathered in Kyiv in support of EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. Protests starting with a small group of pro-European students evolved into the massive one -so called Revolution of Dignity- encompassing not only pro-Western regions of Ukraine but also traditional pro-Russian.

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[395] Isa et al, "Challenges to the Effectiveness of EU Human Rights and Democratisation Policies," 64

[396] Neuman, *Democracy Promotion and the Normative Power Europe Framework*: *European Union in South Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia,* 137

[397] Zhyznomirska, "Normative Power Europe And The Ukrainian Case In EU Democracy Promotion",151

[398] "Viktor Yanukovich has secured a $15 billion bailout from Russia." Darya Korsunskaya and Timothy Heritage, "Russian Bailout Wins Ukraine Economic Respite But Deepens Political Rift", *Reuters*, 2013, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine/russian-bailout-wins-ukraine-economic-respite-but-deepens-political-rift-idUSBRE9BF11U20131217.

The role of the EU in these protests couldn't be overestimated. Indeed, from the very beginning, the EU representatives declared their support to Ukrainian people. At the same time, the EU criticized the anti-democratic actions of government and the disproportionate use of violence of authorities against protesters. On February 21, with the mediation of the foreign ministers of France, Germany and Poland so called "Weimar Triangle", Yanukovych and opposition leaders signed an agreement to deescalate the tensions. It was an important moment, which indicates pro-active leadership of these three Member States to deescalate the crisis. Yet, following Maidan activists did not accept this agreement, Yanukovych fled the country at the end of February 2014. One day later, the *Rada* – the Ukrainian parliament- elected a new cabinet of ministers.

Following these developments, Russia assessed these protests as Western-sponsored coup d'etat directed at undermining its strategic interests in this country and in the region. Then, pro-Russian gunmen with overt Russian support seized the buildings in Simferopol, the capital city of Crimea.[399] On 16 March 2014, a referendum on the future of Crimea was held and majority of voters supported to join Russia. Following this questionable referendum, Russia annexed Crimea, which was considered as a breach of international law, the Helsinki Act of 1975 and the terms of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum.[400] The EU imposed restrictive measures and sanctions against Russia after 'illegal' annexation from the EU side and deliberate destabilization of Ukraine.[401]

The Ukraine crisis as a critical juncture between the West and Russia has posed a very critical geopolitical challenge to the EU, which on the one hand, led France and Germany to take a more cautious stance towards Russia; on the other hand reminded the economic and political vulnerability of some EU Member States such as Poland and

[399] Nikki Ikani, "Change And Continuity In The European Neighbourhood Policy: The Ukraine Crisis As A Critical Juncture", *Geopolitics* 24, no. 1 (2018): 20-50, doi:10.1080/14650045.2017.1422122. 23

[400] Amanda Paul, "Crimea One Year After Russian Annexation", Policy Brief (European Policy Centre, 2015), http://aei.pitt.edu/62987/1/pub_5432_crimea_one_year_after_russian_annexation.pdf

[401] "EU Restrictive Measures In Response To The Crisis In Ukraine", Consilium.Europa.Eu, accessed 20 December 2020, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/ukraine-crisis/.

Lithuania.[402] In fact, it is also a critical juncture, which the EU has faced to revise the ENP in accordance with geopolitical realities, which necessitate to thinking more about stability and security in the neighbourhood. Yet, a rhetorical commitment of President of European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker[403] and other EU officials to make fundamental changes in the framework of the ENP felt short in the implementation side. Despite the lack of substantial changes in terms of policy tools and targets, the revised ENP has brought two new moves. First, it became clear that the incentive-based approach so called "more-for-more" had not been effective enough to create strong incentives for successful implementation of reforms in the field of democracy, human rights, good governance etc. As a response, the EU decided to work more with civil society and social partners in order to make changes in the path of democratization below. In other words, rather than focusing on some ENP governments with no political will to undertake such reforms, the EU revised the ENP framework in a way to pursue the politics of engagement with the civil society groups and business actors. Second, the importance of wide-ranging societal changes and governmental practices in the effectiveness of democracy promotion policies was acknowledged. Thus, rather than a top-down policy through a range of conditionalities prioritizing election monitoring and state institution building, the EU turned its focus on other components of democracy promotion of activities such as those focused on the rule of law, human rights and strengthening civil society.

The year of 2014 was the time when the EU drastically took a crucial role in democracy promotion to Ukraine with its increased financial support and became most strong actor in the process of democratization. Indeed, increased Russian aggression made it clear that both public and political elites had no chance rather than following European direction. Following the change of government in the aftermath of Euromaidan, the EU agreed to give a funding package worth 355 million Euros and additional 10 million Euros for civil society support for the period 2014-2015. The so-called "State Building Contract

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[402] Ikani, "Change and Continuity in the European Neighbourhood Policy: The Ukraine Crisis as a Critical Juncture."

[403] European Union: European Commission, *Mission letter from the President of the Commission - Jean Claude Juncker- to the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and enlargement negotiations -Johannes Hahn,* available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/cwt/files/commissioner_mission_letters/hahn_en.pdf

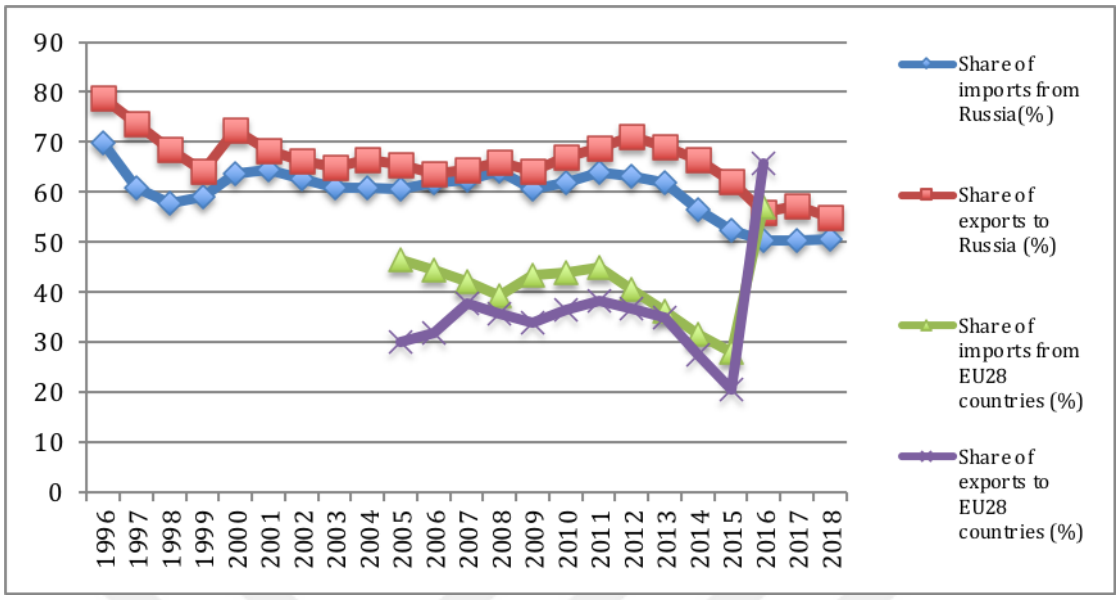
(SBC)" aimed to address the short-term urgent needs for stabilization in Ukraine as well as to support constitutional reforms and electoral legislation.[404] Certain conditions and measures were listed in the SBC in order to monitor the progress in the field of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. While 70% of the SBC funding was given rapidly in June 2014, remaining part of funding - 105 million euros- was conditional with the measures and conditions mentioned above to be met.

Despite the Ukraine's reputation of rhetorical commitment to the reforms, the EU and Ukraine under the new presidency of Petro Poroshenko signed the Association Agreement including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) on the 21st March and 27th of June 2014. The Association Agreement formally entered into force on 1 September 2017 following the ratification of all EU Member States. With this agreement, both parties are committed to "a close and lasting relationship that is based on common values, namely respect for democratic principles, the rule of law, good governance, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, non-discrimination of persons belonging to minorities and respect for diversity, human dignity and commitment to the principles of a free market economy, which would facilitate the participation of Ukraine in European policies."[405] However the degree of political association and economic integration is not clearly predefined in this AA. The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) between the EU and Ukraine, which has been provisionally applied since January 2016, entered into the force on 1 September 2017 with the aim of promoting stronger economic links between the EU and Ukraine. With the DCTFA, the EU has become Ukraine's largest trading partner as shown in Figure 4.6 below. AA/DCTFA is important not only due to promoting deeper political and economic links but also decreasing the leverage of Russia on Ukrainian politics.

[404] "State Building Contract For Ukraine - EU Results - European Commission", EU Results - European Commission, accessed 20 December 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/budget/euprojects/state-building-contract-ukraine_en.

[405] European Union: *Association Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part*, L161/3, signed on 29th May 2014, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22014A0529(01)&from=EN 4

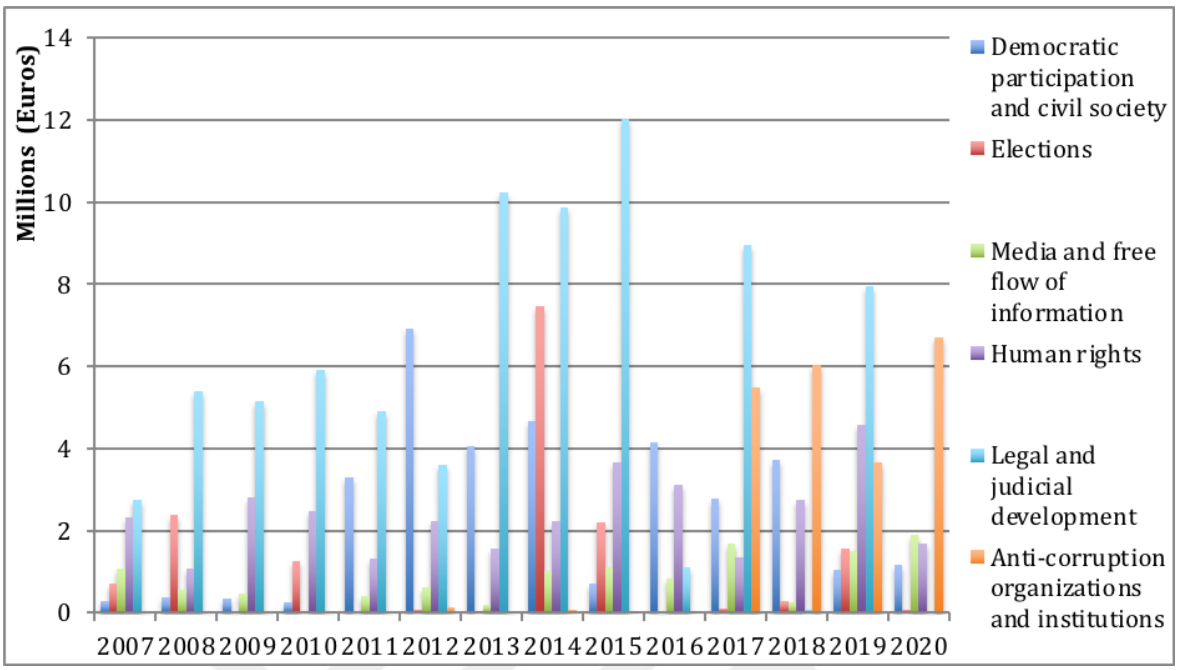
**Figure 4.6** The trade share of Ukraine with Russia and the EU




**Source.** Author compilation from World Bank and Eurostat.

Considering this last period, it can be said that the EU has increased conditions as well as incentives in its agreements with Ukraine to make sure the actual implementation rather than paper-based commitment to reforms. Moreover, the position of civil society in the EU democracy promotion approach has been empowered since 2014. Based on the analysis of documents consisting of bilateral cooperation, in 2014, the EU has promoted all components of democracy and applied broad democracy promotion agenda to Ukraine. Figure 4.7 indicates changes of the EU's disbursed funding to some components sector of "Government and Civil Society" to Ukraine, which implies nearly all funding to the democracy promotion policies to Ukraine. In addition to the support for electoral democracy through elections, in 2014, the EU has put emphasis on supporting other components of embedded liberal democracy through its highest level of funding to Ukraine over years. Following the Euromaidan events, Russian intervention increased public demand for the EU engagement, which in turn paved the way for the EU to take a leading role in democracy promotion. Thus, it is clear that domestic conditions have explanatory power for the EU's adopted democracy promotion model. Yet, this is not only determinant since it does not explain the changes in the EU's democracy promotion despite the stable domestic conditions over years such as corruption level, media freedom and deficiencies in the judiciary.

**Figure 4.7** The EU's disbursed funding to some components of the sector of "Government and Civil Society" to Ukraine between the years 2007-2020




**Source:** EU aid Explorer, https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu

Following years since 2014, it is visible from the disbursed funding and projects that the EU has changed its democracy promotion agenda to narrow one in which some partial regimes and external conditions are supported but not all of them. The year 2017 is critical because the first time, the EU has started to support Ukraine in terms of establishing anti-corruption mechanisms, institutions and organizations since corruption has been one of the most critical defects in Ukrainian politics. It is also significant year because the EU made its assistance conditional upon the implementation of political reforms and specifically of anti-corruption measures. Upon the criticism over the Ukrainian government's record in simply legislating these measures, the EU critically declared that the non-implementation of anti-corruption policies was made as one of the possible conditions for stopping the visa-free regime for Ukrainian citizens. Reforms and mechanisms have been put into the structure despite strong criticisms over implementation side. As a response, on 11 May 2017, the Council adopted a regulation on visa liberalization for Ukrainian citizens travelling to the EU for touristic purposes and for a period of stay of 90 days.

In sum, the amount of funding that the EU allocated for democracy promotion policies has changed yearly. As emphasized above, the key instrument for the EU democracy

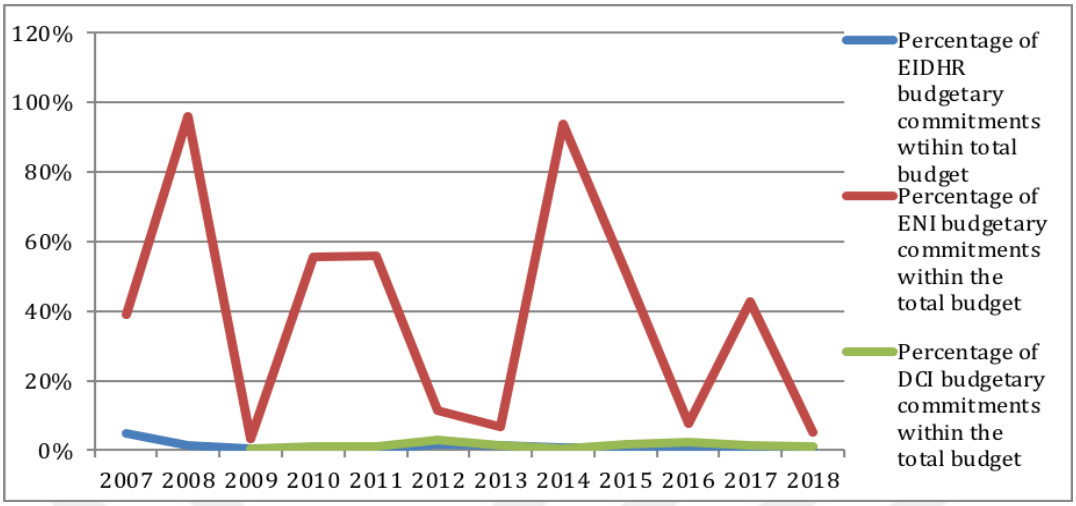
promotion through which the EU supports NGOs is EIDHR. Figure 4.8 below indicates that there is a sharp increase in level of funding for democracy in Ukraine in 2017 even though it does not reach to the level of 2014. Another important point is that documents analyzed for this research indicate that in 2017, the EU had no new attempt, policy and strategy for funding in democracy promotion to Ukraine except the introduction of anti-corruption reforms as an external condition, which refers the support for *state administrative capacity* in the framework of embedded liberal democracy.




**Source:** EU Financial Transparency System, https://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

Yet, it should be underlined that funding allocated to EIDHR is the lowest one among other instruments. It is much more crucial to look at the share of each specific type of EU funding to Ukraine within the total budget. Each specific EU funding indicated in Figure 4.9 is aimed to support somehow the democratization process in Ukraine. As it is clear, the percentage of ENI within the total funding budget is the highest one and varies by year.

**Figure 4.9** Share of the specific type of EU funding to Ukraine within the total funding budget




**Source:** Author compilation from data sources of EU aid explorer and EU Financial Transparency System

### *4.4. Conclusion*

This chapter tries to analyze the EU's democracy promotion policies towards Ukraine. It is clear that until the mid-2012, the EU has directed its support to state institutions with lower focus on other actors such as civil society, business representatives, and other local political elites etc. Yet, it is evident that corrupted state institutions did not bring the expected results for democratization. Deficiencies in the implementation side while having rhetorical commitment to the EU norms and rules by Ukrainian side may explain the failures in the democratization path.

By conducting content analysis of all EU official documents regarding the democracy promotion policies toward Ukraine -mentioned in a detail in Chapter I-, the general framework of EU democracy promotion agendas over time is constituted. Table 4.2 below shows the changes in EU democracy promotion agendas toward Ukraine between the years 2007-2016.

**Table 4.2** The EU's different democracy promotion models toward Ukraine between 2007-2016

| Years | Types of democracy promotion agendas[406] |
|---|---|
| **2007** | narrow agenda |
| **2008** | shallow agenda |
| **2009** | narrow agenda |
| **2010** | narrow agenda |
| **2011** | narrow agenda |
| **2012** | full agenda |
| **2013** | full agenda |
| **2014** | broad agenda |
| **2015** | narrow agenda |
| **2016** | narrow agenda |

It is clear from the table that until 2012, the EU has applied narrow democracy promotion agenda toward Ukraine except the year 2008. It is highly striking that in 2008, the EU has never referred the democracy promotion in all agreements with Ukraine. Yet, all funding was allocated within the framework of ENPI Annual Action Programme 2008 with the aim of removing technical barriers to trade between the EU and Ukraine. What matters for this research is that the EU focused on improving state administrative capacity but no

[406] As explained in a detail in the first chapter, the EU has five possible types of democracy promotion agendas: (1) **broad agenda** in which the EU supports all partial regimes as well as context conditions, (2) **full agenda** in which the EU promotes all five partial regimes except the context conditions, (3) **narrow agenda** in which the EU focuses on some parts of partial regimes by neglecting the others, for example 'electoralism', (4) **shallow agenda** or "output oriented" in which the EU focuses on improvement of external conditions while ignoring the partial regimes, (5) **empty agenda** in which there are no activities related to the support of any partial regime or context condition.

other components of the liberal embedded democracy model. The year of 2008 is also critical to grasp the potential impact of Russia on the EU's chosen democracy promotion models since Ukraine-Russia relations soured due to Putin's accusation that Ukraine supported Georgia through selling weapons during Russo-Georgian War in August 2008. Tensions between Russia and Ukraine increased gradually in the beginning of 2009 when Russia cut off all gas flows to Ukraine due to the failure to reach an agreement on gas sales-purchase price. Yet, before that, there is another important turning point at which the European Commission submitted its proposal[407] for an "Eastern Partnership" on 3rd December 2008, upon the request of the Extraordinary European Council of 1st September 2008[408] to show the EU commitment in enhancing cooperation with its "Eastern Partners"[409] following the conflict in Georgia. This attempt is significant because deterioration of relations between Russia and "Eastern Partners" has opened a space for the EU to take an active stance and to implement its policies in the region smoothly.

Starting from mid-2012, due to the fact that the need for "differentiated" democracy promotion approach came to light in the aftermath of Arab Spring, the EU has changed its democracy promotion model toward Ukraine to the one, which focuses more on the political rights, rule of law, good governance and horizontal accountability. Domestic conditions and defects at this period during Yanukovych presidency of 2010 such as high level of corruption, declined press freedom, corrupted judicial system may have an impact in shaping the EU's democracy promotion policies. Yet, this does not explain why the EU has changed its democracy promotion agenda considerably from full agenda for the years 2012-2013 to broad agenda for the year of 2014.

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[407] European Union: European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Eastern Partnership,* COM(2008)823, Brussels 3rd December 2008, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2008/EN/1-2008-823-EN-F1-1.Pdf

[408] "7. The European Council notes with concern the impact which the current crisis is having on the whole of the region. The European Union considers that it is more necessary than ever to support regional cooperation and step up its relations with its eastern neighbors, in particular through its neighborhood policy, the development of the "Black Sea Synergy" initiative and an "Eastern Partnership" which the European Council wishes to adopt in March 2009; to this end it invites the Commission to submit proposals in December 2008." European Union: The Council of European Union*, Extraordinary European Council, 1 September 2008: Presidency Conclusions*, Brussels 6th October 2008, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/102545.pdf

[409] Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

In 2014, the EU has applied “broad democracy promotion agenda” by focusing on both partial regimes and external conditions of liberal democracy. Public demands for the EU values i.e. democracy, human rights, rule of law during Euromaidan events may trigger the EU to take pro-active stance in this manner. However, it is not easy to link directly the transformation of democracy promotion policies from top-down to bottom up to the domestic conditions since as indicated above, such conditions remain more or less similar. Investigating the determinants for changes in EU’s democracy promotion models necessitates looking closer the other variables hypothesized in this research. To test the argument that the illiberal regional power – Russia- has an impact on the EU’s differentiated democracy promotion agendas, next chapter is devoted to the EU’s democracy promotion towards another case –Georgia-, which has been passed in a very similar historical processes with similar domestic features.

# CHAPTER 5

# THE EU DEMOCRACY PROMOTION POLICIES IN GEORGIA

*"I am Georgian, therefore, I am European"*[410]

**Zurab Zhvania**

This chapter aims to examine the EU democracy promotion policies in Georgia. As emphasized in the previous chapter, the main goal is to figure out the determinants for the changes in EU democracy promotion agendas at critical time periods. Since main focus of this thesis is on two determinants i.e. domestic context conditions and the role of illiberal regional power, this chapter begins with the analysis of domestic conditions and critical junctures shaping democratization process in Georgia. Then, the relationship between Russia, as the illiberal regional power and Georgia is scrutinized closely. Bearing in mind these two factors and critical turning points, this chapter tries to find out the role of these factors in shaping EU democracy promotion agendas in Georgia.

## *5.1. Domestic conditions shaping the democratization process in Georgia*

Georgia can be described as one of the most striking examples, which fulfils fairly to the inside meaning of oft-cited quotation: "Geography is destiny" with its location in a region, which historically powerful neighbours divided and controlled and was subject to a kind of fault lines between Orthodox Church and the Islamic World.[411] Despite the challenges, its location offered to constitute a common identity between civilizations.[412] This has had certain implications on the construction of Georgian national identity as a part of Europe.

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[410] The Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, Zurab Zhvania, made a historical speech in Strasbourg when Georgia was joining the Council of Europe in February 1999. This quotation is important because it indicates not only Georgian pro-European/pro-Western foreign policy direction since its independence but also national self-identification as European, whose roots dated back to 12th -13th centuries.

[411] Darrell Slider, "Democratization In Georgia", in *Conflict, Cleavage, And Change In Central Asia And The Caucasus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). 157

[412] This is also reflected in Georgian literature as the example of Shota Rustavelli's poet titled "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" in which he described the golden age of Georgian history. Written in 12th century, Rustavelli tells about the glory of the rule of Queen Tamar of Georgia with very interesting values such as sovereignty, gender equality, secularism etc. that transcend to generations.

Indeed, well before the independence from Soviet rule, the first Democratic Republic of Georgia as a first independent modern Georgian state was established in 1918[413]. Albeit short-lived, Democratic Republic of Georgia inspired by European social models is very important in Georgian political history due to its role in state-building process with its emphasis on the notion of democracy as well as its impact on the self-identification with Europe and Europeanness. Yet, these nascent notions of self-identification have been disrupted by the developments in February 1921 when Red Army invaded Georgia and incorporated it into the Soviet Empire. Repeated attempts to suppress Georgian nationalism during the Soviet era have also contributed to the shape of Georgian nationalism.

In the aftermath of independence when, similar to other republics seeking the independence from the Soviet Union, Georgia experienced high levels of political instability, ethnic conflicts and economic turmoil. Yet, there was hope for the progress in the path of democratization in Georgia with the series of free and fair elections since 1990s as international observers confirm.[414] These features – some of which has come from Soviet legacy while others are endemic- as well as certain turning points in Georgian political history have played a critical role in determining its position within the democracy-autocracy spectrum. This first section deals with critical turning points in Georgian political history since its independence, which have directly impacted on democratization period as well as on the nature of relations with both Russia and the EU.

### 5.1.1. Critical junctures in Georgian political history since its independence

Though the main focus of the research is on the post-independence period of Georgia, it is critically important to grasp the recent epoch of Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic (Georgian SSR) Soviet Union and how developments in this last era had shaped Georgian democratization after the independence. Therefore, this section begins with the early

[413] The collapse of the tsarist regime in 1917 led to the election of an independent Social Democratic (Menshevik) government in March 1918. Georgia's independence was recognized by the leading European powers, and in May 1920 Lenin signed a treaty with the Georgian government. In February 1921, however, the Red Army invaded, and Georgia was incorporated into the Soviet empire.

[414] Slider, "Democratization in Georgia."

nationalist attempts seeking for independence and its implications for the identity- and state-building.

- **The early independence period until 1995**

The late 1970s witnessed the rising of Georgian nationalist discourse as opposed Soviet assimilationist policies. Yet, a real opposition came with the establishment of the first oppositional groups founded by dissidents and liberal intelligentsia at the beginning of 1988.[415] These small organizational groups had been transformed into more politicized and more nationalist movements in due course. Leader of opposition groups played a pivotal role in organizing mass demonstrations in many city centers but mainly in Tbilisi by the end of 1988, which turned into an important political power and a threat to Communist rule.[416]

The increasing number of radical nationalist groups in all over Georgia had different repercussions in Georgia's autonomous republics. The first development was huge mass demonstration that took place in Abkhazia in March 1989 with some people including Abkhaz members of Communist elite who demanded the partition of Abkhazia from the Georgian SSR. In fact, Abkhazian demand for the integration into the territory of Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) was not new, occurred several times in 1957, 1967 and 1977 during Soviet rule. However, in this time, Abkhazian mobilization was regarded as "the existential threat to the ultimate objective of Georgian independence from the Soviet Union."[417] As the Abhkaz mobilization increased its effectiveness, the Georgian national movement reacted. Throughout the country, mass demonstrations took place including both anti-Communist and anti-Abkhazian slogans.

In March 1989, upon the news of Abhkaz demands for secession from Georgia, one of the largest mass demonstration was held in Tbilisi. Georgian Communist Party fearing not to control these demonstrations, demanded the help of Soviet troops to move in against

[415] Ilya Chavchavadze Society and Helsinki Union are regarded as the first oppositional groupings. Zviad Gamsakhurdia, a literary scholar and dissident who had spent years in prison for nationalist and human rights activity was one of the most prominent leaders of these groups. Christoph Zürcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, And Nationhood In The Caucasus* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2007). 119
[416] Zürcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus*, 119
[417] Zürcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus*, 121

the demonstrators. On the morning of April 9, 1989, Soviet troops rolled into Tbilisi and reacted violently against the demonstrators, resulting in 21 deaths and hundreds of injuries. What was afterwards referred to as the "April tragedy"[418] had very important consequences in Georgian political history.[419] First, it became a turning point for decreasing the legitimacy of local Communist government and augmenting the public support for the nationalist movements for independence. It resulted in the emergence of a stronger pro-independence opposition bloc consisting of former small nationalist groups. Second, the sentiment of "national awakening" united all people around the goal of national independence from Soviet Union. Indeed, it had deep imprints on the construction of Georgian national identity. In addition to all these consequences, the events of April 9 have also left important marks on the development of Russian-Georgian relationship in the aftermath of collapse of the Soviet Union.[420]

In the aftermath of the events of April 9, national movements became more organized, stronger and radicalized. Communist Party leadership had to meet some demands of the nationalist opposition and gave some crucial concessions such as freeing some prominent leaders of the movement including Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Merab Kostava, and Giorgi Chanturia from jail. In November 1989, Communist Party dominated Georgian Supreme Soviet made important constitutional amendments which gave the supremacy of Georgian over Union law and declared that that it would not recognize Soviet Union laws that were contrary to Georgian interests.[421] Another crucial step was language law, which

[418] Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrot, *Conflict, Cleavage, And Change In Central Asia And The Caucasus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). 161

[419] One critical consequence, which is not discussed in a detail due to its inappropriateness for the scope of thesis, is that the events of April 9 led to the emergence of so-called "Tbilisi Syndrome", which is characterized as military commanders and soldiers become reluctant to take any tactical decisions and obey the rules of higher authority. According to this, the military and police took the people's side in the events of April 9, which contributed to the gaining independence.

[420]Archil Gegeshidze claims that Russia's unfriendly and sometimes aggressive actions against independent Georgia, taken examples of separatist wars in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the first years of independence, is due to the desire to punish ungrateful Georgia, which by its rebellion in the late 1980s became an example to others and contributed the collapse of the Soviet Union. Indeed, the roots of confrontation between Russia and Georgia based mainly upon this motivation to punish Georgia for its contribution to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Russian perception towards Georgia as unreliable and disloyal neighbor. Archil Gegeshidze, "The 9 April Tragedy — A Milestone In The History Of Modern Georgia", Blog, *Observer Research Foundation*, 2019, https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-9-april-tragedy-a-milestone-in-the-history-of-modern-georgia-49801/.

[421] Stephen Francis Jones, *Georgia: A Political History Since Independence* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015). 91

made Georgian language mandatory in public sector throughout the country etc. These attempts were received badly in some parts of the country such as Abkhazia and South Ossetia where non-Georgian population was majority and had different language than Georgian.[422]

In March 1990, the Georgian Supreme Soviet made a declaration titled "Guarantees of the Protection of Georgia's State Sovereignty" which removed all Soviet presidential powers that violated the republican sovereignty.[423] In addition, it declared that Soviet invasion of Georgia in February 1921 was de-facto annexation and all treaties concluded between Georgia and Soviet government since May 21st, 1921 were null and void.[424] These attempts accelerated the talks for the restoration of Georgian independence.

In October 1990, Zviad Gamsakhurdia-led opposition coalition party Round Table-Free Georgia Bloc won the Supreme Soviet elections with 54% of votes and captured 155 seats out of 250, while Georgian Communist Party received 29.6% of votes with 64 seats and the Popular Front got 12 seats.[425] This implied that radical nationalist with the leadership of Gamsakhurdia would dominate the new Supreme Soviet while minority and moderate intelligentsia were marjinalized.

The first step towards independence was done by the Georgian government decision on 20 June 1990 to constitute the legal mechanisms of independence based on the 1921 Constitution.[426] One year later, on 17 March 1991, a referendum on the question whether a reformed Soviet Union should be preserved or not, was held. A majority of Georgia voted against the preservation of Soviet Union except 52.4% of votes in Abkhazia in favor of

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[422] Zürcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus*, 123

[423] Jones, *Georgia: A Political History Since Independence*, 91
[424] İbid.
[425] Jones, *Georgia: A Political History Since Independence*, 50
[426] 1921 Georgian Constitution is regarded as one of the most advanced supreme legislative acts oriented toward human rights in the world in the beginning of 20th century. Its uniqueness lies on its provisions to establish a parliamentary governance system, with local self-governance, to abolish death penalty, to provide freedom of speech and belief, universal suffrage (pressing at that time for an equal right to vote for men and women), and many other provisions. George Papuashvili, "A Retrospective On The 1921 Constitution Of The Democratic Republic Of Georgia", *Engage: International And National Security Law* 13, no. 1 (2020),99 available at: https://fedsoc-cms-public.s3.amazonaws.com/update/pdf/iTpKonZgtcui09MEHOu6WIv9Qk2DRBQXtvxrPh3h.pdf

reformed Soviet Union.[427] On 31 March 1991, a referendum on Georgian independence was held and 98% of Georgians voted in favor of independence while a majority of Abkhazians did not attend in this referendum.[428]

- **Gamsakhurdia era in the aftermath of independence**

On 9 April 1991, two years after the April 9 tragedy, Gamsakhurdia declared the Georgian independence from the Soviet Union at an extraordinary session of the Supreme Council by reading "Act of Restoration of Georgian State Independence"[429]. He stated that the new state would be based on democratic principles:

> "The Republic of Georgia, striving for a dignified position in the world community of nations, recognises and ensures equally all the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals, including national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups, envisaged by international law, as required by the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and international pacts and conventions."[430]

Following the declaration of independence, on 26 May 1991, elections were held and Gamsakhurdia and his party Round Table-Free Georgia gained 86.5% of the votes and became the first president of Georgia. Gamsakhurdia's aim was to break almost all ties with Soviet Union and to create a unitary state in which Georgian ethnic group was dominant. Indeed, the Gamsakhurdia era is regarded as nationalism's zenith.[431] Gamsakhurdia's increasingly nationalist rhetoric and attempts not only troubled the ethnic minorities such as Abkhazians and the South Ossetians for the fear of Georgian domination, but also created a chaos among different political groups. Radicalization of Georgian nationalism, political persecutions, increased pressure on media and opposition led to the emergence of

[427] Charlotte Mathilde Louise Hille, *State Building And Conflict Resolution In The Caucasus* (Leiden the Netherlands: Brill, 2010).

[428] Hille, *State Building And Conflict Resolution In The Caucasus*.

[429] Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia, *Act of Restoration of State Independence of Georgia*, 95, 9 April 1994, available at: https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/32362?publication=0

[430] For the speech of Zviad Gamsakhurdia at the extraordinary session of the Supreme Council, please watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Qoo2OYM9zo

[431] Jones, *Georgia: A Political History Since Independence*, 52

paramilitary groups, such as *Mkhedrioni*[432] (horsemen or knights), which threatened state control and would soon play a significant role in the organization of violence and in Georgia. Through such paramilitary groups, different rival nationalist groups tried to get the place in power.[433] Yet, ethnic divisions and clashes among different groups within the country caused two ethno-territorial conflicts and a short-lived civil war from 1991 to 1993.[434]

The first major crisis erupted over the status of breakaway region of South Ossetia[435], which was largely populated by Ossetians, a separate ethnic group with a different language based on Persian. On 10 November 1989 South Ossetian parliament demanded to upgrade its status from "Autonomous Oblast" to "Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic".[436] This demand was denied by Georgian authorities. In September 1990, the South Ossetian Supreme Soviet enacted a law, which revealed its demands towards secession and raise its status to a Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) in the Soviet Union. The so-called "war of laws" started with the decision of Georgian Supreme Soviet to abolish the Autonomous Oblast status of South Ossetia on 11 December 1990. This increased the existing tensions and led to clashes, which eventually developed into a full-scale ethnic conflict in January 1991 and flared up in June 1992. In the summer of 1992, a ceasefire agreement with the introduction of a joint Ossetian, Russian and Georgian peacekeeping missions ended the conflict.[437]

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[432] Mkhedrioni was one of the most powerful nationalist paramilitary groups in Georgia, which established in 1989 by Jaba Ioseliani. It was formed with the aim of preventing Abkhazia and South Ossetia from seceding from the new Republic of Georgia. Mkhedrioni as the rival group to Gamsakhurdia and his supporters, played a critical role in ousting President Gamsakhurdia in 1992.

[433] In January 1991, Gamsakhurdia issued a presidential decree to establish the National Guard of Georgia as a branch of Georgian Army under the Ministry of International Affairs.

[434] It is frequently suggested that ethnic violence in post-communist societies is due to ethnic definition of nationhood, which considers minorities as "guests on our soil" who should behave in a proper way.

[435] In fact, Georgia never accepted the term "South Ossetia as it seems to prompt demands for reunification with North Ossetia, which is a part of the Russian Federation. Therefore, Georgians denied any similarity with the situation in Germany or Korea as any state comprising North and South Ossetia existed. Rather, Georgians regard the region as Georgian historical province, called Shida Kartli or Samachablo. Please see: Ghia Nodia, "Political Turmoil In Georgia And The Ethnic Policies Of Zviad Gamsakhurdia", in *Contested Borders In The Caucasus* (repr., Brussels: Vub Press Publishing, 1996), http://poli.vub.ac.be/publi/ContBorders/eng/ch0201.htm

[436] Arsène Saparov, "From Conflict To Autonomy: The Making Of The South Ossetian Autonomous Region 1918–1922", *Europe-Asia Studies* 62, no. 1 (2009): 99-123, doi:10.1080/09668130903385416.

[437] İbid.

The second critical crisis during Gamsakhurdia era was over the status of breakaway region of Abkhazia, which in fact based on the historical, economic and social resentment of Abkhazians toward first the incorporation of Abkhazia into Democratic Republic of Georgia in 1918. Struggles for the separation from Georgia then continued throughout Soviet period. The roots of conflict were demographic decline, resettlement of Georgians in Abkhazia, regional economic inequalities, low income and labor productivity as well as the introduction of Georgian language in public space and the end of Abkhazian language in radio stations, all of which were interpreted as a deliberate Georgian policy for domination over Abkhazians.[438] Tensions continued during Gamsakhurdia era and escalated into fierce fighting with thousands of dead and displaced during 1992-93 under Eduard Shevardnadze era, who was the successor of Gamsakhurdia. In 1993, with the support of Russian military and non-Georgian fighters such as Chechens and other North Caucasian peoples, Abkhazia won the battle.[439] Shevardnadze's accommodation with Russia brought peacekeeping forces into the area and led to sign the ceasefire agreement in 1994.[440] Russia's interference in the Abkhazian crisis is critically important to which will discuss in a separate section devoted to Georgia-Russia relations below.

The third crisis at this period, which led to the violent overthrow of Gamsakhurdia happened between different rival Georgian groups bidding for political power. Gamsakhurdia's authoritarian attitude and actions over opposition groups, parties and media increased tensions. Throughout September 1991, several opposition members of Parliament, student groups and other activists demonstrated and began hunger strike to demand the resignation of Gamsakhurdia. On 24 September, Gamsakhurdia declared the state of emergency, which brought a new round of pressure on media and the increased number of political prisoners. By the end of September 1991, Tbilisi was divided into several groups with their own troops and militia.

Georgia's refusal to become a member of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) under Gamsakhurdia presidency got Russian reactions, which in turn, for some

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[438] Jones, *Georgia: A Political History Since Its Independence*, 44.

[439] Martina Huber, "State-Building In Georgia: Unfinished And At Risk ?" (Clingendael: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' Conflict Research Unit, 2004), https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/20040200_cru_paper_huber.pdf 29.

[440] Slider, "Democratization in Georgia", 173.

scholars, led Russia's involvement into the conflict with its assistance to one side or another moved the conflicts to the climax. The so-called Tbilisi War or began in December 1991 and ended in January 6, 1992 when Gamsakhurdia had to flee as a result of the bombardment of the Georgian Parliament led by *Mkhedrioni*. Following the forced departure of Gamsakhurdia, a Military Council led by Tengiz Kitovani and Jaba Ioseliani took power in Tbilisi. They invited Eduard Shevardnadze, who served as a Soviet foreign minister, to play a leading role in the political process.

- **Shevardnadze era (1992-2003)**

On 11 October 1992, the post-coup elections were held and Shevardnadze became the Head of State. In 1993, Shevardnadze declared a state of emergency, which gave the full control of some ministries. He created the ruling party, Citizens' Union of Georgia (CUG), which gained the majority of votes in the next two parliamentary elections (1995, 1999)[441].

Compared to Gamsakhurdia era characterized as high levels of political instability and violence, ethnic conflicts and economic disruption, Shevardnadze tried to settle down the ethnic conflicts, to reestablish the control over the militas and sought accomodation with Russia. With the outbreak of Abkhazian war, Shevardnadze had no other choice remaining than to accept Georgia's membership in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) for the sake of the maintenance of Georgian territorial integrity. In December 1993, Georgia became a member of CIS.

Yet, by the turn of the 1990s, it was clear that the Georgian state weakness continued and in addition to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, other parts of country such as the Pankisi Gorge, Ajaria, Kodori Gorge and Mingrelia were all weakly controlled by the central state. Moreover, Shevardnadze failed to bring necessary reforms and policies in the path of democratization. After the relative stable years until 1996, corruption increased

[441] In presidential elections of 1995 and 2000, Eduard Shevardnadze won the highest votes too.

dramatically, and economic stagnation remained as one of the major obstacles on the necessary steps of state-building and peaceful transition.[442]

Another prominent feature of Shevardnadze era was the very pluralistic Georgian Parliament, which nearly all political parties and groups were able to enter with 2% electoral threshold. In fact, this pluralism was reflected itself in Shevardnadze's appointments for the cabinet. He included both communists, non-communists and the leaders of paramilitary groups. Even though Shevardnadze's choice for "balance cabinet" was due to satisfy all different circles to prevent any of them become a challenge for his position, this fragmentation within the government weakened his power. Another consequence of this fragmentation is that newly-emerging, pro-Western, young, reform-oriented people, who got education in the West and had no connection with the Soviet Union were able to take place in the party structure of Citizens' Union of Georgia (CUG). This had certain implications on Georgia's disengagement from the Soviet legacy, which also contributed a new political path of the country resulted in the Rose Revolution in 2003.

Shevardnadze era also engineered the adoption of a new constitution, which was passed by the Georgian Parliament in August 1995. This new constitution granted considerable rights to the President such as the power to appoint ministers with the approval of the Parliament, to dismiss these ministers, to declare a state of emergency, to issue decrees, to appoint members of the National Security Council and to appoint and/or to dismiss generals as the chief of the armed forces. In addition to all these powers, the President was able to present draft laws to Parliament, veto or amend laws that Parliament had passed and Parliament could only revoke, veto or pass the laws with a majority of three fifths for ordinary laws and a majority of two/thirds for constitutional amendments.[443] It is clear that while the main purpose of these amendments was to centralize the state power in order to provide stability, it damaged democratization in Georgia.

Shevardnadze's gradually increasing powers along with the increased level of corruption ended his era in 2003. On November 2nd 2003, parliamentary elections which

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[442] Huber, "State-Building in Georgia: Unfinished and at Risk?," 23.

[443] Parliament of the Republic of Georgia, *Constitution of Georgia*, 24 August 1995, Art.52. Powers of President of Georgia, available at: https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/30346?publication=36

Shevardnadze promised to hold fairly, was held. However, international observers declared the elections as unfair with some problems such as rampant ballot stuffing, multiple voting, late poll openings, and ballots not being delivered to some polling places, and voter lists that included dead people but not thousands of live voters.[444] On November 20th 2003, when the official results were released, opposition parties, civil society groups and the young activists called *Kmara*[445] started to demonstrations and protests of election results in Tbilisi.

- **Rose Revolution *(Vardebis Revolucia)* (2003)**

On November 22nd of 2003, when Shevardnadze attempted to make the speech at the opening session of the new parliament, former Minister of Justice and a leader of opposition Mikheil Saakashvili[446] and his supporters burst into the session with roses in their hands. This protest did not turn into the violent one. After a meeting with opposition leaders Saakashvili and Zurab Zhvania to discuss the situation on November 23rd of 2003, Shevardnadze declared his resignation. Immediately, a provisional government was formed by the speaker of the parliament, Nino Burjanadze, as specified in the constitution. During this interim period, Burjanadze assured international community that a new government in Georgia would place the country on the path oriented toward the West and democracy.[447] Supreme Court of Georgia annulled the results of parliamentary elections and new elections were planned to be held six weeks. New presidential elections were held on the 4 January

[444] According to OSCE Election Observation Mission's final report: "The 2 November Parliamentary elections in Georgia fell short of a number of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections. The elections demonstrated that the authorities lacked political will to conduct a genuine democratic process. This resulted in widespread and systematic election fraud during and after election day, most obviously in Adjara and Kvemo Kartli regions." For the whole report of OSCE on Parliamentary Elections: "Georgian Parliamentary Elections, 2 November 2003", Election Observation Mission Final Report (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2003), https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/georgia/57867

[445] Kmara means "Enough!" in Georgian. It emerged as the main leading youth movement to mobilize thousands of young people during the Rose Revolution.

[446] Saakashvili emerged as a promising young, Western-oriented political figure at the demise of the CUG. Two years before the Rose Revolution, on November 7 2001, Saakashvili declared his intention to establish a social organization called New National Movement, later obtained the United National Movement (UNM) name, which would aim to unite all progressive forces inside the country.

[447] Lincoln Abraham Mitchell, *Uncertain Democracy: US Foreign Policy And Georgia's Rose Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009). 1

2004 and Mikhael Saakashvili became the third president of Georgia with 96% of votes.[448] On the 28th of March 2004, at the new parliamentary elections, Saakashvili-led National Movement-Democrats won the majority.

Georgia's Rose Revolution as one of the most critical junctures in Georgian political history has some crucial implications. First, it became apparent for the first time that the protests and mass mobilization of the Georgian people and initiatives taken by the opposition leaders can lead a political change in a non-violent way. Second, Rose Revolution brought a new path to the state-building process, which included democratic elements and aimed to struggle with high-level corruption, underdeveloped economic structure, and severe patronage politics with clientelist relations. However, as the time passes by, it has become questionable to what extent Rose Revolution was a democratic breakthrough. Some scholars regard this development as "just another case of old wine in new bottles" since the new leaders began to retreat from their promises on democracy immediately after taking office.[449]

The Rose Revolution and Saakashvili's election was regarded as a fresh start for Georgia's democratic state-building and possibly a success model for wider region.[450] It represented a new direction and new outlook, which meant the re-imagining the country's fate with its European identity while detaching itself from the Soviet legacy. Saakashvili's commitment to democracy, transparency, rule of law in his speeches[451] was greeted very well by the West. After the Rose Revolution, the United States and the EU were optimistic about that with the new political elite that emerged from the young, pro-Western oriented, charismatic leaders, Georgia would rapidly consolidate democracy. Indeed, when the U.S. President George W. Bush paid his first visit to Tbilisi on 10 May 2005 after the Saakashvili

[448] It was the one of the highest levels of electoral turnout in presidential elections throughout the Georgian political history, with the participation of 1,763,000 eligible voters.

[449] Mitchell, *Uncertain Democracy: US Foreign Policy and Georgia's Rose Revolution*.

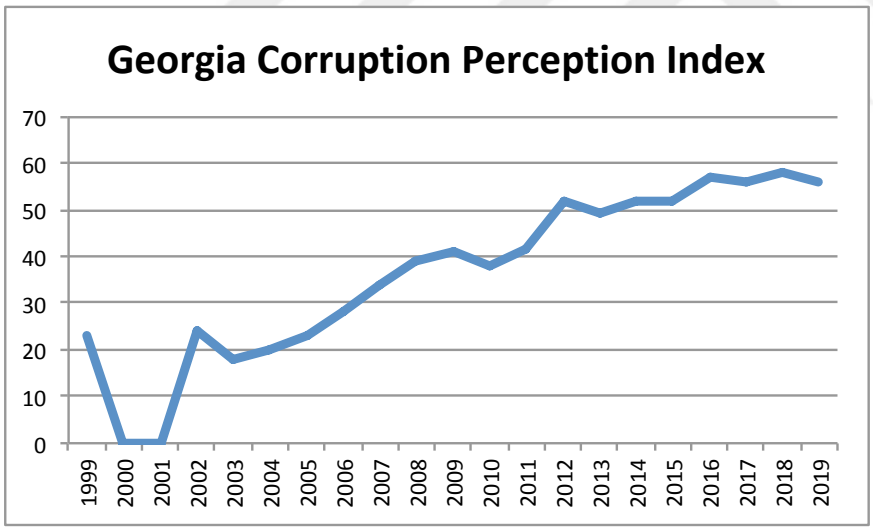
[450] Keti Tsikhelashvili, "Georgia Four Years After The Rose Revolution", *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 6, no. 3 (2007).

[451] One part of the official translation of the speech delivered by Mikheil Saakashvili after he was sworn-in as Georgia's new President for a five-year term on January 25, 2004 outside the Parliament building in Tbilisi: "…Georgia is the country of unique culture. We are not only old Europeans, we are the very first Europeans, and therefore Georgia holds special place in European civilization. Georgia should serve as a paragon for democracy where all citizens are equal before the law, where every citizen will have an equal opportunity for the pursuit of success and realization of his or her possibilities." "President Saakashvili's Inauguration Speech", Civil.Ge, 2004, https://civil.ge/archives/186853

election, he states that Georgia would be a "beacon of liberty for this region and the world" and many would "have been inspired by your Georgia's example and take hope in Georgia's success."[452] In the following days, the West agreed to give support via democracy promotion policies to Georgia's path on democratization.

Saakashvili era can be examined with mixed results in terms of successes and failures. Firstly, Saakashvili and his United National Movement Party succeeded in state-building of Georgia which was at the time close to be a failed state. He restored government control over Adjara in May 2004, regained control of the troubled Pankisi Gorge in 2005 and consolidated the control over Azerbaijani and Armenian minority inhabited areas. Secondly, thanks to the increased focus on transparency, accountability and introduction of reforms in tackling bribery, corruption levels decreased significantly, making Georgia as the least corrupt country in the region in 2012, ranking 51st out of 174 countries.[453] The periodic improvement in corruption levels can be seen in Figure 5.1 below.

**Figure 5.1** Corruption Perception Index in Georgia[454]




**Source:** Transparency International

Foreign assistance was used largely for rebuilding infrastructure and developing economy. Due to Georgia lost its important market area in Russia especially in the aftermath

[452] "President Addresses And Thanks Citizens In Tbilisi, Georgia", *2001-2009.State.Gov*, 2005, https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/45891.htm
[453] Corruption Perception Index, https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2012#
[454] There is no available data for the years 2000 and 2001.

of the war in 2008, it became heavily dependent on foreign aid.[455] Thirdly, thanks to a series of neoliberal reforms including mass deregulation, privatization and liberalization of economy, Georgia experienced fast economic growth, increased foreign direct investment, the remarkable growth of GDP during Saakashvili era.[456]

While Saakashvili had real effort in the state-building and infrastructure, there had been some shortcomings in Georgian democracy. Firstly, especially during the second period of Saakashvili term starting January 2008, periodic and sometimes violent repression of protests and opponents gave damage to the political arena. Press and media freedom were also under pressure. A number of formerly independent media outlets became less critical since the Rose Revolution. One critical example was the government's decision to shut down the last remaining television station, Imedi, during the state of emergency declared after a few days of demonstrations in which protesters accused Saakashvili and his colleagues in corruption, violence and murder. Secondly, the issue of judicial independence had also continued to be a challenge for democracy in this era. The judges, especially some of who decided in some critical cases, had been criticized by being too close to Saakashvili and consulting him on such matters.[457] Country-wide violations of human rights, political repressions of opponents and putting them into the prison and torture indicated that judiciary was still used as a political tool of government. Political decisions were justified as securitization so according to governmental discourse, any opposition to UNM policies was labelled as pro-Russian.[458] Lastly, one of the biggest challenges that Saakashvili did was his decision to react Russian provocations in South Ossetia by invading it. This attempt had devastating consequences for Georgia as Russia disproportionally retaliated and invaded the country. It became apparent that Georgia could never retake South-Ossetia, nor Abkhazia since both regions were recognized as independent states by Russia in the aftermath of Russo-Georgian War, then Nicaragua in September 2008, Venezuela in September 2009, Nauru in December 2009, Vanuatu in May 2011 and Syria in May 2018.

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[455] Teemu Sinkkonen, "Georgian Dream Or Nightmare? Transition Of Power Poses Great Challenges For Georgia And Its Foreign Relations", FIIA Briefing Paper 116 (The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2012), https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/154601/bp116.pdf. 3

[456] Georgia's GDP increased from 3,911 billion (current USD) in 2003 to 15,846 billion in 2012. Worldbank database, available at: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=GE&view=chart

[457] Mitchell, *Uncertain Democracy: US Foreign Policy and Georgia's Rose Revolution*, 93.

[458] Lasha Markozashvili, "Transition Toward Democracy – Georgian Problems", *Przegląd Politologiczny*, no. 3 (2014): 185, doi:10.14746/pp.2014.19.3.14. 190

All these challenges during the second term of Saakashvili in presidency sparked waves of mass protests in the streets. Video footage showing the human rights violations and torture which leaked from a Georgian prison was a wakeup call for the people.[459] Indeed, human rights violations and poor situations in Georgian prisons had been constantly criticized by human rights organizations and the European Union. Yet, it was the first time that wider public became aware of this situation.[460] In parliamentary elections on October 1st, 2012, Saakashvili's political party UNM lost to the coalition party Georgian Dream headed by the billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili, who entered politics in 2011.[461] Ivanishvili had enough resources to manage his visibility in the media and gather the fragmented opposition parties into the coalition.[462] For the first time after a near decade since 2003, UNM felt to the opposition. One year later in 2013, Saakashvili term ended and left the country for the Netherlands to avoid criminal prosecution.[463] The Georgian Dream's candidate Giorgi Margvelashvili defeated major rival, the UNM's David Bakradze, in the presidential runoff. Immediately after the election, the constitutional amendments, which significantly reduced the power of the president in favor of the prime minister and the government, went into force.

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[459] Markozashvili, "Transition toward Democracy – Georgian Problems," 189

[460] Please see: European Union: European Commission, *ENP Package: Country Progress Report Georgia,* (MEMO/12/334), Brussels 15 May 2012, available at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_12_334 or Nino Tsagareishvili, "Taking Liberties, Misusing Power: Annual Human Rights Report For 2011" (Tbilisi: Human Rights Center (HRIDC), 2012), http://www.humanrights.ge/admin/editor/uploads/pdf/Final_Report.pdf.

[461] President Mikheil Saakashvili's United National Movement (UNM) lost to the Georgian Dream Coalition (GDC) which won 55.0% of the votes and 84 seats in the 150-seat parliament, whereas the UNM garnered 40.3% of the votes and 66 seats.

[462] The Georgian Dream Coalition includes Ivanishvili's GDP, the Republican Party, the Free Democrats, the National Forum, the Conservative Party, and the Industry Will Save Georgia Party.

[463]After Saakashvili left the country, he supported Ukraine's Euromaidan movement in 2014. On 30 May 2015, Ukranian President Petro Poroshenko appointed Saakashvili as Governor of Odessa Oblast. He was also granted Ukrainian citizenship. Yet, he was tripped of Georgian citizenship due to restrictions on dual nationality under Georgian law. Later on, the relations soured when Saakashvili accused Poroshenko for enabling corruption in Odessa and in Ukraine overall. In 2017, Saakashvili was stripped of his Ukrainian citizenship by Petro Poroshenko, and became a stateless person. On 29 May 2019, he returned to Ukraine after newly elected President Volodymyr Zelensky restored his citizenship.

The most interesting thing in these developments is that Ivanishvili clearly stated that he would stay in politics two or three years to end the tyranny of Saakashvili. After getting rid of the UNM's governance, he would leave the political arena and return to the public sector. Indeed, he did so, with the introduction of his heir – the new Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili, he left the politics.[464]

Unlike Saakashvili's pro-Western position and confrontation with Russia, Georgian Dream won the elections by giving some critical promises such as improvement of relations with Russia, rapid economic growth, focusing on more democracy, rule of law, and human rights. In terms of democracy, holding free and fair elections since 2012 assessed by international observers was one of the biggest achievements of this era. Yet, in foreign relations, there was a little improvement in normalization of ties with Russia. Even though Moscow lifted trade embargo on Georgian wines, mineral water and agricultural products, some critical issues regarding breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia had remained unsolved. In fact, Russia has increased its impact over these regions, which will be discussed in the following section of Georgia-Russia relations.

Another critical turning point happened when the much-debated constitutional amendments were adopted on 26 September 2017 in the Parliament of Georgia with 117 voting in favor with 2 against. According to these amendments, the new constitution assumes the political system as fully proportional parliamentary representation rather than a semi-presidential system. In this system, with the abolishing of presidential elections since 2024, the president would be elected by a special assembly consisting of parliamentary deputies and members of municipal representative bodies. Thus, the powers of the President of Georgia would be reduced and turning him into a symbolic figure.[465] In October 2017, Giorgi Margvelashvili vetoed these radical changes and returned the draft with his objections to the Parliament. However, the Parliament overrode the Presidential veto and approved the

[464] He addressed congress of Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia (GDDG) party for the last time: "I have kept my promise – Georgia is free from violent regime, the state institutions are free from pressure, Georgia has the President, Giorgi Margvelashvili, who will defend interests of everyone and who will be the President of everyone; Georgia has the Parliamentary Chairman, Davit Usupashvili, who is one of the distinguished politicians of our time; Georgia has the Prime Minister, Irakli Garibashvili, who together with the government, I am sure, will get Georgia back on its feet." "Ivanishvili: 'I Quit Politics, But Remain Active Citizen'", Civil.Ge, 2013, https://civil.ge/archives/186857.

[465] Giorgi Menabde, "Proposed Georgian Constitutional Amendments Lack Support Of President, Opposition", *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 14, no. 63 (2017).

initial version. Eventually, Margvelashvili signed the bill into the law. The same process was happened in January 2018 when Margvelashvili first vetoed the controversial amendments to the law then later on had to sign it.

The following section tries to evaluate Georgian democratization process by critically taking into account these turning points in Georgian political history.

### 5.1.2. Georgia as a hybrid state in the path of democratization

As in the Ukrainian case, it is hard to put Georgia into one particular category rather it is called as hybrid state. Markozashvili states that Georgia could be defined as "a democracy with some problems, or an authoritarian state with some democratic features"[466]. Looking closer to Georgian regime, there are some structural problems in the four arenas of democratic competition i.e. the electoral arena, the legislative arena, the judicial arena and the media, which are defined by Levitsky and Way.[467] It is clear that even though there has been some progress in the path of democratization since its independence, all in all Georgia corresponds to the exaample of hybrid state with its defects in terms of democracy.

In the electoral arena, the mistrust toward elections is the prominent indicator of democratic deficit in Georgia. In fact, there are two critical examples of the replacement of government in Georgia through non-constitutional means rather than elections: once violently in January 1992 and once, though a bloodless rebellion, revolution, or coup in November 2003.[468] As the examples of the election fraud and result falsification has become visible, public opinion on the fairness of elections shows considerable variations at different time periods, as shown in Figure 5.2 below.

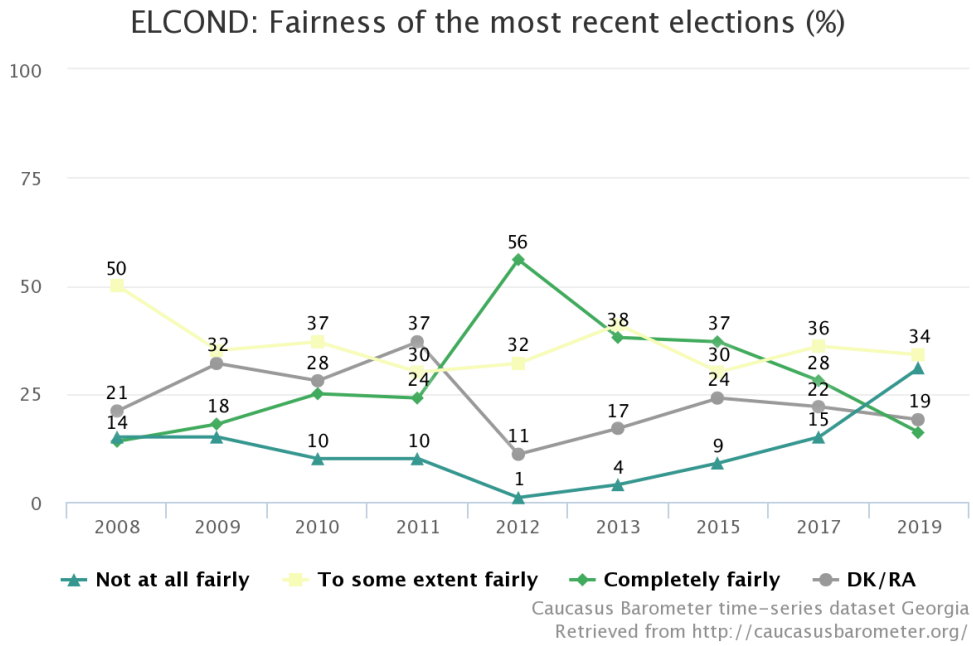
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[466] Markozashvili, "Transition toward Democracy – Georgian Problems," 190.

[467] Levitsky and Way, "The Rise Of Competitive Authoritarianism," 55.

[468] Ghia Nodia, "The Crisis Of Democratization In Georgia?: The Visions, Paths And Resources Of Democratic Consolidation" (repr., Tbilisi: Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, 2012), http://www.cipdd.org/upload/files/eng3ned2.pdf. 12

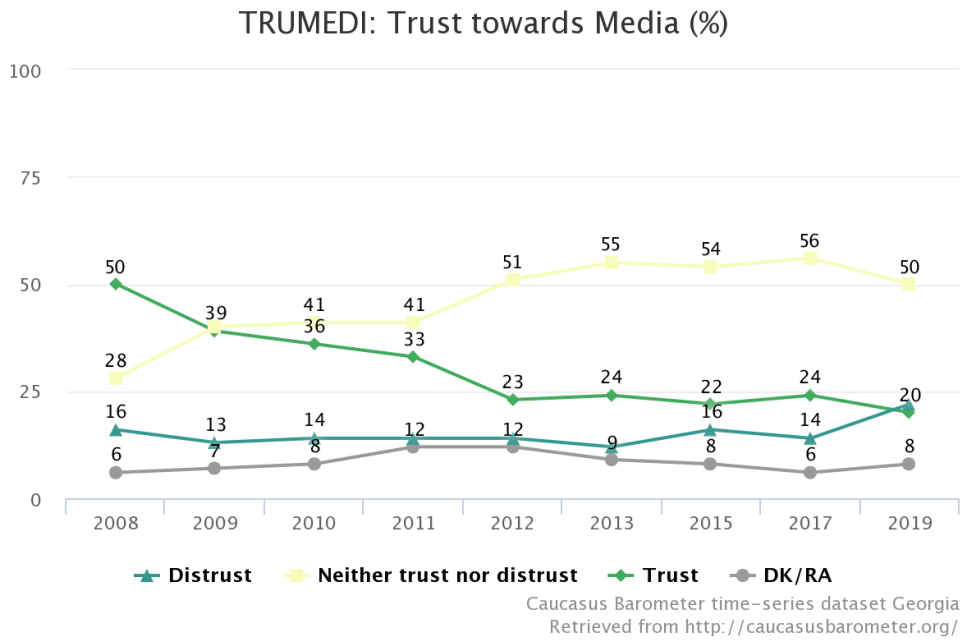
**Figure 5.2** Results of Georgian public opinion on the fairness of the most recent elections (based on Caucasus Barometer)




Another important shortcomings in terms of democracy are the weaknesses of independent media and the judiciary. In terms of problems in media, it is frequently argued that national TV companies broadcasting the whole country are pro-governmental. Strict censorsip on media for the opposition, this creates unfair competition since the remaining channels are weaker in terms of the impact over whole society. It is striking to see how public opinion on the trust towards media changes over time. As shown in Figure 5.3 below, although level of distrust towards media fluctuates at same intervals, there was a sharp decrease in the level of trust from 2008 to 2009. This result overlaps with the increased and strict pressure of Saakashvili on media sources at his second term, especially during Georgia-Russia war.[469]

[469] Mick Stern, "Attacks On The Press In 2008: Georgia", *Committee To Protect Journalists*, 2009, https://cpj.org/2009/02/attacks-on-the-press-in-2008-georgia/

**Figure 5.3** Results of Georgian public opinion on the trust towards media (based on Caucasus Barometer)

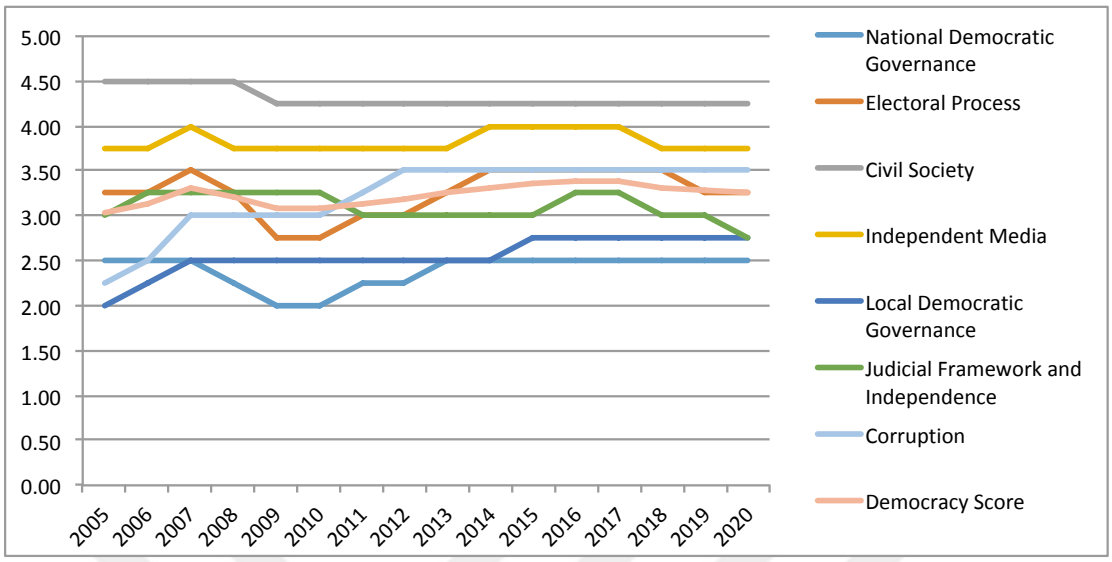



As for the judiciary, politically obedient courts constitute the main weakness. Especially during the second term of Saakashvili, the excessive number of opponents sent into the prisons due to be critical of government policies, indicates to what extent judiciary has been used for political repression.

In order to draw a general picture of democracy in Georgia, this section presents the results of the Freedom House's annual survey titled as "Nations in Transit", which collects data from 29 post-communist states and surveys the progress or setbacks in their democratization process. The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the lowest and 7 the highest level of democracy.[470] Figure 5.4 below gives the changes in the level of democracy components on a yearly basis.

[470] The scores are identified as follows: i) 5.01–7.00 Consolidated Democracies, ii) 4.01–5.00 Semi-Consolidated Democracies, iii) 3.01–4.00 Transitional or Hybrid Regimes, iv) 2.01–3.00 Semi-Consolidated Authoritarian Regimes and v) 1.00–2.00 Consolidated Authoritarian Regimes. https://freedomhouse.org/reports/nations-transit/nations-transit-methodology

**Figure 5.4** "Nations in Transit": Georgia (scores yearly)

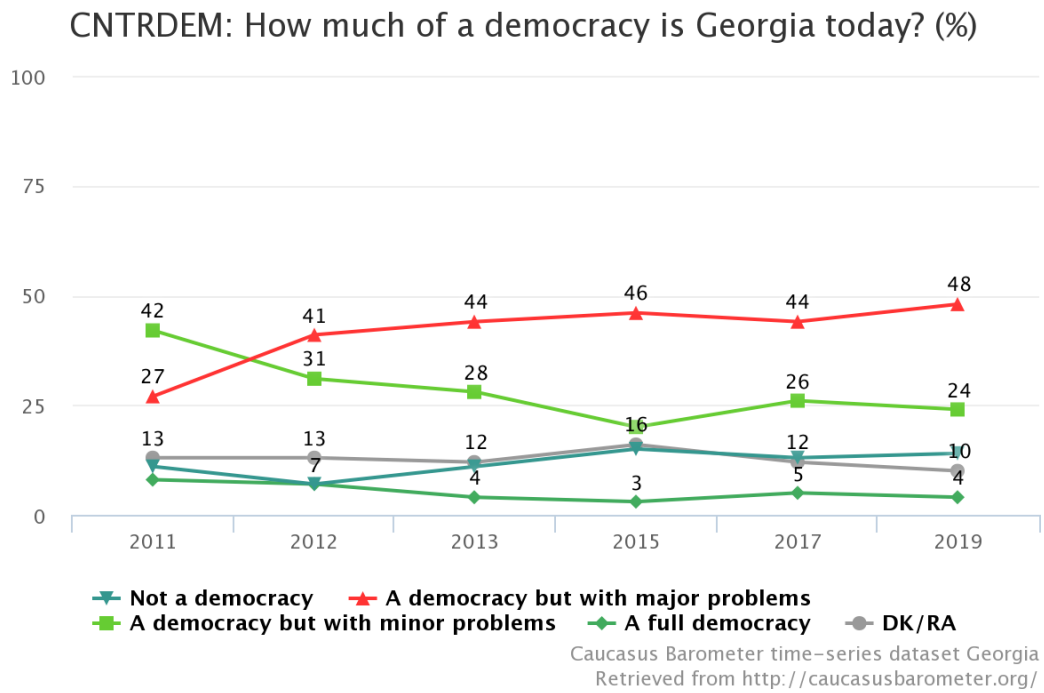



**Source:** Freedom House

In general, Georgia is described as hybrid regime based on the scale of Freedom House's "Nations in Transit" methodology. It is clear that there have been significant improvements in two components including and local democratic governance between 2005 and 2011, which correspond to the Saakashvili era. As emphasized above, Saakashvili succeeded in fighting corruption and state-building through consolidating central power even in expense of democracy. On the other hand, in the second term of Saakashvili, Georgia faced with decreased levels of democracy.

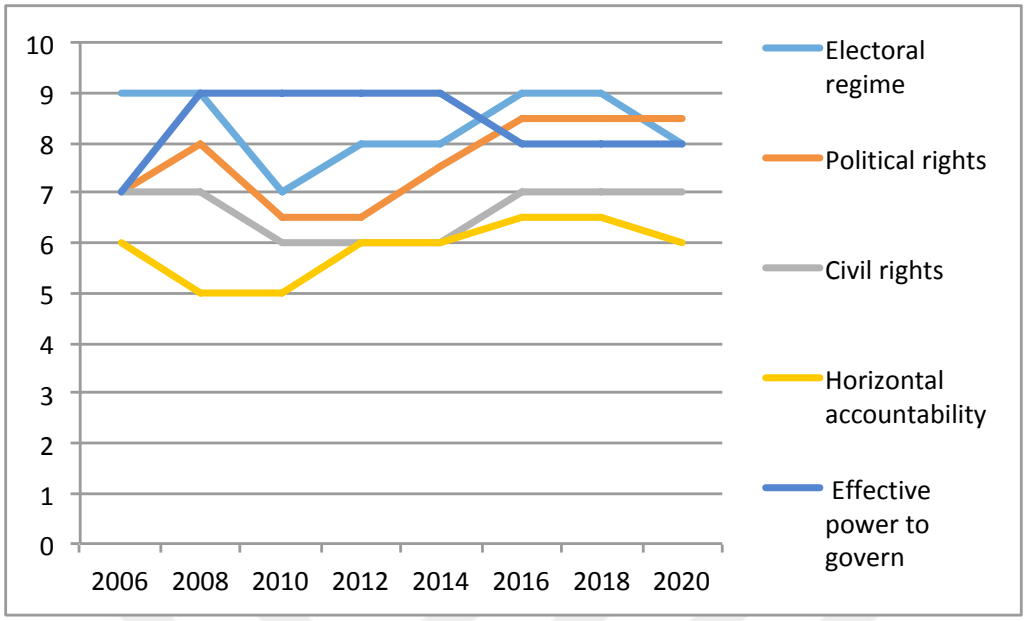
From the end of Saakashvili era in 2013 until 2016, it is seen that there has been a progress in one or more components of democracy including electoral process, independent media, local democratic governance and judicial independence even though there was a slight improvement in overall democracy score. Nevertheless, it is much more important to understand to what extent these changes in political landscape have been recognized by wider public in Georgia. Here, the answers of respondents given to the question: "How much of democracy is Georgia today?" are striking. As indicated in Figure 5.5 below, the number of respondents who regard Georgia as democracy with major problems, has increased steadily while the number of respondents who thinks that Georgian democracy has minor problems has been decreasing.

**Figure 5.5** Public opinion over the democracy in Georgia (based on Caucasus barometer)




In order to grasp the possible impact of domestic context and conditions on the EU's differentiated democracy promotion agendas, this thesis applies Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) to the Georgian case since 2006. BTI covers all components in the analytical framework of this thesis –model of embedded liberal democracy-. These components are determined in the model as five partial regimes i.e. electoral regime, political rights, civil rights, horizontal accountability and effective power to govern, and four external conditions i.e. stateness, state administrative capacity, civil society, and socio-economic requisities. This enables to test the claims the EU tailors its democracy promotion agendas depending on the domestic situation of the country in the question (democracy level, socio-economic situation etc.) the shortcomings in the country (whether it is a post-conflict country or not) and the degree of political will of the government to undertake these democratic reforms.

**Figure 5.6** Partial regimes of "embedded liberal democracy model" in Georgia[471]



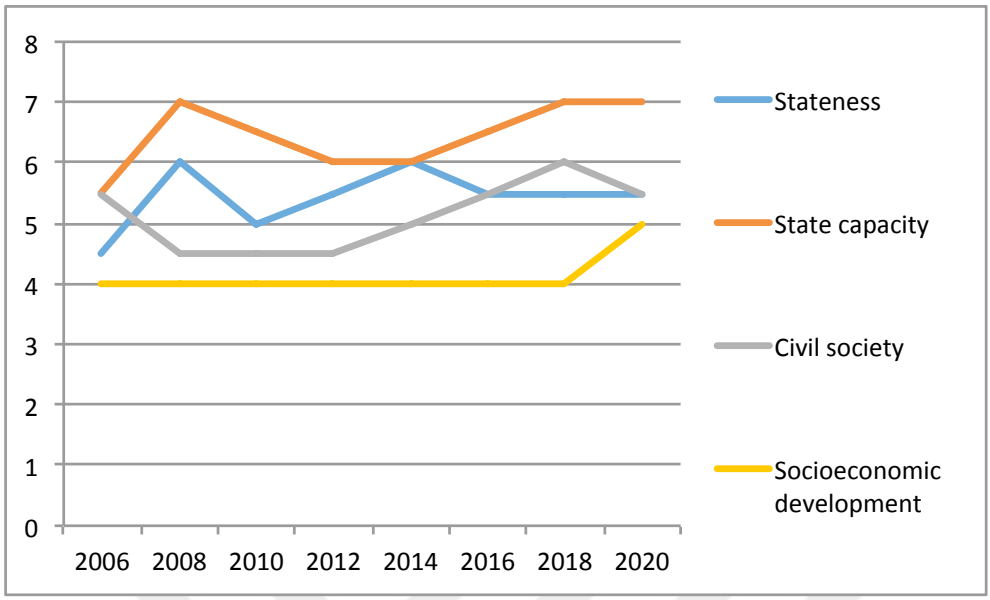

***Source:*** Author compilation from Bertellsman Transformation Index

Figure 5.6 shows that there is trend of decreasing levels of all components of partial regimes except effective power to govern between 2008 and 2010. Starting from 2010, this trend is reversed to positive side. Georgia's democratic improvement can be linked to the EU's diversified tools within the framework of Eastern Partnership and increased amount of funds allocated for democracy promotion in Georgia. As it is clear, horizontal accountability has the lowest degree over years. Therefore, the EU has paid special attention to the strengthening of independent and functional judiciary in Georgia through specific programs such as "Support to the Reform of the Ministry of Justice" and "Support to Criminal Justice Sector in Georgia."

Similar to the partial regimes, external conditions of embedded liberal democracy model show the same trend: a sharp decrease in 2008, a little improvement since 2010, yet overall looking each component has come to the former levels of the year 2006. Figure 5.7 below indicates these changes in external conditions of embedded liberal democracy in Georgia.

[471] Scores are evaluated as: 1-3= - - - (very defective), 4-6= - - (some defective), 7-9= -(little defective), 10= + (no defective)

**Figure 5.7** External conditions of "embedded liberal democracy model" in Georgia




***Source:*** Author compilation from Bertellsman Transformation Index

Interestingly enough, there has been no change in socio-economic development despite challenges of August 2008 war between Georgia-Russia. This may stem from the huge amount of funding allocated to Georgia by the EU and other international actors. Not surprisingly, other components such as stateness, state capacity and civil society decreased in 2008 as a negative consequence of Georgia-Russia war. Projects that aim to support for strengthening civil society such as "Eastern Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility" continued to be introduced since 2008, whose impact is also visible from increasing levels of civil society as shown in the figure above.

### *5.2. Relations with Russia as an illiberal regional power*

Historically, Georgia's fate has been closely linked to Russia for several centuries.[472] Yet, the importance of Russia-Georgia relations has become highly visible in the aftermath of the dissolution of Soviet Union since Russia has played the critical role in shaping the

[472] Russian historian and political analyst S. Markedonov claims, "for over 200 years Georgia had been part of the Russian Empire. Its political class was incorporated into the Russian establishment (from the Bagrationi Dynasty to Eduard Shevardnadze). The Georgian elite ... were highly instrumental in establishing Russia's domination in the Caucasus" Sergey Markedonov, "The Paradoxes Of Russia's Georgia Policy", Blog, *Russia In Global Affairs*, 2007, https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/the-paradoxes-of-russias-georgia-policy/.

modern Georgian state. Behind all the important events in Georgia's recent political history, one can see the active role of Russia. Therefore, in order to understand not only some critical issues of Georgian domestic politics such as territorial integrity, political stability, economic development and the freedom of the country, but also Georgia's behavior in international affairs, we need to look closely at the relationship between Georgia and Russia.[473]

Georgia-Russia relations have always been in troubles since the fall of the Soviet Union. In the very beginning, Gamsakhurdia's attempts to construct Georgian identity with anti-Russian rhetoric, constituted the basis of poor relations.[474] Due to Gamsakhurdia's anti-Russian policies, Moscow declared him as *persona non grata* and increased its leverage to pressure Georgia back into Russian orbit by using ethnic conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.[475]

Gamsakhurdia's forced resignation and the invitation of Shevardnadze by Military Council to stabilize and rebuild Georgia did not end the civil war. As a solution to quell the rebellions and clashes throughout the country, Shevardnadze felt the necessity to sign an agreement with Russia to bring Georgia into the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).[476] On 3 December 1993, Georgia became a member state of CIS despite the lack of consensus in Parliament.[477] Georgia's entry into the CIS was met with great hesitation and mistrust since CIS was regarded as new Russian attempt to colonize the post-Soviet

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[473] Mitchell, *Uncertain Democracy: US Foreign Policy and Georgia's Rose Revolution*, 9

[474] Ambrosio, *Authoritarian Backlash: Russian Resistance to Democratization in the Former Soviet Union*, 132.

[475] Asbed Kotchikian, "The Perceived Roles Of Russia And Turkey In Georgian Foreign Policy", *Insight Turkey* 6, no. 2 (2004): 33-44.

[476] In his memoirs, Shevardnadze stated "Georgia was faced with the prospect of catastrophe... The situation forced me to find a compromise: Georgia was forced to become a member of Russia controlled Commonwealth of independent states" Eduard Shevardnadze, Thoughts on the Past and Future (*Razmyshlenija o proshlom I buduschem*), (Tbilissi: Palitral, 2006), pp. 432–433. (translation done in Laetitia Spetschinsky and Irina V. Bolgova, "Post-Soviet Or Post-Colonial? The Relations Between Russia And Georgia After 1991", *ERIS – European Review Of International Studies* 1, no. 3 (2014): 110-122, 114)

[477] Spetschinsky and Bolgova, "Post-Soviet or Post-Colonial? The Relations between Russia and Georgia after 1991," 113

countries.[478] Nevertheless, firstly, Russia attempted to resolve the crisis in South Ossetia as a broker. A cease-fire between the Georgian and the South Ossetian forces was established with the Russian mediation. The security corridor zone along the 'Ossetian- Georgian' border was controlled by a joint peacekeeping force (JPKF) composed of Russian, Georgian and from North and South Ossetian peacekeepers.[479] In Abkhazian case, Russia played a broker role in cease-fire and became an active player in the peacekeeping operations too. Thus, during this period, internal conflicts and the existence of breakaway regions such as Abkhazia and South Ossetia became important determinants for the direction of Georgia-Russia relations.

Two aspects are frequently mentioned as the reasons of Russian meddling into the internal affairs of Georgia at this period. First of all, for security reasons, Russia wanted to preserve its military presence in Georgia.[480] In addition, Georgia's long border with Chechnya is critically important for Russia's security interests. While Georgia has accused Russia of supporting the separatist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Russia has accused Georgia of supporting Chechen separatists and other terrorists operating in the North Caucasus by allowing the unimpeded transit of military equipment. Secondly, for civil reasons, Russian minorities living in Georgia were another concern for Russian interests in Georgia. In addition, trade and energy issues subjected these countries interdependent.

Relations remained strained throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s. Rose Revolution and the election of Saakashvili as a harsh opponent to Russian influence in Georgian affairs opened a new phase in Georgia-Russia relations. Even though Saakashvili's

[478] Kotchikian, "The Perceived Roles of Russia and Turkey in Georgian Foreign Policy," 40.

[479] Spetschinsky and Bolgova, "Post-Soviet or Post-Colonial? The Relations between Russia and Georgia after 1991," 113.

[480] Officially, Russia has two army bases in Georgia, although unofficially it has three, all of which are "conveniently" located in breakaway regions or potential zones of conflict: Gudauta, in Abkhazia (north of Sukhumi); Batumi, in Ajaria; and Akhalkalaki, in the largely Armenian populated region of Samtskhe-Javakheti. Kotchikian, "The Perceived Roles of Russia and Turkey in Georgian Foreign Policy," 42. There is one more military base near Tbilisi (Vaziani). At last, under an agreement signed at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in November 1999, Russia agreed to close its military bases in Vaziani, near Tbilisi and Guduata, Abkhazia by July 2000. The Russian side also agreed to start negotiations with Georgian authorities in 2000 on withdrawing its remaining two military bases in Batumi and Akhalkalaki. During negotiations with Georgian leadership, Russian insistence on the need for a lengthy of time to find new accommodations for departing Russian troops from Georgia became a source tension in 2000s. Ömer Kocaman, "Russia's Relations With Georgia Within The Context Of The Russian National Interests Towards The South Caucasus In The Post-Soviet Era: 1992-2005", *Journal Of Central Asian & Caucasian Studies* 2, no. 3 (2007): 1-27.

first trip to Moscow after his inauguration and his meeting with Vladimir Putin were positive, his subsequent statements and pro-Western policy, oriented towards rapprochement with the EU and integration into NATO strained Georgia-Russia relations. In addition to these Western-oriented policies, Saakashvili's commitment to reintegration of the Russian-backed separatist Georgian territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia increased Russian hostility steadily toward Georgia at the post-Rose Revolution. First, it started with trade wars when Russia with a highly politically motive, banned imports of Georgian wines, agricultural products and mineral water in 2006. Then, the expulsion of Georgian citizens working in Russia increased tensions. Last, with Russia's interference in issues of disputed territories of Abkhazia and Ossetia tensions reached a climax.[481]

In April 2008, in the aftermath of that Russia issued a decree to establish closer relations with the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, a series of violent incidents occurred in these regions. On 7 August 2008, Georgian Army was sent to end the violence and bring South Ossetia back under Georgian control. Russia responded with massive force and conducted air strikes on Georgian positions in South Ossetia as well as Abkhazia. The conflict continued for five days, leaving hundreds dead and over 135000 people displaced.[482] On 12 August 2008, a cease-fire ended the Russia-Georgia War. Through the EU mediation, Russia and Georgia agreed to six-point deal.[483] Tbilisi cut off all diplomatic ties with Moscow and in the same day, President

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[481] Spetschinsky and Bolgova, "Post-Soviet or Post-Colonial? The Relations between Russia and Georgia after 1991"

[482] The report of Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IIFFMCG) established by the Council of European Union on 2 December 2008. Accessed on https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/HUDOC_38263_08_Annexes_ENG.pdf

[483] "1. No recourse to use violence between the protagonists. Sarkozy: This applies to everyone: Ossetians, Abkhazians, Georgia in its entirety and Russians.

2. The cessation of hostilities.

3. The granting of access to humanitarian aid.

4. The return of Georgian armed forces to their usual quarters.

5. Russian armed forces to withdraw to the positions held before hostilities began in South Ossetia. Russian peacekeepers to implement additional security measures until an international monitoring mechanism is in place. Sarkozy: These measures affect only the immediate vicinity of South Ossetia and in no instance the entire territory of Georgia.

Saakashvili announced that Georgia would leave the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Georgia's membership formally ended on 18 August 2009.

Later on, despite small steps taken by both Russian and Georgian sides to normalize relations such as the reopening of a land border and permitting some direct charter flights, relations remained stagnant and poor until the end of rule of Saakashvili. In 2012, when the Georgian Dream coalition came to the power, Georgian-Russian relations passed to the new phase of normalization. At least, the new government attempted to improve the relations, which can be seen the recurrent words such as "normalization", "de-escalation" and "pragmatism" in official declarations about the bilateral relations since the permanent threat of war and Russian economic embargoes were highly destructive for Georgia.[484] Nevertheless, Georgia has always been skeptical on the extent of normalization of relations depending on historical roots. In other words, there is a kind of dilemma in Georgian side towards Russia: on the one hand, taking a more assertive approach towards Russia, as done during Saakashvili era, risks a brutal backlash, but on the other hand, engaging Moscow too closely paves the way to meddling in Georgia's internal affairs.

Ivanishvili and his foreign ministers declared that there would not be any change in Georgia's pro-Western orientation or its desire to join NATO and the European Union. Yet, turning down the tensions and finding a common ground with Russia on the issues of common interest such as trade was critically important for Georgia. Immediately after signing the Association Agreement with the EU on June 27th, 2014 the Georgian Prime Minister stated that "Georgia's European integration process became irreversible, but it does not conflict with our aspiration to have normal relations with our neighboring countries including Russia.[485]

6. The opening of international discussions on the modalities of security and stability of South Ossetia and Abkhazia." For further information: Nana Macharashvili, Ekaterine Basilaia and Nikoloz Samkharade, "Assessing The EU's Conflict Prevention And Peacebuilding Interventions In Georgia", Woscap: Enhancing EU Peacebuilding Capabilities, 2017.

[484] Spetschinsky and Bolgova, "Post-Soviet or Post-Colonial? The Relations between Russia and Georgia after 1991," 119.

[485] "Georgian PM On Russia: We Do Not See Any Signs Of Complication", Tabula, accessed 20 December 2020, http://www.tabula.ge/en/story/85086-georgian-pm-on-russia-we-do-not-see-any-signs-of-complication.

The first positive step taken by the Georgian Dream coalition was to mitigate the confrontational rhetoric previously used towards Russia through new appointments to the posts of Prime Minister's special representative for relations with Russia and deputy foreign minister. Both appointments were welcomed positively from Russian side.[486] The second crucial step of the Georgian Dream government was to draw a line between economic and social issues on one side, and political and security matters on the other, which in turn any disputes over territorial issues would not hamper the progress in economic and social issues.[487] As an outcome, Russia opened up its borders for agricultural products including mainly wine and mineral water from Georgia, which meant the increase of Georgian exports to Russia up to 300% compared the year before.

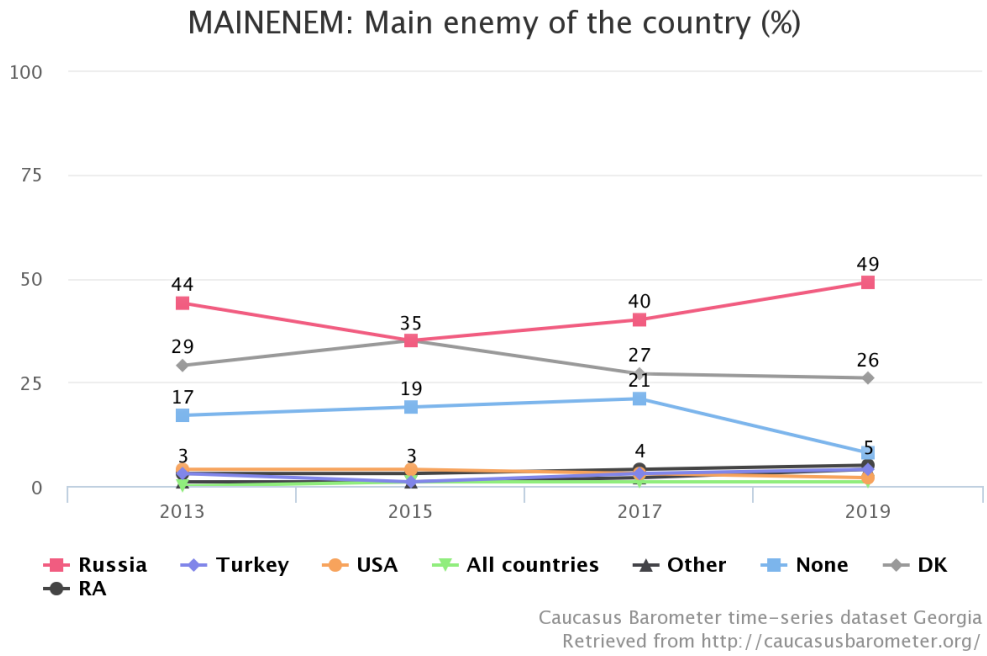
Restoration of economic ties were followed by improvement of relations in other fields such as cultural, social, humanitarian etc. For example, the number of visas issued to Georgian citizens from Russian side has increased by 25% since 2012 until the end of 2015.[488] Tourism also benefited from the revival of ties between Russia and Georgia. This progress was visible in the results of public opinion polls. As shown in Figure 5.8, the number of respondents, who was thinking that the main enemy of Georgia is Russia, decreased considerably between 2013 and 2015.

[486] Revaz Koiava, Edisher Baghaturia and Yulia Nikitina, "Georgia And Russia: Bilateral View On The Quarter Century Relations" (repr., Caucasian House, 2017), http://regional-dialogue.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Research-EN-web.pdf

[487] Koiava, Baghaturia, and Nikitina, "Georgia and Russia: Bilateral View on the Quarter Century Relations," 31.

[488] Koiava, Baghaturia, and Nikitina, "Georgia and Russia: Bilateral View on the Quarter Century Relations," 32.

**Figure 5.8** Public opinion over the main enemy of Georgia (%) (based on Caucasus Barometer)




However, despite the progress and positive outcomes achieved on less disputed issues, normalization of relations between Russia and Georgia remained inadequate. In other words, Russia continues increasingly to be a main threat and enemy for Georgia as it can also be seen from the figure above. The path to normalize relations between Russia and Georgia is a hard one due to some reasons. First, the fact that Russia has remained firm in its recognition of Abkhaz and South Ossetian independence, means the denial of Georgian territorial integrity from Georgian side. Second, developments in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea in 2014, have increased serious concerns and fears on Russia's imperialistic policies. Third, with the signing of Association Agreement with the EU in 2014, Georgia has displayed clearly its choice for pro-Western path rather than Moscow-driven Eurasian Union.

By the end of 2014, the relations turned to its former stagnant position as many of trade-economic, humanitarian and cultural issues has been addressed. Both sides have come to the red lines in their bilateral relations, which prevents any kind of negotiation or consensus. One of these disputed issues is, of course, Russian recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Overall, since the independence, Georgia has pursued different foreign policy approaches toward Russia from extreme confrontation to bandwagoning with the joining the CIS, mainly depending on the different attitudes of incumbent authorities during their time in power. It should be concluded that while Gamsakhurdia's "emotional" and Saakashvili's revolutionary nationalism were far more hard-line and confrontational, Shevarnadze's balancing policy and the Georgian Dream's pragmatist approach were more moderate to normalize the Georgia-Russia relations.[489]

### *5.3. The EU-Georgia relations: Georgian standing desire for the EU membership*

As emphasized in the previous chapters, during 1990s, the EU's policies towards post-Soviet countries were similar with the same tools, whose main aim was the establishment of democracy and a market economy in the region. The EU has been reluctant to take an active role in this region, which was seen as Russia's periphery, mainly due to special bilateral relations of some member states with Russia. In the end of 1990s, the EU transformed its strategy and defined a new regional framework in which the EU differentiated the tools and approaches towards Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, Azerbaijan and Armenia from the rest of the post-Soviet space. This approach became more explicit with the introduction of the Eastern Partnership in 2009. Since then, the EU has become involved in democracy promotion activities even at different pace towards these post-Soviet countries.

From Georgian side, it is apparent that Georgia has always been striving to join the European Union since very first day of its independence. Unlike the Ukrainian case, which indicates changes in foreign policy direction depending on the incumbents in power, every government and ruling party in Georgia have declared that integration into the EU -and also Western-oriented security architecture- would be main priority of the country. This chapter seeks to examine the EU-Georgia relations within the framework of EU democracy promotion policies toward Georgia at critical junctures since its independence.

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[489] Koiava, Baghaturia, and Nikitina, "Georgia and Russia: Bilateral View on the Quarter Century Relations," 38.

### 5.3.1 Pre-ENP Period: The EU Approach from "Benevolent Indifference"[490] to "Growing Interconnectedness"

In the very early independence period under Gamsakhurdia's ruling, Georgia can be characterized as a country with a deep crisis stemmed from civil turmoil with internal conflicts, loss of economic markets, political instability, social destitution and many other negative factors. In this period, Georgia struggling with the internal problems of independence, chose the way of international isolation, which limited the relations with outside actors including the EU limited.

Relationship between EU (formerly EC) and Georgia started on 23 March 1992 when the EC recognized Georgian independence. Immediately, the EC established diplomatic relations with signing agreements on specific issues with Georgia.[491] Yet, in the early independence period, the relations were limited to food and humanitarian assistance.

The arrival of Shevardnadze brought a new era in the EU-Georgia relations. The EU started to provide aid through various programs and projects, which had contributed to the emergence of a new state with democratic principles and the development of market economy. Yet, during the 1990s, these programs were limited to humanitarian assistance to the conflicting zones and regions. In other words, the main objectives of these programs were poverty reduction, rehabilitation as well as promotion of transition to market economy and a lesser degree to democracy.

In 1994, all three South Caucasus states -Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia- started the negotiations with the EU for Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) with more or less similar arrangements. The PCA with Georgia was signed in 1996 and were entered into force on July 1, 1999. For the first time, the EU applied the regional approach to South

[490] In 1998, Bruno Coppieters claims that the EU regards Georgia as a peripheral state bridging Europe and Asia, yet not belong to Europe. Thus, the European Union does not follow specific Georgian policies but pursues an attitude of benevolent indifference. Bruno Coppieters, Alexei Zverev and Dmitry Trenin, *Commonwealth And Independence In Post-Soviet Eurasia* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998).65

[491] European Union: European Commission, *Georgia and European Commission Initial New Partnership Agreement,* Brussels 9 January 1996, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_96_12

Caucasus with nearly no substantial differences concerning the specific national circumstances.[492] The main objective of PCA was to strengthen economic relations between the EU and Georgia and to facilitate better access to each other's markets.[493] The EU paid a particular attention on the investment projects in the energy sector especially for the construction of oil and gas pipelines. In addition, similar to the PCA conducted with Ukraine, the provisions of this PCA signed between the EU and Georgia had a series of 'soft obligations' such as the establishment and development of democratic institutions, rule of law and the adoption of principles of good governance.[494] Yet, in terms of strengthening political relations, the PCA remained weak due to lack of political incentives offered in a case Georgia implemented these reforms and detailed plan for reform.

During the 1990s, the EU provided technical assistance through TACIS instrument aimed at facilitating Georgia's economic and social development. All in all, between 1992-2003, the EC/EU provided assistance in grants through the following main instruments: European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) humanitarian assistance: (€ 94.25 million); Food Security Programme (€ 85.25 million); TACIS National Programme (€ 84 million); Exceptional financial assistance (€ 25 million); the European Initiative for Democracy and Human rights (EIDHR) (€ 5.5 million), Rehabilitation in Conflict Zones (€ 27.5 million) etc.[495]

Looking in general the whole era of Shevardnadze, it can be said that Georgia-EU relations had been improved and cooperation areas had been diversified to many other fields than humanitarian assistance compared to Gamsakhurdia's era. Yet, it is still questionable

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[492] Kakha Gogolashvili, "The EU And Georgia: The Choice Is In The Context", in *The EU And The South Caucasus: Three Perspectives On The Future Of The European Project From The Caucasus* (repr., Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2009), https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/EiD200901EuropeanUnionandSouthCaucasus.pdf

[493] European Union: *Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part (PCA Georgia)*, Luxembourg 22 April 1996, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=188

[494] Kakha Gogolashvili, "EU-Georgia Relations: Future Perspectives", *Georgian Center For Security And Development*, 2017, https://www.gfsis.org/publications/view/2501.

[495] "Country Strategy Paper 2003 – 2006, National Indicative Programme 2003 -2003 Georgia", *Parliament.Ge*, 2001, http://www.parliament.ge/files/491_6279_747326_NIP-2002-2003.pdf.

to what extent reform provisions in the agreements between the EU-Georgia have been implemented. Lack of necessary institutional and legislative framework for the requirements of PCA remained as one of the main challenges for the desired progress in relations.

### 5.3.2. EU Democracy Promotion to Georgia within the framework of European Neighbourhood Policy

The introduction of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is regarded as the cornerstone in the EU-Georgia relations. Indeed, bilateral relations strengthened significantly after the Rose Revolution and the election of a new, pro-Western oriented-President Mikheil Saakashvili. The Rose Revolution attracted the international attention on Georgia. Not only for the EU, but also for other international actors such as USA, Russia, Turkey and many other, Georgia got the priority on their foreign policy agenda. From the EU side, this peaceful and democratic revolution in Georgia was welcomed and EU Commission President Romano Prodi declared that "the EU is determined to continue supporting Georgian efforts towards political and economic reform. This is the best way for Georgia to get closer to the Union."[496]

After the largest round of eastern enlargement of May 1st, 2004, the EU faced with its new borders and new neighbourhood, which required more coherent policy framework to be applied to its new neighborhood. With the introduction of the ENP, the EU pursued a more active policy framework to Georgia. The National Indicative Programme and Action Plan (AP) within the framework of the ENP had stronger commitments, incentives and enforcement mechanisms, which played significant role in strengthening cooperation. On the other hand, from the Georgian side, President Saakashvili gave the signals from the first days of his inauguration that declared that Georgia was going to pursue pro-Western foreign policy focused on Euro-Atlantic and European integration – even at the expense of worsening relations with Russia.

The Action Plan within the framework of the ENP was designed to fulfill the missing part of the PCAs previously applied such as lack of legal obligations and concrete pathways

[496] European Union: European Commission, *President Prodi and Commissioner Patten meet President Saakashvili to confirm EU support for Georgia's reform process*, Brussels, 6 April 2004, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_04_465

on how to achieve goals and reforms. To overcome the challenges of previous term, some special institutional bodies were established at both the executive and parliamentary levels. In December 2004, the office of State Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was created under the government, with the task of deepening cooperation and of achieving full integration with NATO and the EU.[497] In addition, the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration was introduced in order to oversee the implementation of Georgian Parliament's obligations towards the EU.[498] In spite of these developments, the real transformation in the EU-Georgia relations happened in the aftermath of the Georgia-Russia war in August 2008. Before that, Georgia frequently declared in its official Foreign Policy Strategy papers that NATO membership is declared objective of foreign policy strategy for 2006-2009, and EU integration is long-term foreign policy goal.[499] However, the NATO's refusal to give Georgia a Membership Action Plan at the Bucharest Summit of April 3, 2008 paved the way for looking another actor which supports the security and territorial integrity of Georgia. The EU emerged as the only alternative to undertake this task. Immediately after the Russia-Georgia war, the extraordinary Georgia- EU summit was held on 1 September 2008. The European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia was established on 15 September 2008 and started its operation on 1 October 2008.[500] At post-conflict era, the EU's role has increased considerably as only remaining international body monitoring closely the conflict zone due to the closure of the OSCE and UNOMIG[501] missions.[502] Huge amount of funding -approximately 4.5 billion dollars- from partner countries and international donor

[497] Tamar Khidasheli, "Georgia'S European Way", 3 (repr., IPG, 2011), https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/ipg/2011-3/09_khidasheli.pdf.
[498] Ibid.
[499] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Foreign Policy Strategy 2006-2009", accessed 20 December 2020, https://www.gfsis.org/media/download/GSAC/resources/115_1973_997704_Strategy_MFA2006-2009En.pdf
[500] "Chronology Of Major Events Of EU-Georgia Cooperation", Mfa.Gov.Ge, accessed 20 December 2020, https://mfa.gov.ge/ევროპული-და-ევრო-ატლანტიკური-ინტეგრაცია/საქართველო-ევროკავშირი.aspx
[501] The United Nations Observation Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) was initially established in August 1993 to monitor compliance with the ceasefire between the Georgian government and the Abkhaz authorities in Georgia. Its mandate was later extended to include evaluation of the local police forces following the signing of 1994 Agreement on a Ceasefir and Separation of Forces. UNOMIG's mission ended on June 2009. "UNOMIG: United Nations Observer Mission In Georgia", Peacekeeping.Un.Org, accessed 20 December 2020, https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unomig/index.html.
[502] Khidasheli, "Georgia's European Way."

organizations was collected at the Georgian Donor's Conference organized by the EU and the World Bank in order to support Georgia for the years 2008-2010.

The introduction of the Eastern Partnership with the Joint Declaration of the Prague EaP Summit led the EU to develop distinct policy instruments for enhancing further political and economic integration between the EU and six partner countries. For Georgia, the ENP and the Eastern Partnership emerged as accelerating tool for strengthening relations. The timing of developing such policies and instruments is no surprising as the EU's concerns for its security increased firstly, with the 2007 enlargement through which the EU's borders became more vulnerable to any spillover of security threats that could emanate from the post-Soviet region; secondly, with the August 2008 war when Russian threat became highly visible.

When the Georgian Dream coalition came to power in 2012 parliamentary and 2013 presidential elections, there were some concerns over the slightly different foreign policy direction of new political leadership than that Saakashvili and his party United National Movement had. Yet, for the Georgian Dream coalition, the normalization of relations with Russia did not mean to destroy Georgia's desire to be a part of Euro-Atlantic integration. Indeed, Georgia and the EU continued to improve their relations and started the bilateral talks for the Association Agreement, which was signed on 27 June 2014 along with the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. Association Agreement has entered into the force on July 1st, 2016. With the DCTFA, the EU has become Georgia's largest regional trading partner. Yet, by country, Georgia's partners for exports and imports are countries from its neighborhood. as indicated in Table 5.1 below, Georgia's main export partner having the biggest share is Azerbaijan while Russia has the second place. This implies that Russia has ongoing not only political but also economic leverage over Georgia.

**Table 5.1** Exports share by country in 2018

| Partner Name | Export Share in Total Products (%) | Export (US$ Thousand) | Export Partner Share (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Azerbaijan | 52,67 | 502042,41 | 14,96 |
| Russian Federation | 20,32 | 436646,79 | 13,01 |
| Armenia | 64,01 | 278689,78 | 8,3 |
| Bulgaria | 3,6 | 258866,84 | 7,71 |
| Turkey | 24,77 | 233497,2 | 6,96 |
| China | 3,94 | 198034,93 | 5,9 |
| Ukraine | 18,2 | 175044,68 | 5,22 |
| United States | 7,96 | 159971,44 | 4,77 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kazakhstan | 16,51 | 90808,69 | 2,71 |
| Uzbekistan | 6,27 | 80487,66 | 2,4 |
| Switzerland | 3,13 | 77453,16 | 2,31 |
| Iran, Islamic Rep. | 11,64 | 74155,11 | 2,21 |
| Spain | 7,07 | 62131,05 | 1,85 |
| Romania | 2,29 | 57829,17 | 1,72 |
| Germany | 19,05 | 51532,74 | 1,54 |

**Source.** World Bank Database (WITS)
https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/GEO/Year/2018/TradeFlow/EXPIMP/Partner/by-country#

On the other hand, import shares draw a similar picture indicating that neighboring countries have bigger import share to Georgia than the individual EU member states. While Turkey has the biggest import share in Georgian markets, Russia takes again the second place here, as shown in Table 5.2 below.

**Table 5.2** Import share by country to Georgia in 2018

| Partner Name | Import Share in Total Products (%) | Import (US$ Thousand) | Import Partner Share (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Turkey | 78,74 | 1473024,19 | 16,12 |
| Russian Federation | 57,4 | 934891,56 | 10,23 |
| China | 59,73 | 833887,8 | 9,13 |
| Azerbaijan | 30,92 | 593014,81 | 6,49 |
| Ukraine | 44,55 | 514766,78 | 5,63 |
| Germany | 65,38 | 431454,38 | 4,72 |
| United States | 30,59 | 359524,87 | 3,93 |
| Armenia | 22,53 | 335271,62 | 3,67 |
| France | 42,68 | 262593,84 | 2,87 |
| Italy | 51,44 | 231427 | 2,53 |
| Japan | 8,16 | 215245,73 | 2,36 |
| Romania | 12,62 | 209192,75 | 2,29 |
| Netherlands | 43,28 | 205308,79 | 2,25 |
| Latin America & Caribbean | 4,08 | 183077,05 | 2 |

**Source.** World Bank Database (WITS)
https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/GEO/Year/2018/TradeFlow/EXPIMP/Partner/by-country#

Another turning point in the EU-Georgia relations occurred on February 27th, 2017 when the European Council adopted the visa liberalization policy proposal for Georgia after a long negotiation talks, which took five years due to some criticisms of member states. Visa

liberalization was a great achievement as Georgian Prime Minister declared during his visa-free visit to Athens with cabinet ministers and a group of students[503]:

> Today is a historic day. Georgian citizens will finally be able to travel visa- free to the European Union/Schengen countries... This is an enormous achievement and a great opportunity for Georgian citizens to better acquaint with the European Union, to better learn the values that the European Union stands on.[504]

As emphasized previously, Georgia's ambition to become an EU member has continued since its independence period. Recently, at an international conference marking the tenth anniversary of the Eastern Partnership in the Georgian Black Sea city of Batumi, Georgian President Salome Zurabishvili underlined this desire on the path to EU membership by saying that: "Our values, culture, history are European, our population is European, 80% of our population support the objective of joining the European Union, and that is steadily in the last 15 years, without any change, without Euroscepticism."[505]

She also suggested that the EU should consider Georgian participation as an ad hoc basis:

> "We understand the difficulties of the political decision to award a country the candidate status […] One idea outside the box is for Georgia to start accession negotiations on an "ad hoc" basis. Such a pragmatic, non-institutional, non-political decision, would be very significative and very important."[506]

All in all, the EU-Georgia relations in general and the EU democracy promotion policies towards Georgia in specifically shows considerable changes over time. Similar to one with other post-Soviet countries, the EU's relations with Georgia has improved since its independence, yet at a faster pace since the August 2008 war. However, the EU's attention on different components of democracy in its democracy promotion strategies has changed depending on both Georgia-Russia relations and changing domestic conditions of Georgia. The following figure shows the EU's disbursed funding to some critical components of its policy pillar called "Government and Civil Society" to Georgia between 2007 and 2020.

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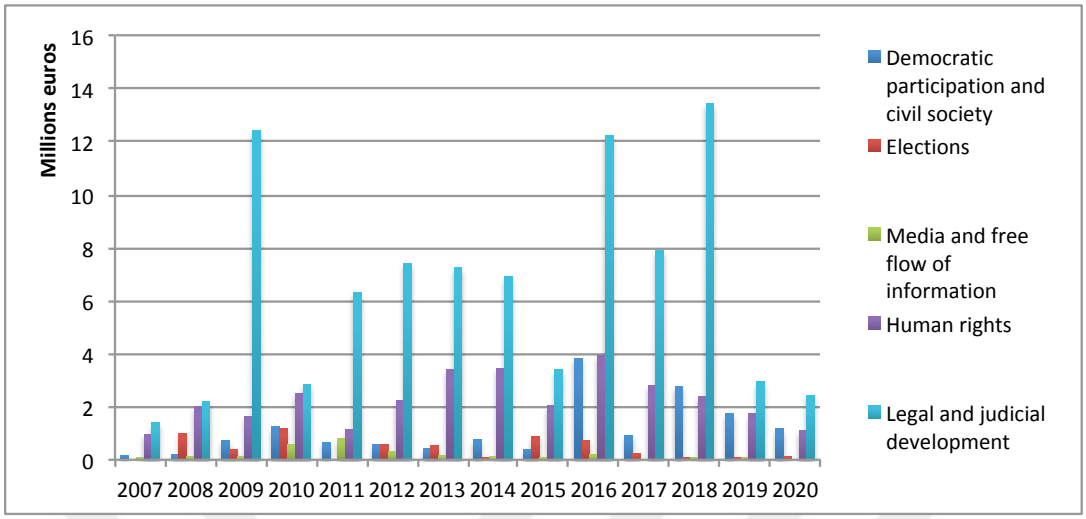
[503] Yelda Karadağ, "Georgian Europeanization: An Ideational And Institutional Analysis" (Ph.D., repr., Middle East Technical University, 2019).

[504] "Georgia Celebrates Visa Free Travel To EU", www.Civil.Ge, 2017, https://civil.ge/archives/126273

[505] Georgi Gotev, "Georgia Suggests Taking An Unconventional Path To EU Accession", *Euractive*, 2019, https://www.euractiv.com/section/eastern-europe/news/georgia-suggest-taking-an-unconventional-path-to-eu-accession/.

[506] Ibid.

**Figure 5.9a** The EU's disbursed funding to some components of the sector of "Government and Civil Society" to Georgia between the years 2007-2020




As it can be seen from the figure above, the EU has increased its funding to legal and judicial development strikingly in 2009. This is critical because at the end of 2008, Georgia-Russia war occurred, which took the EU's attention to the region due to possible negative consequences of the spillover of security threats. The year of 2009 is also important because since 2009 the EU started to focus on each component of embedded liberal democracy in its democracy promotion agenda with increased funding.

## *5.4. Conclusion*

This chapter tries to examine the EU's democracy promotion policies towards Georgia. Strikingly, it concludes that the EU's democracy promotion agendas have changed depending on Georgia's relations with Russia and changes in Russian leverage over Georgia. Based on findings of analysis of official documents between the EU and Georgia, Table 5.3 below shows the EU's different democracy promotion agendas toward Georgia yearly.

**Table 5.3** The EU's differentiated democracy promotion agendas toward Georgia

| Years | Types of democracy promotion agendas |
|---|---|
| **2003** | shallow agenda |
| **2004** | broad agenda |
| **2005** | shallow agenda |
| **2006** | shallow agenda |
| **2007** | shallow agenda |
| **2008** | shallow agenda |
| **2009** | broad agenda |
| **2010** | broad agenda |
| **2011** | broad agenda |
| **2012** | shallow agenda |
| **2013** | narrow agenda |
| **2014** | full agenda |
| **2015** | full agenda |
| **2016** | broad agenda |

As indicated in the table, there are three certain time periods in which the EU has applied "broad democracy promotion agenda" toward Georgia: in 2004 immediately after Rose Revolution, between 2009-2011, in 2016 (with increasing focus on partial regimes of liberal democracy starting from 2014). In the aftermath of Rose Revolution and with the inclusion of Georgia into the framework of the ENP, the scope of the EU-Georgia relations has expanded, which in turn increased the EU's leverage over Georgian politics. The EU welcomed the non-violent political change after Rose Revolution, yet some kind of criticisms over whether this revolution is democratic or not started. At this critical time, the EU aimed to support the strengthening of democratic institutions in order to consolidate emerging democratic steps of Georgia. That's why it is not surprising that the EU chose all-encompassing democracy promotion agenda called "broad democracy promotion agenda".

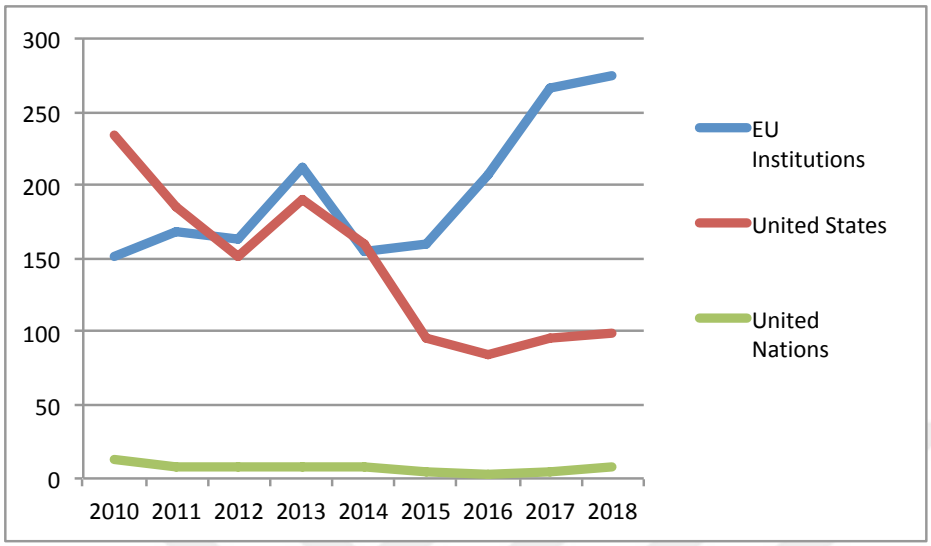
The second turning point is the period between 2009-2011, which is emphasized frequently as the situation of Georgia-Russia relations has affected the EU's foreign policies toward Georgia in terms of democracy promotion. Compatible with the illiberal regional power hypothesis in the analysis, at the time periods when the relations between Russia and Georgia deteriorated and turned into the conflict, the EU has found enough space to intervene in Georgia via various democracy promotion policies and tools. As assumed, security threats coming from Russian aggression in the aftermath of August 2008 war, pushed the EU to take an active stance to control its neighbourhood, which was possible through the EU's normative power. As indicated in Evaluation Final Report of European Union's co-operation with Georgia (2007-2013), the EU responded flexibly and at scale to the needs that arose in the aftermath of August 2008 War.[507] It is stated that the EU adapted broader framework for relations with Georgia and focused much more on political aspects of the ENP reform agenda related to the EU values, human rights, conflict resolution and the rule of law along with sector specific cooperation such as Public Finance Management (PFM), Criminal Justice and Agriculture and Regional Development.[508]

The third critical time period is between 2014 and 2016, which starts with the Russian annexation of Crimea and increased concerns over the Russian aggression in the region. Another critical step taken by Russia is the signing of treaties with both Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2014 and 2015 in order to protect them from "Georgian aggression".[509] The September 2014 agreement on "Alliance and Strategic Partnership" with Abkhazia and the March 2015 agreement on "Alliance and Integration" with South Ossetia are important due to the fact that they provided a comprehensive legal framework of Russian military assistance and economic integration. As a response to these attempts, the EU chose the way of integration with Georgia from all aspects. The EU's increased leverage over Georgia since 2014 can also be seen the share of EU assistance to Georgia in overall aid disbursements. The following figure illustrates that starting from 2014, the EU aid to Georgia has increased considerably that surpassed the level of USA, which was the second largest aid donor until

[507] European Commission, "Evaluation Of The European Union's Co-Operation With Georgia (2007-2013)", Final Report Volume I (Freiburg, 2015), https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/financial_assistance/phare/evaluation/2016/20160927-geo-cse-volume-1-to-3.pdf
[508] Ibid.
[509] This terminology is used by Russian side. "Russia-Abkhazia Agreement On Alliance And Strategic Partnership Submitted To State Duma", President Of Russia, accessed 20 December 2020, http://en.kremlin.ru/catalog/countries/XA/events/47288

that time.

**Figure 5.9b** Total Net Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Georgia (US Dollar, Millions, Constant Prices 2018)




***Source:*** OECD Statistics

The year 2016 is significant as the Association Agreement between the European Union and Georgia fully enters into force in that year. Through the provisions of the AA, economic and political linkages between Georgia and the EU increased. Legal approximation to EU acquis, convergence to the EU standards in various business-related regulations such as food safety, technical standards etc. and reduction in non-tariff barriers in trade relations with the EU can be considered as important gains of DCFTA for Georgia. Not only DCFTA but also the EU's specific projects for democracy promotion increased the EU's actorness in Georgia since then.

# CHAPTER 6

# EXPLANING THE VARIATION IN THE SUBSTANCE OF EU DEMOCRACY PROMOTION

The starting point of this research has been to find out determinants of the variation in the substance of democracy promotion towards Ukraine and Georgia. The previous chapters have displayed that the EU has changed its democracy promotion agendas towards Ukraine and Georgia at certain time periods at which relations between target countries at stake and Russia has evolved into a positive or negative side. In accordance with the main hypothesis of this research, the EU has implemented broader democracy promotion agenda towards target state i.e. Ukraine/Georgia when Russia as an illiberal regional power has had lower leverage, whereas it adopted shallow democracy promotion agenda when Russia has had higher leverage over them.

Therefore, the main intention of this chapter is first to draw the general picture of the evolution of EU democracy promotion policies at critical turning points towards Ukraine and Georgia from the EU side with its declared reasons and intentions for these changes, then to reveal how Russia as an illiberal regional power has shaped and contributed to these changes in EU democracy promotion policies.

## *6.1.EU Democracy Promotion Policies Towards Ukraine and Georgia: Between Broad and Shallow Democracy Promotion Agendas*

As discussed in the previous chapters, EU's relations with post-Soviet countries in the aftermath of dissolution of Soviet Union were determined within the framework of "Russia-first policy" in which the relations between certain EU member states such as Germany, France and Italy were given high priority to their relations with Russia over relations with other post-Soviet countries.[510] In the early period of independence of post-

[510] Indeed, Russia was the first country in the region that the EU initiated immediately a meeting concerning to discuss Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. Concerning the remaining post-

Soviet countries, the EC (later the EU) aimed to build constructive the relationship with the region, which was a *terra incognita* to Brussels at that time, through Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs). Therefore, the EU's first interaction with Ukraine and Georgia were limited to the cooperation on technical matters and humanitarian assistance to overcome immediate challenges of newly independent countries. While the EU and Ukraine agreed to sign PCA in 1994, which makes Ukraine the first CIS country to sign it, negotiations for the PCAs with three South Caucasus states i.e. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia had just started in 1994 and those PCAs were signed in 1996, ratified in 1999. Analysis of these two PCAs with Ukraine and Georgia indicates that there is nearly no difference in the content, declared objectives and tools to reach these goals between them.

With the largest round of enlargement of Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) in 2004[511], the EU's new borders reached to the region characterized by high level of political instability, ethnic tensions and low level of economic development. To overcome these immediate threats and challenges, the EU introduced the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) with the goal of establishing a democratically governed "ring of friends". Without membership perspective, the EU has aimed to achieve political and economic reforms in the neighbourhood countries through some economic and financial incentives as discussed in a detail in the previous chapters. Coincided with the same time period, events such as Georgia's Rose revolution of 2003 and Ukraine's Orange revolution of 2004 in which public demands for democracy were high, sparked the EU's interest to become one of the key democracy promoters in Eastern neighborhood. Therefore, the EU's increased attention to the region and its differentiated treatment to neighboring countries for the sake of democracy promotion emerged gradually after the so-called "color revolutions" and the introduction of European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004.

Concerning the increased importance of the region and the EU's active participation in democracy promotion activities in the region, the time scope of this analysis is limited the

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Soviet countries, this thesis has divided the EU's differentiated foreign policies into two different clusters of post-Soviet countries except Russia: the countries in the framework of Eastern Partnership i.e. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and Central Asian countries with lower priority attached.

[511] This enlargement was also described as "big-bang enlargement" in which Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Malta and Cyprus joined the EU in 2004. This wave of enlargement was followed by accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 and of Croatia in 2013.

period starting with the ENP in 2004 until 2016 in which Association Agreements (AAs) with Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs) with Georgia and Ukraine were entered into force.[512] Based on the results of content analysis of the relevant EU official documents, strategy papers, communications etc. related to EU democracy promotion policies towards Ukraine and Georgia, the general framework for each country case indicating the variation in the EU democracy promotion agendas has been created as can be seen in the Table 4.2 in Chapter 4 and Table 5.3 in Chapter 5. The results have been supported with the findings of allocated EU funds for the declared objectives in the documents. In this chapter, these general frameworks of EU democracy promotion agendas towards Ukraine and Georgia have been gathered in one timeline, which includes not only the variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion agendas but also critical time periods in which bilateral relations with Russia has changed.

The Figure 6.1 illustrates critical turning points in EU democracy promotion policies towards Ukraine and Georgia. Strikingly, it also shows these time periods correspond the crises between Ukraine-Russia / Georgia-Russia, which in turn demonstrates the periods of changing Russian leverage over them. Based on these turning points, the EU democracy promotion policies in Ukraine and Georgia as follows:

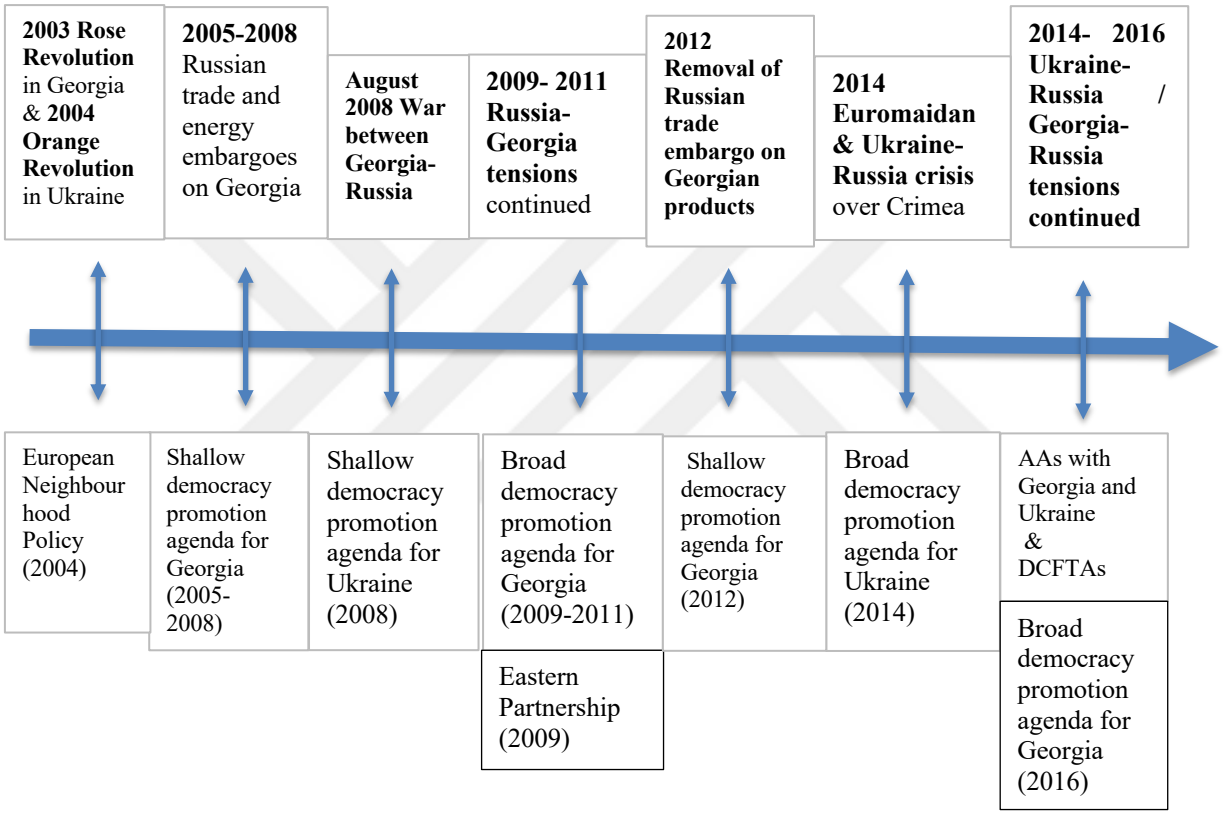
i) 'Rose Revolution' in Georgia in 2003, 'Orange Revolution' in Ukraine in 2004 and the introduction of European Neighbourhood Policy,
ii) Russian trade embargoes on Georgian products (2005-2008), shallow democracy promotion agenda towards Georgia,
iii) August 2008 War between Georgia and Russia, shallow democracy promotion agenda towards Ukraine and the EU introduction of Eastern Partnership in 2009,
iv) Broad democracy promotion agenda to Georgia between 2009-2011 in the light of ongoing Russia-Georgia tensions,
v) Removal of Russian trade embargo on Georgian products (2012) and shallow democracy promotion agenda towards Georgia,

[512] As mentioned in the Introduction chapter, the year of 2016 is critically important to signify the deepening bilateral political and economic relations with the EU through AAs with DCFTAs. Since then, the relations have been shaped within the comprehensive framework of AAs. It also signifies the beginning point of approximation of both Ukraine and Georgia to the European rules, norms and standards.

vi) Broad democracy promotion agenda to Ukraine at the post-'Revolution of Dignity' (Euromaidan events) and Ukraine-Russia crisis in 2014,

vii) The signing of Association Agreements with DCFTAs as well as broad democracy agenda for Georgia in 2016 in the light of ongoing tensions between Georgia and Russia due to the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

**Figure 6.1** Timeline of EU Democracy Promotion in Ukraine & Georgia




The upper side of the Figure 6.1 above demonstrates the critical turning points not only for domestic politics of Ukraine and Georgia but also in their relations with Russia, which have directly affected Russian leverage over these countries. The lower side of the figure, on the other hand, shows how the EU's democracy promotion policy towards these cases has changed in accordance with the developments above. It illustrates that during each time period in which Russian leverage against the country at stake, the EU follows shallow democracy promotion agenda toward that country. At the breaking points in relations between Russia and Ukraine/Georgia were turned into the conflicts, the EU has applied

broad democracy promotion agendas towards Ukraine and Georgia as assumed in the hypotheses.

The time scope of analysis has started from the year 2004 when the European Neighbourhood Policy was introduced. As emphasized above, in the aftermath of the EU's largest round of eastern enlargement with the expanded borders, the EU faced with the necessity to develop more structured and institutionalized relationship with its new neighbors. Indeed, it is stated in the European Parliament's 2004 Gahrton report that the EU must play a greater role in the South Caucasus:

> "to give an impetus to peace and stabilisation processes in the South Caucasus and intensify efforts to promote democratisation and economic reform in the region through the creation of stronger incentives for reform and for co-operation among parties to conflicts; to support the promising renewal in Georgia through democratisation programmes…"[513]

With the country specific Action Plans in the framework of ENP, the EU could set the objectives in the required fields of cooperation. Yet, it is stated in these APs that the pace of progress in relationships depends on the efforts of the target country and the concrete achievements in meeting those commitments. As Ferrero-Waldner, European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, emphasized the positive impact of Action Plans for democratization process in the partner countries:

> "these action plans will enable us to bring our values, namely human rights and everything with which they are associated – namely the rule of law, human rights and democracy – to these countries, such as Ukraine, as soon as free and fair elections have taken place there…The action plans also offer opportunities for us to present our priorities alongside the countries' own priorities and promote democracy and human rights."[514]

In 2006, the European Commission has decided to provide one billion euros to boost energy infrastructure and democratic reforms in former Soviet and Mediterranean countries

[513] Per Gahrton, "With A Proposal For A European Parliament Recommendation To The Council On EU Policy Towards The South Caucasus 2003/2225(INI))", Committee On Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security And Defence Policy (European Parliament, 2004), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A5-2004-0052+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN

[514] EU Parliamentary debates on "democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms in third country", 15 December 2004, Ferrero-Waldner (Commission) https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20041215+ITEM-010+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN

on its borders.[515] This step was evaluated as the necessary if the EU wanted to have stable and democratic neighbours.[516] Although the Commission was looking the ways for strengthening the ENP with increased funds as EU External Affairs Commissioner Benita Ferrero Waldner said, some scholars claimed that the EU offer was not big enough to push these countries carry out these reforms. Nicu Popescu, Centre for European Policy Studies, argued that: "While the EU offer is substantial but long-term, Russia applies very strong, clear pressure, which has very quick results." For countries like Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan or Ukraine, he says that "the choice is between waiting for a vague long-term offer from the EU and accepting the conditions which Russia is imposing on them, in the context of very serious economic pressures like wine bans, doubling or tripling of gas prices."[517] Indeed, while Ukraine faced with increasing gas prices between 2005 and 2010, and cut off gas supplies in 2006 by Russia, trade wars between Russia and Georgia with the ban on Georgian wine imports started in the same year, in 2006. Strikingly, between the years 2005-2008, the EU has applied shallow democracy agenda to Georgia in accordance with the hypothesis of this dissertation that illiberal regional power -Russia- has had greater leverage against Georgia, which will be examined in a detail in the next section.

With the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, the EU borders reached eastwards to the Black Sea, which made the EU closer to the volatile Caucasus region. In other word, problems within the Caucasus region were no longer extraneous to the EU and were critically important for the security and stability.[518] Bearing in mind that during the time period starting from the introduction of ENP in 2004 until the inception of Eastern Partnership, the EU's democracy promotion approach is all-encompassing and overall for

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[515] It is stated that the EU would continue to pursue tailor-made support depending on the needs and aspirations of partner countries. "The more progress a partner country makes in implementing reforms, the deeper the relationship can become, and the more support the EU should provide." Thus, while an amount of 700 million euros was allocated for a Neighbourhood Investment Fund, an amount of 300 million euros was intended to support the partner states who made most progress in implementing the agreed reforms. European Union: *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy*, COM(2006)726 final, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52006DC0726

[516] Oana Lungescu, "EU Push To Influence Neighbours", *BBC News*, 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6194928.stm

[517] Lungescu, "EU push to influence neighbours."

[518] Tracey C. German, "Visibly Invisible: EU Engagement In Conflict Resolution In The South Caucasus", *European Security* 16, no. 3-4 (2007): 357-374, doi:10.1080/09662830701751141.

the whole region. Nevertheless, the country-specific differentiation is visible since the introduction of Eastern Partnership as it is seen in Ukrainian and Georgian cases.

Immediately after the August 2008 War between Georgia and Russia, EU High Representative for the CDSP, Javier Solana met with Prime Minister of Georgia, Lado Gurgenidze on September 1, 2008 and made following remarks: "The situation today is clear. Georgia is a country whose territorial integrity has been breached and there is tremendous damage on the ground as concerns people, property, etc. and it is our obligation to help."[519] More importantly, he gave the signals of EU's increased commitment and more active role in the region by stating that: "On the relations with Georgia, I think that three things are important; the political support, the economic support - as you know we are trying to do the utmost - and then our presence on the ground."[520] At the same day, and an extraordinary European Council meeting was held. The similar conclusions were declared:

> "The European Council strongly condemns Russia's unilateral decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia…The European Union is ready to commit itself, including through a presence on the ground, to support every effort to secure a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict in Georgia."

Yet, this presence was not limited to the EU's mediatory role in the conflict by proposing the six-point cease-fire agreement as mentioned previously. In addition to the immediate emergency aid for the reconstruction, the EU underlined that "it is ready to support confidence-building measures and the development of regional cooperation. It also decides to step up its relations with Georgia, including visa facilitation measures and the possible establishment of a full and comprehensive free trade area as soon as the conditions are met." It is clear that the crisis evoked the necessity for the EU to take an active role in the region. Indeed, one of the most striking conclusions from this extraordinary meeting was the EU's determination for strengthening relations with the states in the region by declaring that:

> "The European Council notes with concern the impact which the current crisis is having on the whole of the region. The European Union considers that it is more

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[519] European Union: Council of the European Union, *Summary of remarks by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, after the meeting with Lado Gurgenidze Prime Minister of Georgia,* S289/08, Brussels, 1 September 2008, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/discours/102543.pdf

[520] Ibid.

> necessary than ever to support regional cooperation and step up its relations with its eastern neighbours, in particular through its neighbourhood policy, the development of the 'Black Sea Synergy' initiative and an 'Eastern Partnership' which the European Council wishes to adopt in March 2009; to this end it invites the Commission to submit proposals in December 2008."[521]

Russia's destructive actions in Georgia and Ukraine invoked the necessity for a common strategy prioritizing security in the whole region. Not only for strengthening stability and security, but also for consolidating its presence, the EU focused on more proactive democracy promotion policy in the region. Therefore, the emergence of the Eastern Partnership initiative is a clear reflection of the EU's increased interest in strengthening its influence and actorness in this region, which was under the control of Russia for a long time. In fact, the EU has been involved from the beginning of August 2008 War not only with rehabilitation and conflict resolution programmes but also supporting democratic institutions in Georgia. Strikingly, analysis of official documents in relations and funding levels indicate that the EU implemented broad democracy promotion agenda towards Georgia between 2009-2011.[522]

At this period of 2009-2011, another significant signal indicating the EU's pro-active foreign policy in Georgia is the EU's Non-Recognition and Engagement Policy (NREP)[523] for the Georgian breakaway region of Abkhazia, which based upon two pillars: the EU's firm commitment to Georgia's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and the EU's interest in engaging with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In his statement at OSCE

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[521] European Union: Council of the European Union, *Extraordinary European Council Presidency Conclusions*, Brussels 1 September 2008, available at: https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12594-2008-INIT/en/pdf

[522] While an amount of European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) allocated to Georgia in 2008 was 25 million euros, this amount increased to more than its three-fold to over 83 million euros. "Financial Transparency System (FTS) - European Commission", Ec.Europa.Eu, accessed 20 December 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm.

[523] "The non-recognition and engagement policy is not aimed explicitly at solving the conflicts but rather to create conditions for increased EU presence in these regions, which it hopes, will eventually translate into Georgia and EU becoming a viable option for the entities." For further information on NREP, please see: Sabine Fischer, "The EU'S Non-Recognition And Engagement Policy Towards Abkhazia And South Ossetia" (Brussels: Institute for Security Studies, 2010), https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/NREP_report.pdf;Anna Steiner, *Enhanced Relations - Protracted Conflict(S)?: The EU's Non-Recognition And Engagement Policy (NREP) Towards Abkhazia And South Ossetia In Georgia* (Baden: Tectum, 2019).

Permanent Council on 10 February 2011, Peter Semneby, the European Union's Special Representative for the South Caucasus, declared that:

> "the purpose of engagement with the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia is clear: by engaging the entities, the EU can open up these territories, increase its footprint and leverage, provide an alternative perspective to the predominant Russian one, and, ultimately, move closer towards a resolution of the conflicts. In essence this is about doing what the EU does best, namely, to use its soft power to nudge societies in the direction of Europe while fostering a stronger European identity."[524]

Obviously, the EU attempted to increase gradually its leverage in Georgia as the political environment at post- August 2008 War between Russia and Georgia created an opportunity to undermine Russian influence and to use its soft power tools. This favorable environment for the EU broad democracy promotion persisted until the end of 2011. Following Georgia's 2012 parliamentary elections, which brought the Georgian Dream coalition to power, the normalization policy for the relations with Russia has renewed trade relations and travel between Georgia and Russia. Moscow's decision to remove trade ban Georgian products in the late 2012 had some implications for the increasing of Russian leverage. In line with the hypothesis of this research, the EU applied shallow democracy promotion agenda in Georgia in 2012 when Russian leverage was renewed.

Another critical juncture in which the role of Russia as an illiberal power on the substance of EU democracy promotion is visible, is the period starting from November 2013 when Yanukovych decided to postpone the signing of the AA with Russian pressure, continuing with the Euromaidan events in the early months of 2014 and annexation of Crimea by Russia, until the end of 2014. The so-called "Euromaidan" events in the aftermath of Yanukovych and public demands for the EU integration were welcomed by the EU side. Yanukovych's flee to Russia and thereafter the emergence of Russian hybrid war increased the tensions. Ten days before the referendum held on the future of Crimea, the extraordinary meeting of EU Heads of State or Government on Ukraine was held on 6 March 2014. The EU strongly condemned the unprovoked violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Russian Federation and call on the Russian Federation to immediately

[524] "Statement By The EUSR For The South Caucasus Peter Semneby OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna 10 February 2011", Europarl.Europa.Eu, 2011, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/dsca/dv/dsca_20110315_10/dsca_20110315_10en.pdf.

withdraw its armed forces in accordance with the relevant agreements.[525] Immediate step taken by the EU was to suspend bilateral talks with the Russian Federation on visa matters as well as talks with the Russian Federation on the New Agreement. More importantly, the EU declared that it would provide rapidly strong financial backing and comprehensive assistance to Ukraine. In addition, this statement is critical in terms of indicating how the EU responded to the crisis by improving relations in political sphere:

> "The European Union and Ukraine have already taken an important step in deepening our relation by the initialling of the Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. We reiterate the European Union's commitment to signing the Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. As a matter of priority, we will sign very shortly all the political chapters before the Ukrainian elections of 25 May."[526]

Indeed, the crisis between Russia and Ukraine became an impetus for the EU to speed up the strengthening the political association and economic integration with Ukraine. Accordingly, on 26 June 2014, the EU and Ukraine signed the Association Agreement with its deep and comprehensive Free Trade Area. As High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, Stefan Füle, said in European Parliamentary debates that "the Association Agreement does not constitute the final goal of European Union-Ukraine cooperation. On the contrary, it provides new opportunities and is an important step in the European Union's commitment to support Ukraine along the road of transforming this country into a stable and prosperous European democracy."[527]

The year of 2014 was a turning point for the EU democracy promotion policies in Ukraine with allocated a huge amount of funds and the special focus on each aspect of liberal democracy. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, claimed that "Ukraine has faced unparalleled challenges, with Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Since 2014, we have put together for Ukraine the biggest support package in the history of the European Union. We have invested more in Ukraine than in any other country in the world and no other partner has

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[525] European Union: European Council, *Statement of the Heads of State or Government on Ukraine*, Brussels 6 March 2014, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/29285/141372.pdf

[526] Ibid.

[527] European Union: European Parliament, *Debates in European Parliament*, Strasbourg 15 July 2014, available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-8-2014-07-15-ITM-008_EN.html

invested in Ukraine as much as we have done."[528] It is clear that the EU has put an ambitious effort to support Ukraine's reform process in every aspect of democratization such as rule of law, fighting corruption, improving the electoral framework, which corresponds the EU's embedded liberal democracy promotion agenda. The period between 2014-2016 is significant as AAs with DCFTAs along with visa liberalization (Ukraine and Georgia) entered into the force, which have had certain implications on strengthening relations with the EU as well as reducing Russian economic and trade leverage over them.

As shown in the two previous country-case chapters and underlined here, the EU implemented variety of democracy promotion agenda towards Ukraine and Georgia. Not only discourses and statements at EU level but also official documents including agreements, strategic papers, as well as funding amounts demonstrate that at times when relations between Ukraine/Georgia and Russia deteriorated due to some problems and crisis, the EU has chosen broader democracy promotion agenda towards these countries at stake i.e. Ukraine and Georgia. Thus, democracy promotion policies have served as an instrument to engage in these countries and to consolidate the EU's presence in the region where there is a need for the actorness in the face of Russian aggression. Thus, this conclusion is corresponding with the main argument of this thesis that the EU democracy promotion agenda to Ukraine and Georgia is shaped by bilateral relations of each country with Russia as an illiberal regional power. As assumed in the beginning of the research, at times of crisis when relations between individual target state -Ukraine and Georgia- and Russia, the illiberal regional power are turned into the conflicts, the EU chooses to promote broader democracy promotion agenda including not only partial regimes of liberal democracy but also external conditions. It is obvious that the EU through broader democracy promotion policies aimed to consolidate its actorness and presence in these states where leverage of illiberal regional power -Russia- was decreasing due to crises between Russia and Ukraine or Russia and Georgia. On the other hand, when Russian leverage over these states was high, the EU has chosen shallow democracy promotion agenda with only focusing on the improving the external conditions.

[528] European Union: European Parliament, *Debates in European Parliament*, Strasbourg 27 November 2019, available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2019-11-27-ITM-016_EN.html

Nevertheless, this does not explain why the EU has chosen more frequently broad democracy agenda towards Georgia (during the period 2009-2011 and in 2016) than Ukraine (in 2014). This brings us to the second hypothesis of this thesis, which suggests the less leverage illiberal regional power has over target state, the more the EU uses broader democracy promotion to the target state at stake. The reasons for differentiation of the EU democracy promotion agendas between Georgia and Ukraine is discussed in the next section in a comparative manner in terms of different degrees of Russian leverage over Georgia and Ukraine.

### *6.1. The role of illiberal regional powers: Russia as the remodeler of the EU's democracy promotion towards Ukraine and Georgia*

Obviously, it is evident that Russia as an illiberal regional power has an indirect impact on the differentiation of substance of EU democracy promotion agendas. To understand this impact, this section analyzes different degrees of Russian leverage over these two countries chosen as case studies: Ukraine and Georgia. Bearing in mind it is quite hard to measure the level of leverage, it aims to evaluate Russian leverage over Georgia and Ukraine in terms of three dimensions: political leverage, human-based leverage and economic/trade/energy leverage. This enables to make a comparative analysis of cases.

In terms of political leverage, Russia has used not only diplomacy tools and exploited challenges against the territorial integrity of but also created multilateral venues where Russia is dominant. The first turning point in this analysis is Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003 and the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, eventually hastened the EU's increasing presence in the region but also for indicating as a challenge for Russia and Russia-led Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) as an exclusive zone of Russian influence. Indeed, in the early days of November 2004, Georgian officials started to declare the ineffectiveness of CIS as Georgian Defence Minister Georgy Baramidze said that he would not attend a meeting of the CIS Council of Defence Ministers, due to be held in Moscow on November 25. Baramidze told journalists that "CIS belongs to the past. I do not think military cooperation in that format will be of interest for Georgia" and "cooperation with defence ministers of the NATO member countries is of priority importance for Tbilisi and

is Georgia's future, this is our perspective."[529] This perception was supported with Saakashvili's decision of Georgian withdrawal from the CIS Council of Defence Ministers in February 2006 with the Georgian Foreign Ministry's statement that "Georgia has taken the course to join NATO and it cannot be part of two military structures simultaneously."[530] This step was followed by the decision on Georgia's withdrawal from CIS framework, which was passed unanimously by Georgian parliament on August 14, 2008. This withdrawal process took twelve months in accordance with the CIS Charter and Georgia's membership ended on August 18, 2009.

As to Ukraine, even though it did not ratify CIS Charter which would make it a full member of the CIS, yet, Ukraine under Kuchma presidency participated to Common Economic Space with a free trade agreement in 2003. Yet, Kuchma signed the agreement with reservation that it would not be in contradiction with Ukraine's commitments to its European integration. After the Orange Revolution, some statements similar to the ones done in Georgia were made from Ukrainian side. On 1 March 2005, Ukrainian Foreign Ministry declared that "CIS will not have a future unless effective mechanisms are found in the framework of this organization to further the interests of all the member states."[531] Unlike Georgia, Ukraine hesitated to declare any possibility to withdraw rather Ukrainian Foreign Minister Boris Tarasyuk said that "Ukraine which has taken a course towards European integration, intends to continue to develop cooperation within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States as long as it meets national interests."[532]

In addition to the Russian-led regional integration models under the CIS, Russia used its political leverage through border disputes, international diplomacy tools such as recognizing the break-away regions, and active participation in domestic politics of former Soviet Union states. As discussed previously, one of the most critical and common patterns in both cases is the direct Russian influence in domestic politics of Georgia and Ukraine.

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[529] Robert L. Larsson and Jakob Hedenskog, "Russian Leverage On The CIS And The Baltic States" (repr., Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), 2007), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228877758_Russian_Leverage_on_the_CIS_and_the_Baltic_States

[530] Larsson and Hedenskog, "Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States," 19

[531] BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, "Ukraine Says CIS Future In Doubt", 2005.
[532] Andrei Fomin, "Ukraine Not To Withdraw From CIS Cooperation- Minister", *ITAR-TASS*, 2005.

One striking example is Russia's active involvement through public relations experts and image-makers in the election campaign of Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych in the Ukrainian 2004 presidential elections. This became apparent when Putin congratulated Yanukovych for his victory in the second round even before the official election results had been announced. In fact, some scholars claim that Russian interference in elections of Ukrainian 2004 presidential elections with its explicit support on candidate who Kremlin wanted to win, annoyed the Ukrainian voters and they supported to the opposite candidate that the Kremlin opposed probably much more than if the Kremlin had not interfered.[533] Thus, in the aftermath of Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003 and Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, changes in domestic political landscape in both countries have had an impact on decreasing influence of Russian political leverage over Georgia and Ukraine, in which we see the increasing presence of the EU to fill this political vacuum.

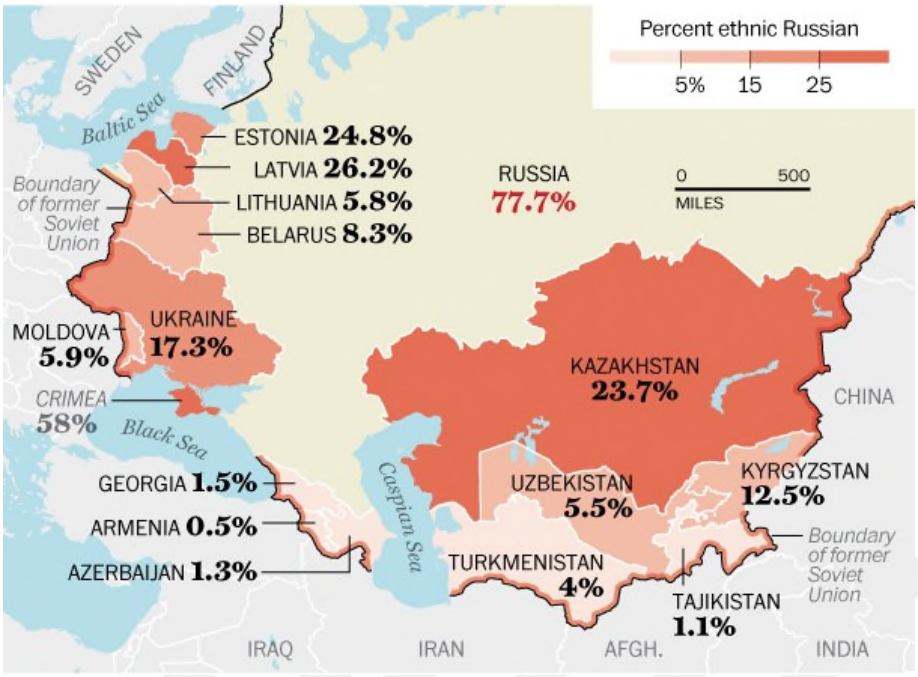
Generally speaking, the impact of Russian political leverage is much more visible in Ukraine than Georgia due to the fact that regional divisions in Ukraine whether being in Eastern or Western Ukraine produce different perceptions on Ukraine's foreign policy direction towards either Russia or the West as discussed in the previous chapter. Considering the political history of Ukraine since its independence, it is clear that this regional divisions have manifested itself in voting patterns during parliamentary and presidential elections, which affected the foreign policy direction of Ukraine considerably. Therefore, when president with pro-Russian or pro-Eurasian integration in his mind as the foreign policy direction of Ukraine, comes to the power -for example during Yanukovych era-, Russian political leverage increases over the domestic politics of Ukraine. This in turn increases the incumbent government's vulnerability to Russian pressure. The clear example can be given from Yanukovych era (2010-2014) when Ukraine gave important concessions such as the extension of rent contract for the naval base in Sevastopol for an additional 25 years, language reform giving more extensive rights to Russian population in the east and south of Ukraine etc. The increasing leverage of Russia over Ukraine led the EU follow shallower democracy promotion agendas focusing one aspect of democracy during this period as assumed in the hypotheses.

[533] Nikolai Petrov and Andrei Ryabov, "Russia's Role In The Orange Revolution", in *Revolution In Orange: The Origin Of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough* (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006).145-148.

The influence of pro-Russian political elites and pro-Russian views in public opinion is lower in Georgia compared to Ukrainian case, which usually decreases Russian political leverage in Georgia. Indeed, unlike Ukrainian case, every government and ruling party have declared that the main pillar of Georgia's foreign policy is the integration into the Western-oriented security architecture and the EU even though some of them did not deny the importance of improving relations with Russia and attempted to turning down the tensions with Russia as in Ivanishvili era (2012-2013). As a target state in which Russian political leverage is low, the EU could establish and consolidate its actorness more easily in Georgia through broader democracy promotion agenda.

The second point is Russian human-based -demographic- leverage in which Russia uses ethnic Russian minorities living outside of Russian Federation as a leverage tool. Very related to the political leverage, the existence of Russian minorities has some implications for the relations between Russia and Ukraine/Georgia. The following map illustrates the percentage of the ethnic Russian minorities living in the former Soviet Union countries within the total population as of 2014. As indicated below, the largest proportions of Russians are in Latvia (26.2%), Estonia (24.8%), Kazakhstan (23.7%), Ukraine (17.3%) and Kyrgyzstan (12,5%). On the other hand, Russian minority in Georgia consists 1.5% of total populari

**Map 6.1** Ethnic Russian Minorities Living in the Former Soviet Union Countries




**Source**: Washington Post based on CIA World Factbook, May 17, 2014, available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/ethnic-russians-in-the-former-soviet-republics/2014/05/17/25298b4e-de19-11e3-8009-71de85b9c527_graphic.html

Russia's compatriot policy has taken its place as a central part of foreign policy starting with Putin presidency. In his address to the Fourth World Congress in 2012, Putin stressed that "Support for the Russian diaspora is one of the most important policies of our state."[534] As one of the most striking example of Russian active compatriot policy is the granting Russian passports to residents living in breakaway regions of Georgia i.e. Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The main rationale for giving Russian passports is to secure a legitimate right for Russia to claim to represent the interests of residents in these regions. This paves the way for creating a political and legitimate basis for intervention, which is claimed to be done for the sake of protecting its own citizens.[535] Russia started to introduce the visa-regime for Georgia in 2001. This policy strengthened separatist entities i.e. Abkhazia and South Ossetia within Georgia and reduced the legitimacy of Georgia over these regions. Russia's "protection of citizens" was used as justification for military operation during August 2008

[534] "Vladimir Putin's Address To The Participants Of The Fourth World Congress Of Compatriots", President Of Russia, 2012, http://en.kremlin.ru/catalog/keywords/32/events/16719.

[535] Larsson, and Hedenskog, "Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States," 35

War. On August 13, 2008, the Chairman and Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, Valery Zorkin published the paper claiming the Russian military action is necessary for the protection of Russian citizens outside of the country.[536] He stated that:

> "Moreover, these civilians are not just citizens of a neighboring state. These are Russian citizens, of whom the majority in South Ossetia. Therefore, our peacekeepers, our Armed Forces, the government and the President of Russia had no other way than to ensure in the most decisive manner the implementation of Article 61 of the Constitution, in which it is written in black and white that the Russian Federation guarantees its citizens protection and patronage beyond its borders. This constitutional requirement is developed in the provisions of the Federal Law "On the state policy of the Russian Federation in relation to compatriots abroad." For example, paragraph 5 of Article 14 of this Law states that "the failure of a foreign state to comply with the universally recognized principles and norms of international law in the field of fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms in relation to compatriots is a sufficient basis for the adoption by the state authorities of the Russian Federation of measures to protect interests of compatriots". Russia has fulfilled its obligations to compatriots."[537]

In sum, the existence of Russian minorities in both Georgia and Ukraine provides Russia the legal justification to use them in order to interfere in internal affairs of both states. Depending on the size of the Russian minority, the impact of human-based leverage is higher in Ukraine than in Georgia in spite of Russia's policy of issuing passports in breakaway regions in Georgia.

The third point is economic/trade and energy leverage of Russia, which has been used many times against Ukraine and Georgia. The asymmetrical nature of Russian-Ukrainian/ Russian-Georgian trade pattern leads Russia to use this dependence as an instrument for political/military requests, political penalty in times of poor relations or some other strategic interests. As discussed in Chapter 5, there are clear incidents in which Russia has used economic/trade leverage against Georgia through the boycotts of goods imported from Georgia, embargoes and freezing money transfers. For example, in 2006, Russia imposed a ban on wine imports from Moldova and Georgia after years of relations filled with tension and problems. The Russian Federal Goods Supervisory Service

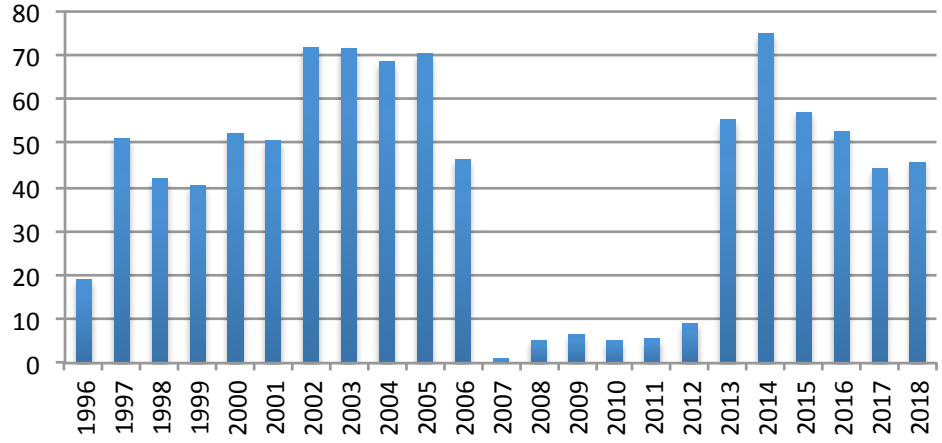
[536] Valery Zorkin, *Peace Enforcement and Human Rights*, RG, 13 August 2008, *available at* http://www.rg.ru/2008/08/13/zorkin.html (Translated)

[537] Ibid.

(Rospotrebnadzor) legitimized this attempt by claiming that Georgian wine contained pesticides and heavy metals.[538] Despite there were no exact figures on export volume, Russia accounted more than 80% of Georgian wine exports according to some sources.[539] This indicates to what extent Georgian wine industry is vulnerable to trade embargoes. Immediately after Russian ban, Georgia searched for alternative markets for its wine exports as a quick solution. With this goal, Georgia was able to acquire 1% share of the UK and Germany markets.[540] Yet, Georgian ambition to diversify markets for wine exports has not been enough to reduce its vulnerability.

In 2006, when Russia declared de facto trade boycott on agricultural products and wine, Russia's share in Georgia's total exports of food products was 46,35% while this value decreased to 0.95% of total exports in 2007.[541] Figure 6.2 indicates the share of Georgian food products in exported goods to Russian Federation. As it is clear, the place of food products in exported goods to Russia has always been significantly high except the period of trade embargo between 2006-2012.

**Figure 6.2** Share of food products in exported goods to Russian Federation (%)

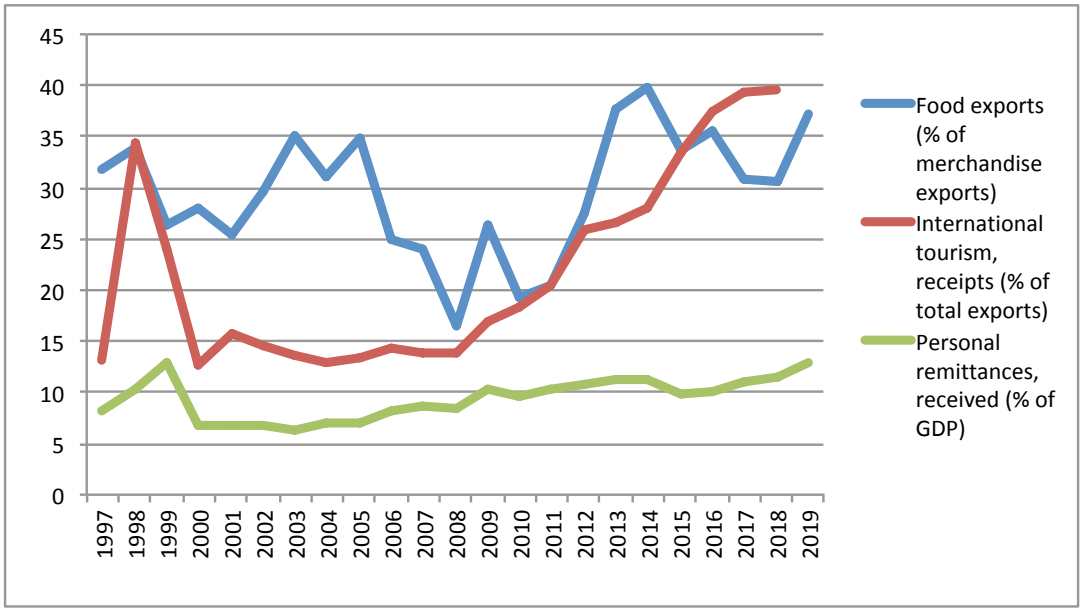



***Source:*** World Bank Data

[538] Larsson and Hedenskog, "Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States," 61
[539] BBC News, "Russian Wine Move Draws Protests", 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4860454.stm
[540] Larsson and Hedenskog, "Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States," 61
[541] Transparency International Georgia, "Georgia's Economic Dependence On Russia: Trends And Threats" (Transparency International Georgia, 2020), https://transparency.ge/en/blog/georgias-economic-dependence-russia-trends-and-threats.

To investigate the impact of Russian trade and travel ban on Georgia, there is a need more figures on the place of food products and the international tourism receipts in total exports. Figure 6.3 illustrates the changes in share of Georgian food exports and international tourism receipts (in total merchandise exports) and the share of personal remittances in GDP. Not only through wine/agricultural products exports, but also through tourism receipts and remittances, Georgia's economy is dependent on Russia. The sharp decrease in both percentage of food exports and international tourism receipts in total exports indicate the importance of Russian trade and travel ban on Georgia.

**Figure 6.3** Share of food exports, international tourism receipts (in total exports) and personal remittances (in GDP) (Georgia)



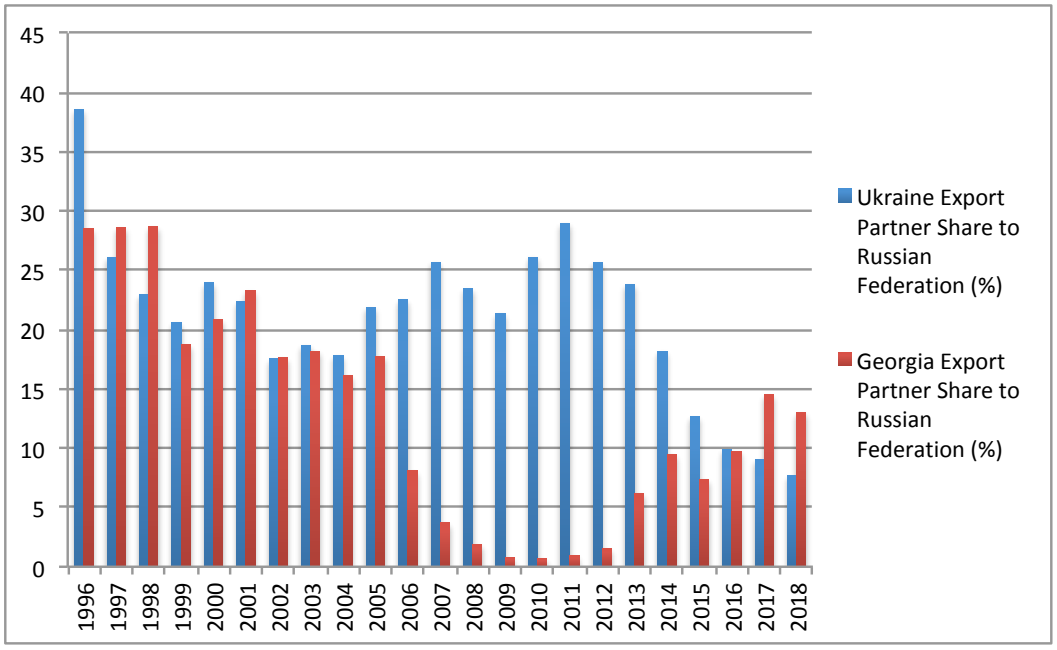

***Source:*** World Bank Data

Following the removal of trade ban on agricultural products in 2012, Russia has renewed its economic leverage over Georgia[542], which can also be seen from the figures of wine industry, as in 2019, Georgia exported USD 133 million worth of wine to Russia, which was 57% of Georgia's total wine exports.[543]

[542] Simon Appleby, "Georgian Wine Industry: Implications Of A Russian Embargo", *Georgia Today*, 2019, http://georgiatoday.ge/news/16302/Georgian-Wine-Industry%3A-Implications-of-a-Russian-Embargo.
[543] Transparency International Georgia, "Georgia's Economic Dependence On Russia: Trends And Threats" (Transparency International Georgia, 2020), https://transparency.ge/en/blog/georgias-economic-dependence-russia-trends-and-threats.

Compared the levels of economic dependency on Russia, the figures show that Ukrainian economy is much more dependent on Russia than Georgian economy. Figure 6.4 illustrates the export partner share to Russian Federation in percentages between the years 1996-2018. In analyzed years, both the levels of Ukraine's Georgia's export share to Russia in percentage have been more or less similar except the period of the years 2006 and 2013 in which the impact of Russian trade embargo on Georgian export levels can be visible.

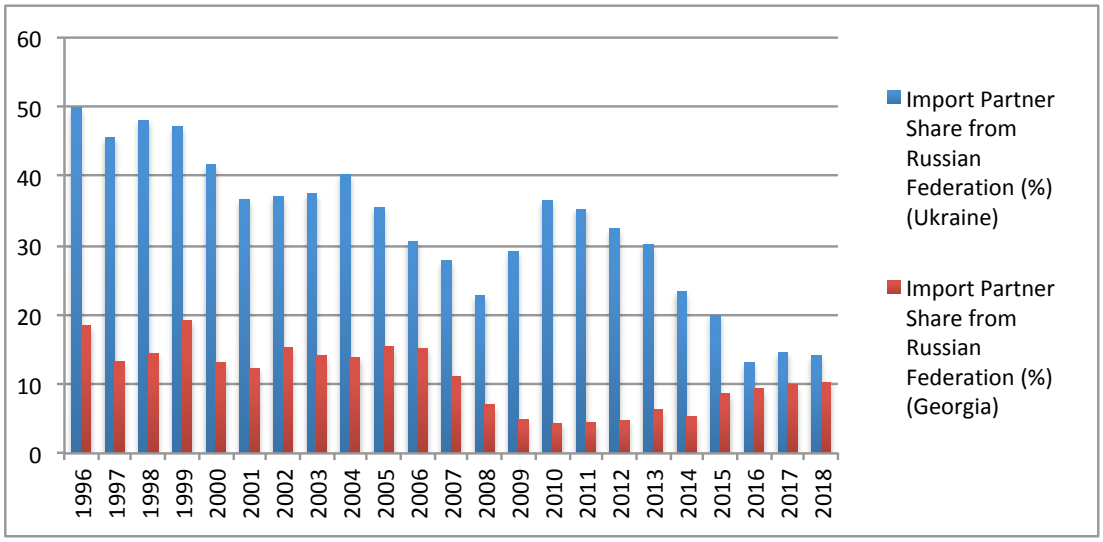
**Figure 6.4** Export Partner Share to Russian Federation (1996-2018) (%)




***Source:*** World Bank

Nevertheless, in terms of import partner share, Russia has bigger share in imports to Ukraine than Georgia as illustrated in Figure 6.5. This figure reveals that Ukraine is much more dependent on Russian products than Georgia over the years. Despite the impact of DCFTAs in decreasing Russian economic leverage over Georgia and Ukraine since 2016, Russia has continued to have significant share in imports and exports of both countries at stake.

**Figure 6.5** Import Partner Share from Russian Federation (1996-2018)



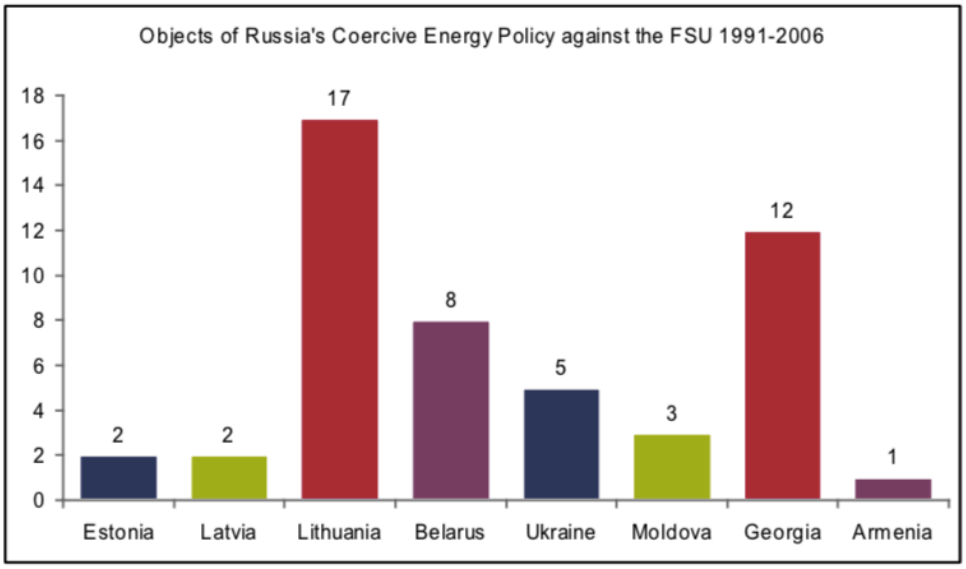

***Source:*** World Bank Data, available at: https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/GEO/StartYear/1996/EndYear/2018/TradeFlow/Import/Partner/RUS/Indicator/MPRT-PRTNR-SHR#

Energy leverage is another way that Russia has used as a powerful lever to influence its neighbours through total or partial supply interruptions, covert or overt threats of supply interruptions and coercive pricing policy i.e. usage of prices as reward or punishment.[544] The roots of this leverage traced back to the Soviet era, when the country's Union Republics were knit together by a network of gas pipelines fed by Russia as only one supplier.[545] Thus, they had no alternative to Russian energy. Indeed, today, this is true for some former Soviet Union states. Figure 6.5 illustrates the total number of incidents of Russia's coercive energy policy against former Soviet Union countries, that have occurred between 1991-2006.

[544] Larsson, Robert L, and Jakob Hedenskog. "Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States," 2007. p.61 For further information, see for example: Adam Stuhlberg, *Well-Oiled Diplomacy: Strategic Manipulation And Russia's Energy Statecraft In Eurasia* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), and Marshall I Goldman, *Petrostate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[545] Randall E. Newnham, "Georgia On My Mind? Russian Sanctions And The End Of The 'Rose Revolution'", *Journal Of Eurasian Studies* 6, no. 2 (2015): 161-170, doi:10.1016/j.euras.2015.03.008.

**Figure 6.6** Number of incidents of Russia's coercive energy policy against the former members of Soviet Union period




**N.B. Sabotages not included**

***Source*:** Larsson and Hedenskog, "Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States," 50

As illustrated from the figure above, Georgia is the second country that has faced Russia's coercive energy policy tools from sabotages to cutting gas supplies. After Rose Revolution, during Saakashvili's first term (2004-2008), Georgia faced with many incidents of sanctions in the field of energy supply. At this period, Georgia was subjected to massive gas price increases. A striking example is in November 2005 when Gazprom decided to raise gas prices for Georgia to nearly twofold by portraying this increase as a normal price increase designed to bring Georgia in line with "prices charged to Moscow's West European purchasers" -world market price-.[546] President Saakashvili claimed that this decision was purely politically grounded and emphasized that "the increase in the price of gas will hit the Georgian economy, but it will not suppress the democratic mood…Russian companies are the major gas consumers in Georgia and they will suffer most of all."[547] This attempt of gas prices was also strengthened with Russian threats to cut gas supply. It is not surprising that these threats came just before the meeting of the CIS Energy Council in Tbilisi. As a

[546] Newnham, "Georgia on My Mind? Russian Sanctions and the End of the 'Rose Revolution,'" 164
[547] civil.ge, "Saakashvili: Increase Of Gas Price Will Hit Georgia'S Economy", 2005, https://civil.ge/archives/109305.

result, Georgia accepted all of Russia's conditions for entering the CIS united energy market without any reservations.[548]

Georgia had faced negative consequences of being heavily dependent on natural gas supplied by Russia. In 2006, it was left without natural gas for two weeks due to damage of pipeline. This increased concerns to diversify the supply sources. Thanks to Georgia's geographical position, Azerbaijan was able to replace Russia's gas supplies. In 2018, 97% of the primary gas supply was received from Azerbaijan while 2.5% of natural gas was imported from Russia.[549]

Ukraine also faced similar threats increasingly after Orange Revolution. As mentioned in the previous chapters, notable examples of these incidents happened when Kiev faced the cutting of gas supply in the winters of 2006, 2009 and again in 2014, which had severe impact on consumers not only in Ukraine but also in all other countries downstream from Ukraine gas. The most striking one was happened in fall 2013 Russia threatened to demand advance payment for all the gas supply to Ukraine during the winter 2013-2014 unless Ukraine backed out of signing the Association Agreement with EU. This threat became successful and as Yanukovych decided not to sign the Association Agreement on 21 November 2013.

Georgia's reliance on Russian energy resources was low compared to Ukraine, as Georgia could be able to diversify its imports from Azerbaijan and Iran respectively while Ukraine as the greatest importers had no option other than to import from Russia due to lack of physical ability to find alternative import routes. In fact, starting in 2008, Georgia was able to buy its natural gas from Azerbaijan, which greatly helped both states and cut Moscow out of the process. With this strategic attempt, Georgia benefitted from lower, stable energy prices compared those put by Gazprom.[550] In terms of energy dependency, it could be said that Russia does not play a significant role in Georgia's import of electricity and natural gas since according to the latest figures, in 2019, the share of electricity imported from Russia

[548] Larsson and Hedenskog, "Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States," 52
[549] Teimuraz Gochitashvili, "Oil And Gas Sector Of Georgia In The Transition Period" (Tbilisi: Meridian Publishing House, 2020), http://weg.ge/sites/default/files/book_4_25_21.03.2020.pdf. 17

[550] Newnham, "Georgia on My Mind? Russian Sanctions and the End of the 'Rose Revolution,'"165

was up to 4% in total electricity consumption of Georgia, while the share of gas imported from Russia was 1.7% of Georgia's total gas consumption.

On the other hand, Ukraine's reliance on Russian natural gas was high indicating a strong level of dependence with very limited domestic supplies. According to figures, three quarters of its natural gas was received from Russian pipelines.[551] Bearing this leverage in mind, Russia used energy policy against Ukraine either as "carrots" to support pro-Russian governments in Ukraine or as "sticks" to punish anti-Russian moves of governments.[552] Obviously, while Russia used economic and energy leverage with economic incentives to support the friendly Kuchma regime such as keeping gas prices absurdly low and allowing natural gas from Turkmenistan through Russian pipeline system etc., after Orange revolution, Russia put sanctions systematically to undermine Ukrainian economy during the Yushchenko years as witnessed with quadrupled price for Ukraine's natural gas bill overnight after fifteen years of stable prices. Thus, Ukraine economy and also politics was dependent on Russian maneuvers in the energy politics. Yet, in the recent years, Ukrainian historical dependence on natural gas from Russia has been decreasing via reverse flows from Slovakia, Poland and Hungary to Ukraine and energy market reforms needed by the EU starting from 2014.[553]

Overall, both Ukraine and Georgia have been facing Russian leverage in all terms since their independence. The degree of this leverage is dependent on the certain developments as well as specific domestic conditions of each country. It can be argued that regarding current positions of Ukraine and Georgia having DCFTAs with the EU, Russian economic and trade leverage over these countries is not high as happened previously. As the main trade partner of both countries since 2016 when DCFTAs came into force is the EU, dependency on Russian market has decreased, which in turn has made Russian economic sanctions ineffective. For example, while Russia was the third largest foreign direct investor

[551] Randall E. Newnham, "Pipeline Politics: Russian Energy Sanctions And The 2010 Ukrainian Elections", *Journal Of Eurasian Studies* 4, no. 2 (2013): 115-122, doi:10.1016/j.euras.2013.03.001.
[552] Newnham, "Pipeline Politics: Russian Energy Sanctions And The 2010 Ukrainian Elections", 116.

[553] "Ukraine", Eia.Gov, accessed 4 January 2021, https://www.eia.gov/international/analysis/country/UKR. For further information on the latest developments on the energy reforms, please see: Agha Bayramov and Yaroslava Marusyk, "Ukraine'S Unfinished Natural Gas And Electricity Reforms: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", *Eurasian Geography And Economics* 60, no. 1 (2019): 73-96, doi:10.1080/15387216.2019.1593210.

country in Ukraine for the years 2009-2013, this position decreased to fifth in 2014, and to the seventh between the years 2015-2019.[554] For Georgia, Russia's rank in the top 20 countries, which had direct investment within the country was the 8th between 2009-2014 whereas this position decreased to 13th in the years 2015-2016, and 12th in the years 2017-2019. The fact that Russian place was superseded by EU member states indicates the impact of DCFTA on Ukrainian and Georgian market while decreasing Russian leverage against the countries at stake. Indeed, DCFTAs are important not only for accelerating reforms in other fields than economy but also key tool offset the effects of Russia's multiple trade embargoes.

In terms of specific domestic conditions of Ukraine and Georgia, regarding the three aspects of Russian leverage i.e. political, human-based and economic discussed in this chapter, it is clear that Russia has much more leverage over Ukraine with higher amount of Russian minority inside, more constructed linkages with Russia, less alternatives for energy supply than Georgia. Even though regarding posing threats to territorial integrity of Georgia as in the cases of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Russian political leverage over Georgia is still high, in terms of economic/trade and energy leverage, Russian impact over Georgian economy and politics is lower than Ukraine. The different degree of Russian leverage over these country cases explains why the EU has chosen more frequently broader democracy promotion agenda towards Georgia than Ukraine.

### *6.3. Conclusion*

In conclusion, the results from analysis confirm two main assumptions of this research. First, the hypothesis that the EU applies broader democracy promotion agendas towards countries where the illiberal regional power has lower leverage is confirmed. Therefore, sharp changes in the EU democracy promotion agendas towards Georgia and Ukraine over years can be explained by the fact that the EU has implemented "broad democracy promotion agenda" towards these countries at the critical time periods when bilateral relations of these countries with Russia deteriorated. Immediately after those crisis period such as August 2008 War between Georgia and Russia, the Russia-Ukraine crisis in

[554] "IMF Data", Data.Imf.Org, accessed 2 January 2021, https://data.imf.org/regular.aspx?key=61227424

2014 etc., the EU has speeded up to improve its relations with Georgia and Ukraine through broader democracy promotion policies in order to construct and consolidate its presence in those states by filling political vacuum left by Russia. Second, the differentiation of EU democracy promotion agendas between Georgia and Ukraine depends on the degree of Russian leverage over the state at stake. Accordingly, the fact that Russia has lower leverage over Georgia regarding three dimensions of leverage -political, human-based, economic/trade/energy- explains why the EU has implemented more frequently and easily broad democracy promotion agenda towards Georgia than Ukraine, which Russia has higher leverage over.

# CHAPTER 7

# CONCLUSION

The EU democracy promotion policies since the emergence of its first instances in the 1990s have been transformed in accordance with the EU's deepening and widening processes. Successful transition experience of Central and Eastern European countries into democracies as a result of enlargement process has prompted the EU take more ambitious democracy promotion policies across its new neighborhood. Yet, immediate threats and security challenges such as terrorism, organized crime and illegal trafficking, which could spread from these new unstable borders, limited the EU's normative commitment to promote democracy and necessitated to find new ways of establishing "ring of friends" while securing its citizens within the borders.

In this new environment, the EU's geostrategic and security concerns have become important. Since the EU cannot keep enlarging *ad infinitum,* this new framework of neighborhood policy offered other "carrots" such as economic and financial incentives, visa liberalization, access to the market, sectoral support etc., rather than the membership perspective. The EU democracy promotion policies have also been adapted into this new reality, which in turn lead to the emergence of more flexible and "tailor-made" democracy promotion policies incorporating security concerns.

Even though statements at EU level have underlined that "tailor-made" democracy promotion policies are based on local needs and circumstances, empirical evidences have revealed that the variation in the EU democracy promotion agendas can't be relied upon only domestic conditions. Examples of the EU's differentiated democracy promotion policies towards two target countries in the same region with similar domestic conditions have entailed to pay special attention on the determinants of this variation. Besides, as relevant literature has mainly focused on the outcomes of EU democracy promotion with the successes and failures of particular agenda in a specific context, they have failed to explain the underlying motivations and factors on why the EU has chosen such particular democracy promotion agenda for the target state at stake as discussed in a detail in Chapter 2. Therefore,

this dissertation aimed to find out determinants for the variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion policies towards the target countries.

To understand the main determinants of variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion agendas, this dissertation started with exploring the most convenient theoretical approach, which could be able to explain the complexities and differences in EU democracy promotion. As a democracy promotion is a cross-sectional issue incorporating various fields of foreign policy such as economic, technical, development cooperation, humanitarian aid and security policy, this dissertation suggested that there is a need for an eclectic approach, which can make possible to grasp the EU democracy promotion at all points. In addition, since some studies in the literature discussed in Chapter 2 indicate that the EU as a pragmatic democracy promoter has fallen into the trap of "democracy-stability dilemma" in some cases, normative explanations remain incapable to grasp why the EU has applied broader democracy promotion agenda in one target state than others, or why the EU has prioritized stability over democracy in some cases. Assuming that the EU democracy promotion is motivated by a blend of both declared normative ideals/values and geopolitical interests in a complex institutional structure, this dissertation reached to the conclusion that any single theoretical approach is not capable enough to explain the EU's motivations for differentiated democracy promotion policies across countries over time. The need for an eclectic approach in analyzing the EU democracy promotion prompted to use the concept of "embedded liberal democracy" suggested by Wetzel and Orbie, which enabled to analyze differentiated EU democracy promotion policies within a holistic framework.

Using model of embedded liberal democracy as a framework allowed to set forth a general and comprehensive picture of EU democracy promotion agendas towards target states. However, this dissertation differed from Wetzel and Orbie's framework regarding the determinants to explain the variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion agendas. They suggested that the substance of EU democracy promotion depends on four factors: power asymmetries between the EU and target state, domestic conditions of the target state, the EU's internal institutional context and the interorganizational field. This dissertation argued that these factors are not capable enough to explain the variation in EU democracy promotion policies not only across target states with the similar domestic conditions and within the same policy framework but also in one target state over time.

Instead of these factors expressed by scholars, this dissertation had the aim of exploring whether illiberal regional power, who had a certain level of leverage over countries in that region, has an impact on the substance of EU democracy. Based on assumption that the variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion depends on its geostrategic considerations and regional circumstances in which the illiberal regional power(s) play a role, the research was designed to examine the EU's differentiated democracy promotion towards Ukraine and Georgia over which Russia as an illiberal regional power has leverage.

The reasons for choosing Ukraine and Georgia as cases for this research based upon the fact that both share post-Soviet legacy, similar socio-economic features, ethnic conflicts and similar political processes since their independence. In addition, Ukraine and Georgia can be described as "cross-pressured" states between the EU and Russia not only in terms of their geographical positions, but also regarding their way of foreign policy directions. Besides, since the EU's relations with both Ukraine and Georgia can be evaluated in the same framework -Eastern Partnership,- it makes more sense to compare these cases in order to prove that the variation in the EU democracy promotion does not depend on aforementioned four factors, but on the leverage of illiberal regional power.

In Chapter 3, it was intended not only to examine the transformation of the EU democracy promotion policies, tools and objectives towards post-Soviet region, but also to reveal the importance of Russia in designing these policies. In both Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, not only the evolution of EU democracy promotion policies towards that country aforementioned, but also these countries' relations with Russia and the impact of these relations on the dynamics of their domestic politics were presented.

For the Ukrainian case, two points were critically important. First, the existence of high number of Russian ethnic population in the eastern and southern part of Ukraine has had some implications not only in voting pattern during parliamentary and presidential elections but also indirectly in Ukraine's foreign policy direction towards Russia / pro-Eurasian integration or the West / pro-EU integration. Indeed, as examined in a detailed way in Chapter 4, relations with Russia have gone through ebbs and flows depending on the leaning of elected president or the government towards either the West or the East. Periodical changes in relations with Russia based on this domestic political situation aforementioned have considerable impact on relations with the EU. While Ukraine-EU relations in the aftermath of Orange Revolution during President Yuschenko era were going in a positive

direction, the election of Yanukovych as a new president demonstrating pro-Russian leanings changed the direction of Ukraine-EU relations. Second, Russian leverage over Ukraine is not limited only to the existence of Russian diaspora in the country but also manifests itself in the field of energy dependency. Ukraine's lack of alternative energy supply sources has paved the way for Russia to use energy lever as a powerful political tool -either as carrot or stick- to influence Ukraine as happened in November 2013 when Russia pressured Yanukovych not to sign Association Agreement with the EU by offering to reduce the price of natural gas, or as happened in 2006 and in 2009 when Russia cut off gas supplies for politically motivated reasons.

For Georgian case, on the other hand, pro-Western/pro-EU foreign policy direction has been followed without disruptions since its independence. Georgia's self-identification with Europe and Europeanness has manifested itself in the foreign policy direction of every government, which came to the power. Therefore, Russian political leverage over Georgia is lower compared to Ukrainian case. This has had some implications for the relations with the EU in general and the EU democracy promotion policies in specific.

Overall, analysis of the substance of EU democracy promotion within the framework of model of embedded liberal democracy indicated that the EU has changed the democracy promotion policies at critical turning points in which the condition of relations between Russia as an illiberal regional power and Ukraine/Georgia are changed sharply towards either positive or negative side. Between 2004 and 2016, seven critical turning points in which the substance of EU democracy promotion towards Ukraine/Georgia changed considerably, were propounded.[555] First turning point happened immediately after 'Rose Revolution' in Georgia in 2003, 'Orange Revolution' in Ukraine in 2004, when the EU's interest over the region has increased due to not only apparent public demands for democracy in those countries but also the EU's increased concerns for peace and security and need for taking more active role in the region. Following the largest enlargement wave in 2004 and the democratic developments in the region, the EU had faced the need to build deeper political and economic relationship between the EU and its neighbours as well as supporting them in their transition to democracy. Yet, as different from approach applied to candidate countries, the EU introduced European Neighbourhood Policy as a comprehensive

[555] This was illustrated in Figure 6.1 on page 183.

framework offering some economic and financial incentives rather than membership perspective. As it is clear in the statements of EU officials underlined in Chapter 6, the EU aimed to intensify its efforts with stronger incentives in order to establish "ring of friends" in its neighbourhood.

Second turning point was the period of the years 2005-2008 when Russia applied trade embargoes on Georgian products for politically motivated reasons since Saakashvili's pro-European foreign policy direction was regarded as threat for Russian interests in the region. As clearly indicated in Chapter 6, share of food products exports in total Georgian manufactured exports was considerably high, which clearly manifests that any ban over exports of food products could damage heavily Georgian economy. Indeed, figures showed that Russia had substantial economic and energy leverage over Georgia during this period. Strikingly, in line with the hypothesis of this dissertation, the EU followed shallow democracy promotion agenda towards Georgia between 2005-2008 by only focusing on the improving context conditions of embedded liberal democracy. Lack of membership perspective in the framework of relations with Georgia despite consistent demands of Georgian political elites on this, hindered the EU leverage against Russian leverage over the country.

Third and fourth critical turning points started with August 2008 War between Georgia and Russia, which necessitated the EU take a more active role in the region. As emphasized in Chapter 6, the EU officials declared that the EU would offer not only political support to secure a peaceful solution to the conflict in Georgia, but also economic support for reconstruction and state-building. Therefore, the conflict between Georgia and Russia paved the way for the EU to strengthen its presence on the ground through comprehensive policy program. Indeed, during the post-war period, the EU applied broad democracy promotion agenda toward Georgia with increased amount of funding as in line with the hypothesis of this dissertation. For Ukraine, Russia used its energy leverage over the country between 2006 and 2009 through increasing gas prices and cutting off the gas supply. In 2008, the relations between Ukraine and Russia deteriorated due to Russia's accusation that Ukraine supported Georgia through selling weapons during Russo-Georgian War in August 2008. Critically important, in such an environment and time period when Russian leverage over Ukraine was high, the EU tried to increase its presence in Ukraine through improving economic and trade relations. Indeed, in 2008, there was no reference to the promoting

democracy in all agreements with Ukraine yet through all allocated funding in the ENPI Annual Action Programme, it was intended to remove technical barriers to trade between the EU and Ukraine. What matters for this research is that the EU applied shallow democracy promotion agenda toward Ukraine in 2008, which supports the hypothesis.

The fifth point referred the period when Georgia-Russia relations started to be normalized following Georgia's 2012 parliamentary elections, which brought the Georgian Dream coalition to power. The normalization policy of new government updated the trade relations with Russia. Indeed, Moscow's decision to remove trade ban Georgian products in the late 2012 not only made Russia again as one of the major trade partners but also renewed and increased Russian leverage over Georgia. In line with the hypothesis of this research, the EU applied shallow democracy promotion agenda in Georgia in 2012 when Russian political and economic leverage over Georgia was significantly high.

The sixth turning point was the period of Ukraine-Russia crisis and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. As happened in Georgia-Russia war in August 2008, the EU attempted to increase its presence on ground not only through mediatory efforts to propose solutions for the crisis but also through huge amount of funding allocated to Ukraine. Indeed, the EU officials declared that it offered the biggest support package in the EU history. The crisis between Russia and Ukraine became an impetus for the EU to speed up the strengthening the political association and economic integration with Ukraine. As in line with the hypothesis of this research, the EU applied broad democracy promotion agenda toward Ukraine in 2014 when the relations between Ukraine and Russia were turned into the conflict.

The last turning point referred the new period of both countries with signing Association Agreements with DCFTAs. This signifies the beginning of the period not only legal approximation of countries to EU standards, rules and regulations but also increasing EU presence in these countries. Through DFTAs, Russia's place in Ukrainian and Georgian market has been superseded by EU member states, which is key to decrease Russian leverage over the countries at stake.

Not only content analysis of official documents part of democracy promotion policies, but also formal/informal statements of officials during these critical time periods

supported the argument of this dissertation that Russia as an illiberal regional power has had an impact on changing democracy promotion agendas.

Two conclusions can be drawn from this analysis. First, as a geopolitical motive, it is clear that the EU has benefited from the political vacuum due to the crises between Russia and Ukraine or Russia and Georgia and tried to fill this political vacuum via democracy promotion policies. Since the EU is able to manifest its actorness abroad through generally two ways i.e. either via economic and trade policies as being the largest market or model of political reforms and democracy promotion policies with its soft power, the EU has used both ways to strengthen its presence in these countries. When Russian leverage over these states decreased due to clash of interests, the EU chose to strengthen its presence through broader democracy promotion agendas with increased funding and more meaningful "carrots" for Ukraine and Georgia. Second, as a normative motive, the EU implemented democracy promotion policies in order to prevent the possible damage to the institutions of these countries at the stage of democratization in the face of Russian aggression, democracy backsliding of these countries and surely to avoid the negative consequences for the security and stability in the EU.

One of limitations of this research, which needs to be considered is the difficulty to put some EU policies and projects under the specific component of embedded liberal democracy concept while constituting general framework of the substance of EU democracy promotion within the model of embedded liberal democracy. In other words, it is not easy to draw boundaries that determine the extent such EU policy focuses on that specific component unless it is not indicated with emphasis as determined and declared objective of that EU policy/programme. Thus, this dissertation did not take into account those policies with no/very little focus on democracy promotion.

Because this thesis was primarily concerned with analyzing the variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion, the main focus was on the role of Russia as critical player to change dynamics in the region, which at certain time periods, gives room for increasing EU presence in the region. Yet, this study has another limitation on explanatory power in terms of the role of illiberal regional power on democratization process of target state. In other words, it does not answer the question that to what extent that the EU democracy promotion in both Ukraine and Georgia is successful even in the face of

decreased Russian leverage. In fact, current democracy situation of Ukraine and Georgia gives some clues about this question. As Richard Youngs claimed a decade ago, even if the EU is successful in exporting its values, this rarely leads to actual democratization in any meaningful way in the targeted countries.[556] This can be seen from the consolidation of democracy scores of both Ukraine and Georgia.

One possible reason for this failure is because the EU has chosen to concentrate almost exclusively on political and socio-economic objectives, and to avoid developing security and defense partnerships with its eastern neighbours. Since pillar of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) falls under the competences of both member states and the EU institutions, developing a common policy under this policy, which meets national interests of all member states in that specific region is hard. Therefore, historical processes mentioned in this dissertation showed that the EU has refrained from being a part of conflicts rather has had increasing mediatory role in the conflicts for the sake of security and stability of the region. Yet, in a region where Russia as an aggressive neighbour poses immediate threats to stateness of these countries through escalating 'frozen conflict' and its ways of 'hybrid war', it is highly difficult that the EU democracy promotion policies become successful in transforming the governance. One policy implication for the EU to have an active and effective actorness is that it has to prioritize the establishment of security and defence partnerships in the region, which can support stateness of these countries that is *sine qua non* of their survival. By sharing the views of Margrietus van den Berg, rapporteur of European Parliament, that "responsibility for good governance and effective aid is shared by the donor community and the developing countries themselves; 'it takes two to tango'",[557] this dissertation revealed that there is one player -illiberal regional power-, who shapes the conditions of scene, where 'tango is played.'

This dissertation has contributed to existing knowledge in the EU democracy promotion literature. First, on the empirical level, this dissertation has offered a

[556] Youngs, "Democracy Promotion As External Governance?"

[557] EU Parliamentary debates on "Aid effectiveness and corruption in developing countries," 6 April 2006, Strasbourg, Margietus van den Berg (European Parliament), available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20060406+ITEM-005+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN&query=INTERV&detail=4-026

comprehensive mapping of the variation in EU democracy promotion agendas to Ukraine and Georgia yearly. This is significant in terms of revealing the changing of the EU democracy promotion policies rather than putting one general label for democracy promotion agenda toward case for the whole period analyzed as done in previous studies. Second, it has provided a new insight into the importance of geopolitics on the substance of the EU's differentiated democracy promotion agendas. It has departed from the previous studies, which have focused only on the agencies of the EU with its member states and the target states in determining the substance of EU democracy promotion policies. However, this dissertation has improved our understanding on the role of illiberal regional actors on the EU's way of conducting its democracy promotion agendas.

Further to this study, it is the intention of the present writer to conduct more research on the impact of illiberal regional power on the substance of EU democracy promotion agendas towards other countries. It is believed that analyzing Russian impact on the substance of EU democracy promotion agendas towards other two key countries in the same region within the same framework of Eastern Partnership would be appropriate to test the hypothesis of the dissertation. For that reason, Armenia and Belarus as two countries in Eastern Partnership, which have had pro-Russian foreign policy discourses since their independence are found to be very good study cases. Since Russian leverage over Armenia and Belarus is higher than Ukraine and Georgia, analyzing variation in the substance of EU democracy promotion would extend this study while testing the assumption that the more Russian leverage over the target state(s), the more the EU uses shallow democracy promotion agenda.

Lastly, future research into the variation in substance of EU democracy promotion policies might usefully focus in particular on the role of different illiberal regional power(s) in other contexts such as North Africa in which the EU's differentiated democracy promotion agendas can be observable not only over time but also in the cross-country manner. It is highly relevant to investigate whether the EU has changed its democracy promotion agendas across similar cases in North Africa over time (for instance; pre- and post-Arab Spring periods) depending on which factors (i.e. domestic conditions, illiberal regional powers, or other geostrategic and security concerns).

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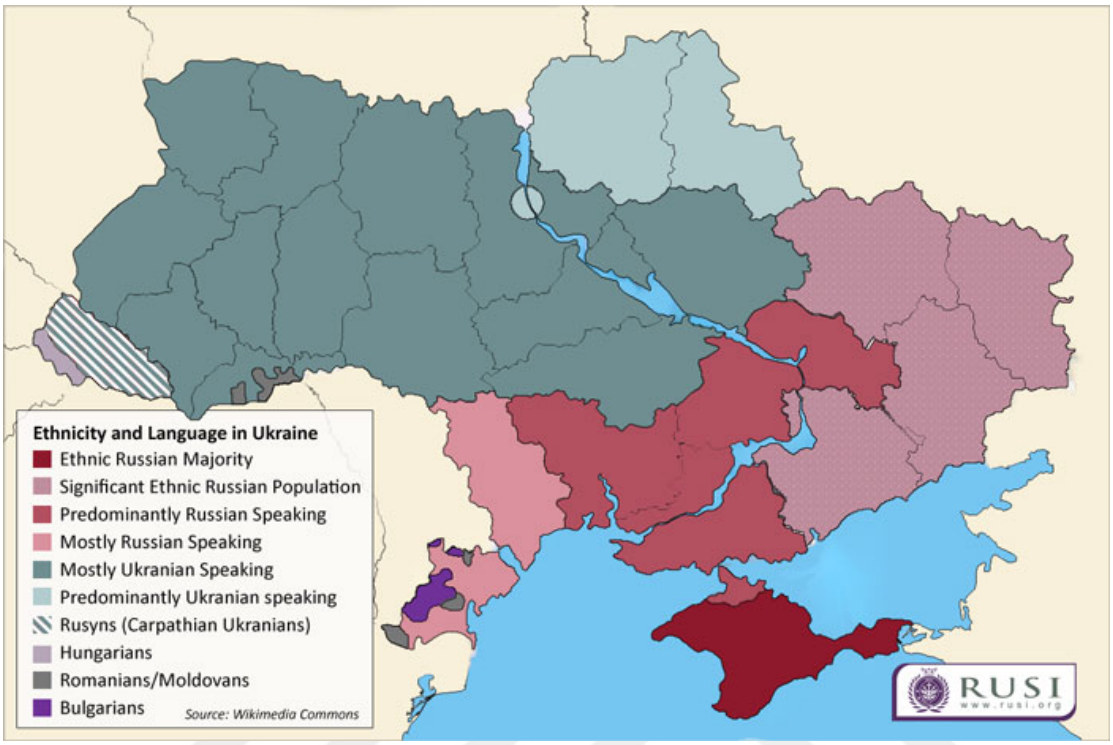
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## ANNEX.

**Map 4.1 Regional divisions of population in Ukraine by ethnicity and language**




**Source.** Janet Gunn, Ethnicity and Language in Ukraine, 12 March 2014, https://rusi.org/commentary/ethnicity-and-language-ukraine