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EU's Enlargement and Bordering: The European Neighbourhood Policy and the EU's Notion of Territorial Cohesion

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Contents

Zusammenfassung

EU-Erweiterung und Grenzziehungen: die Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik und der EU-Begriff vom territorialen Zusammenhalt

Die EU-Erweiterung von 2004 war ein wichtiger und mutiger Schritt, der zum Ziel hatte, die Voraussetzungen für die Förderung von Sicherheit, Wohlstand und regionaler

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Zusammenarbeit in Europa zu schaffen. Allerdings nahm nach diesem Prozess die Diskussion um die europäische Raumentwicklungspolitik einen ‚territorialen' Charakter an. Der Begriff der Territorialität und der dominant ‚territoriale' Diskurs überschatteten offensichtlich jenen Begriff von ‚europäischem Raum' wie er in den frühen 1990er Jahren entwickelt worden war. Die gleichen EU-Konzepte von Erweiterung und politischer Integration brachten ein scharfes System von Inklusion und Exklusion hervor, definiert durch den Status der Vollmitgliedschaft und durch befestigte, überwachte und zunehmend militarisierte Außengrenzen. Wegen dieser pragmatischen Auffassung von Territorialität und von Grenzen wurde die Idee von der EU als einem ‚nicht-Westfälischen neuen Reich', bestimmt durch das Abschwächen von Grenzen und das Teilen politischer Macht durch eine vielfältige Politik auf mehreren Ebenen, unrealistisch – wie die jüngste Migrationskrise auch zeigt.

Schlagwörter: EU-Erweiterung, Grenzen, räumlicher Zusammenhalt, Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik, Flüchtlingskrise

Summary

The EU's enlargement of 2004 was a relevant and courageous step aiming at the creation of conditions for the promotion of security, prosperity and regional co-operation in Europe. However, after that process the European spatial development policy discourse has taken a 'territorial' character. The notion of territoriality and the prevalent 'territorial' discourse produced an evident eclipse of the notion of 'European space' that had been developed in the early 1990s. The same EU's concepts of enlargement and political integration produced a sharp system of inclusion and exclusion, defined by full membership status and by fortified, scrutinised and increasingly militarised external borders. Due to this pragmatic notion of territoriality and boundaries, the idea of the EU as a 'non-Westphalian new empire', characterised by softening of borders and sharing of political power across multiple and multilevel politics became unrealistic, as shown by the recent migrant crisis.

Keywords: EU's enlargement, borders, territorial cohesion, European Neighbourhood Policy, migration crisis

1 Introduction

After the European Union's (EU's) eastern enlargement, the European spatial development policy discourse, which means debates, policy-making concerning development, planning policies and strategic visioning, has taken a territorial character. Despite the fact that terminology regarding this policy field remains ambiguous, territory has become de facto an increasingly prevalent notion in the discourse on the organisation of 'European' (i.e., EU's) space. In fact, the notion of territoriality and the prevalent 'territorial' discourse produced an evident eclipse of the notion of *European space* (in terms of post-Westphalian 'de-territorialisation') that had been developed in the early 1990s. This process is probably

an inevitable consequence of the EU's concepts of enlargement and political integration, based on a sharp system of inclusion and exclusion, defined by full membership status and by fortified, scrutinised and increasingly militarised external borders as expression of an old conception of territoriality and territorial integrity.

In recent years have appeared even the European spatial policy concepts of *territorial cohesion, territorial governance* and *territorial development policy*. As a result, the EU's predominant spatial conception contributes to an emergence of a sharpened territorial building of the European space. The idea of both t*erritorial cohesion* and *territorial continuity*[1)] provides relevant insights into the notion of territoriality in the 'European discourse' and consequently clearly shows how are accepted the tools of hard bordering (as policies and practices) and the sharp inside/outside dichotomy, typical of a 'Westphalian memory' and of a use of territory as support for a new, unified political unit.

Due to this pragmatic notion of *territoriality* the popular idea of the EU as a 'non-Westphalian new empire', characterised by the softening of borders and sharing of political power across multiple and multilevel politics, became at least unrealistic as shown by the recent migrant crisis. Indeed, EU's borders – based on these territorial conceptions – are getting more territorial, physical and visible. This is surprising, since Europe has always been distinguished by its openness to the rest of the world. It has never been a clearly demarcated continent similar to a great state or a fixed-bordered entity and it has always been characterised by shifting spatialities of politics.

Pre-modern territories were characterised by variety, fluidity, 'non-territoriality' in the modern sense of the word, or "nonexclusive" territoriality (Ruggie 1993; Anderson 1996, p. 141). The territorialisation of politics has implied a long-term process of the creation of 'internal' and 'external' state borders.

It is well known that the Middle Ages in Europe were characterised by overlapping, divided authority structures and often contentious jurisdictions without territorial containments and a clear notion of the external border. Before the 16th century, neither the sovereign territorial state (with its typical spatial feature), nor a system of international politics based primarily upon such states existed. Before the European state building, there was no clear distinction between domestic politics and international relations. Europeans have for many centuries moved freely over each other's lands, contributing their distinctive patterns to the cultures of different countries. Europe has always been transnational, especially in the multinational empires that occupied much of its space until the 19th century (Lieven 2001). The space of empire created permeable and fluid boundaries that allowed for a considerable mingling of peoples, including those of non-European origin.

There have been many cultural groups, who have made major contributions to the cultures of European lands. The Jews are one example considering Central and Eastern Europe. Muslims are another, in the form of Arabs in Spain and in Sicily [Sicilia]. And what about Mongols in Russia or Turks in the Balkans? European culture would have been immeasurably different, not to say infinitely poorer, without them. Europe has an

[1)] The European debates on the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad (former Königsberg), at the same time an enclave in the enlarged EU, clearly represent the vitality and the emergence of this concept.

intrinsic historical openness and cannot be understood with a definite beginning or end. It has never been a clearly demarcated continent or a fixed-bordered entity and it has always been characterised by shifting spatiality. As it is well known, the Mediterranean once was a bridge of civilisations between Europe, Africa and Asia. Only recently, it became a European periphery and border zone. Similarly, EU's eastern border is quite recent and it replies that of the Iron Curtain, even if it is located on a more eastern, new line. For centuries, East-Central European countries had loose border areas and marches rather than sealed types of borders.

The main change in the political structure of Europe was the creation and the spread of firm territorial boundary lines between political formations. The most distinct feature of modernity in international politics came to be a particular form of territorially-disjoint, fixed and mutually exclusive – as the basis for organising political life. Historical regions, mostly spontaneous, were forced to adopt these lines and a specific form of 'spatial extension' of the states, strongly connected to an inclusive base of legitimacy, mutual exclusion and a gradual differentiation between internal and external as 'natural' and inevitable.

In fact, this process was unique in human history (SACK 1986). Within the Westphalian order, states are said to be composed of self-enclosed and contiguous territorial space. The norms of the Westphalian system rapidly came to favour coherent territorial entities that had a degree of effective control of the internal space. Certain of the forces active in the constitution of the state system are not merely historical, but are still at work in it. In short, there is a strong tendency in the modern international system to reinforce exclusive territorial governance. Supranational agencies such as the EU are limited to specific functions and are legitimated and backed by modern territorial states. Moreover, EU as a political space is territorially ambiguous. Regulatory decrees are trans-European. Membership is nation-state based. As a result, the EU's drive to 're-territorialise' is not a mere academic question: This kind of neo-Westphalian process has very real consequences for our lives and for peoples, places, states, regions and especially for those people beyond the border. The process of 're-territorialisation' may hinder both interaction and co-operation across the EU's external borders and stimulate many problems and political difficulties.

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), developed in eastern direction after 2009, has been a significant dynamic counter-tendency to hard bordering and strong territorial enclosure. In spite of all efforts, however, the ENP has been unable to contrast the main structural EU's tendency towards re-territorialisation and bordering. Probably, the European Union is currently undergoing a process of sharpening its territorial profile[2)], which manifests itself in different ways, especially in its external dimension.

[2)] The EU is hardening its external borders. This is the case with the Polish-Russian border region at the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad. (The project will be paid by the EU's External Borders Fund.) The same is happening in the case of the Bulgarian-Turkish, Estonian-Russian and Greek-Turkish borders. Hungary is now erecting a 13-foot high fence along its 109-mile southern border with Serbia (who is hoping to join the EU).

2 The Eastern Enlargement of 2004 as a decisive and courageous step: achievements and problems

The EU's enlargement of 2004 was a relevant and courageous step aiming at the creation of a new security and prosperity space particularly for countries (both of the 'internal' and 'external' empire) of the former Soviet bloc (Borkowski 2009, pp. 191–192, 195–200). They participate in different supranational and regional international forms of co-operation implying a concrete logic of shared institutions and powers, governance and embryonic continental sovereignty, which remains in public discourse the goal to achieve.

Without any doubt, this step was deeply influential. It included normative concepts and ideals as democracy, equality, fairness, justice, security, respect for human dignity, liberty, the rule of law, pluralism, non-discrimination, citizenship and sharing of mutual prosperity and peace. However, after the enlargement it became impossible to maintain the previous situation in Eastern Europe considering the improving of EU's institutional structures, external borders and the reality of a new territorial and political union. In its foreign policy, the Union is committed to overcoming rather than stimulating divisions in Europe. Its policy of enlargement, in particular, is said to be about inclusion rather than exclusion. But hardening of the EU's external borders is clearly in conflict with these principles (Zielonka 2002).

States outside the EU's boundary are in a difficult situation because of the prevalent concept of border in Europe and the accession criteria imposed by the Union. Face to face with the enlarged Europe, the great challenges of the enlargement and its costs in terms of difficulties in transborder co-operation, trade and collaboration arise. Today it is possible to evaluate the reality after the 2004 enlargement, when the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Malta, Cyprus, Slovenia and three former Soviet republics, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, joined the EU's space.

3 EU's enlargement and bordering

In fact, the removal of internal borders within the EU and the opening of a common market were accompanied by a continuous strengthening and by an increasing importance of external borders (Ibryamova 2004). The creation of an integrated space with economic and social cohesion was followed by acts and policies to demarcate, border and protect the common European space (Geddes 2001; Zielonka 2006) through a de facto 're-territorialisation' of the EU's space. As a result, the EU's concept of political integration, based on a rigorous system of inclusion and exclusion, defined by full membership status and fortified external borders, became an instrument of an old concept of territoriality. The Maastricht Treaty (1992) clearly established an increasing relevance of the EU's territorial basis. Commission's officials clearly stated that the dismantling of Europe's internal borders made it necessary to make sure that the controls at the external borders of their shared territory were reliable (Islam 1994, p. 40).

As a result, the EU's system is characterised, much more than in the past, by a territorially fixed political community. Several developments in the European Union after the first enlargement, such as the widening of the Schengen area[3], the Lisbon Treaty[4], and the Frontex agency, show that the territorial concept, in a modern geographical sense, is still important, influential and seems to evolve towards a polity with 'Westphalian' characteristics. Most of the member states wanted to move the Community towards a closer economic and political union. 'Internal cohesion' became one of the pillars of the Community's structure (FITZGERALD & MICHIE 1997, p. 20).

Moreover, the security discourse still prevails over the economic integrationist one that dominated European politics till the last enlargement round. Within the security discourse there is a tension between "security through inclusion" and "security through exclusion". According to David NEWMAN (2006, p. 88), "re-territorialisation" offers a means of interpreting the EU's structure. It takes place at the level of high politics and is manifested by physical borders and visa regimes. The EU as an expanding political project is actively engaging in processes of bordering.

4 The notion of *European territoriality*

The consolidation of the EU has underpinned dramatic transformations of political space. The prevailing discourse about the European spatial development is increasingly littered by references to territory, territoriality and territorial cohesion in terms of social (the European welfare), political, cultural, mental and physical space. The spatial dimension manifests itself most clearly in the drawing of territorial boundaries that separate the inside from the outside. Already in the Constitution's provisions (OFFICE FOR OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2005), the themes of territoriality and territorial cohesion recur again and again. The cohesion of its territory is explicitly posited as codified and institutionalised, something "to be reinforced" (BURGESS 2009, p. 148).[5]

Nowadays the European Commission conceptualises the EU as a demarcated area with a clear inside and outside, surrounded by a "ring of friends" (EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2003).[6] The contemporary dominant discourse and metaphors on the EU's political geographical nature are still clearly territorial. The creation of a single space triggered a wish

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[3] The new focus on the controlling of the EU's external borders was also triggered by the Schengen Treaties (ALBRECHT 2002, p. 1).

[4] The contemporary tendency towards a Europe with a Constitution, President, Minister of Foreign Affairs and above all a clearly demarcated territory with a sharp inside/outside dichotomy, borders as barriers, is going on. It represents a project of a very restricted and closed EU (BOEDELTJE & VAN HOUTUM 2008, p. 361). Control of the EU's external borders and the struggle against irregular immigration occupies a prominent position in the Hague's Programme's goal of "Strengthening freedom, security and justice in the EU", which was ratified by the European Council in 2004.

[5] Among the objectives formulated in Title 1 is the promotion of economic, social and **territorial** cohesion (BURGESS 2009, p. 148; OFFICE FOR OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2005, p. 17).

[6] This document refers to the European territory as a clearly demarcated space and uses the definitions "Within and beyond the new borders of the Union" and the concept "Ring of friends".

to demarcate and border the European political space and entity (Islam 1994, p. 38). A new common external border was needed to protect the entire Union (Geddes 2001; Harvey 2000) and the external borders have been increasingly policed (Albrecht 2002) representing a clear conception of hard territoriality.

Concerns about the safety of the Union rose quickly in the 1990's. The EU is now a territorial structure with policing of its physical external borders, walls, hardware and internal surveillance of the territory, strong immigration laws and a protectionist policy, especially concerning agriculture. Membership of and belonging to the EU automatically creates exclusion, and it is necessary to remember that the right to control and deny admission of foreigners is often seen as crucial to a nation state's sovereignty and territorial integrity (Leitner 1995, p. 261). As wrote Colin Harvey, "supranationalism" requires a process of boundary drawing just as much as nationalism (Harvey 2000, p. 374).[7] It is due to the fact that the supranational approach taken in the construction of a unified European space mimics the nation-state, re-territorialising the European space within a framework of territorial states. As Preuss has pointed out (Preuss 1998), territoriality becomes the basic means of citizenship in Europe. As a result, remapping a political community "supranationalism" is not antithetical to the Westphalian concept of modern territoriality (as the federal approach): It contains all the main concepts of *jus publicum europaeum* including a hierarchical idea of levels of government with competencies (foreign policy, migration and trade policy, transborder co-operation and so on) shifted from national state to EU-level (including sovereignty, which is antithetical to the federal paradigm) and the borders in the modern sense. The paradox of supranationalism lies in the fact that while questioning the nation state, it also re-inforces the role of the state in the building of a political Europe. EU's space has become the projection of the nation state onto a transnational scale. Empirical evidence suggests that states remain the driving force of the EU.

Moreover, it is worth to remember that the EU is a product and a legacy of the Cold War. Bipolarity brought about the maximum level of politicisation through hierarchisation. The bipolar world divided Europe into East and West, a divide fortified until recently by the European Community and the European Union. It is de facto a Western European club based on a bipolar concept of *Western civilisation*, from which eastern Europe was excluded. In fact, the EU preserves in its DNA a project depending on a bipolar world. The territorial prerequisite of EU and the prevalent idea of borders is a mirror of the bipolar origin of this 'new Europe'. The interactions between a hegemonic core and the 'peripheries' – as they are played out, for instance, in the politics of EU's enlargement, are yet another element in the EU's political architecture.

It is not surprising that the demarcation, bordering and securing of the common European space became the permanent conception of scholars, politicians and of the media. Bordering is driven mostly by fear of crime and the need to be amongst 'ourselves',

[7] Harvey adds that a boundary between "us" and "them" and the construction of the mechanism to ensure inclusion cannot be wished away, because it is the consequence of the ambitious aims of the EU (Harvey 2000, p. 374).

hence protecting welfare, security and identity (VAN HOUTUM & PIJPERS 2007, p. 303). The EU aspires to become an international actor by extending its institutional power and superimposing its borders on the already existing state borders of European nation states. Even though some scholars claim external borders of EU as "undefined external boundaries" (e.g., WALLACE 1999, p. 519), these borders maintain a clear function of barrier. The modern characteristics of EU's external border appear by the attempt to sharply separate between internal 'law and order' of the internal space (*Innenraum*) and the outside dimension to which all the 'disorder' is to be expelled, which cannot be assimilated. This is the typical logic of the modern state: ensuring the 'order' inside the political community and expelling 'disorder' to the outside. Indeed, in Europe in the past the state was considered to be the ultimate power that could impose order within a territory.

The EU's borders are evidently still characterised by a "Westphalian memory" in the way to use the territory as support of political unity (BADIE 1995; REUT 2000) and correspond to the modern idea of "political territorial exclusivity" (sovereignty).[8)] For many years, Brussels demanded that candidate states transformed their borders into a more rigid barrier – otherwise the political 'centre' did not let them enter in a Union based on a precise and contingent territory. This territorial conception caused through the years an 'involution' of the border and rendered the borders as impermeable and certainly not 'fuzzy frontier zones'.[9)] This process reflects the conception of creating a big self-sufficient, autarcic area, closed by a customs and boundary belt, which existed already in the Cold-War period and reminds of the ideal of the 'FICHTEan' *geschlossene Handelsstaat*, a territorially closed and mercantilist area.[10)]

Although the EU is acknowledged to be a political hybrid, which eludes to conventional categories of national political organisation, and the EU's territoriality is still less fixed and exclusive than that of modern states and progresses in a complex, multifaceted

8) "The Westphalian model of international political life presumes a notion of hard borders." (MOSTOV 2008, p. 20).

9) In the academic debate on the future of the EU, reference has been made to the experience of the Holy Roman Empire (SCHMITTER 2000). Some commentators have seen the Hanseatic League as a model that may be useful as a way to thinking about the European Union (PICHIERRI 1997). Actually, in many ways the League looks like a surprisingly modern organisation echoing forms of supranational governance today. But at that time there was a plurality of political subjects very different in form, substance and objectives: the Empire, the Church and small, totally unrealised sovereignties. The difference between the Hanseatic League and the EU is enormous. The 'supraterritoriality' of the League (of medieval kind) became a disadvantage the more the principle of territorial sovereignty took hold. The League's fundamental principle of governance relied on a European political system that was not territorially exclusive (RUGGIE 1993; SPRUYT 1994). The Holy Roman Empire cannot be an example for the contemporary European political space. In my opinion, referring back to the medieval past does not provide us with the analytical insights to gain an understanding of the contemporary EU's transformation and future European structures.

10) Territorialisation and bordering of politics and economy are symmetrical. Indeed, the other aspect of 17th-century state building in Europe is the discovery of the economy by political classes. The creation of exclusively governed territories is a precondition for the notion of a national economy. The result is the widespread adoption of mercantilist doctrines and practices. This consequence continued theoretically in the FICHTEan ideal of the *geschlossene Handelsstaat* and in the modern concept of *economic territoriality*.

and non-linear fashion, the 'supra-national' character of the EU is more similar to a typical territorial unification which implies the hardening of borders in order to re-inforce the division between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'.

Re-bordering causes many problems, first of all the fracture of complementary regional areas from which point of view ever – in an ethnographic, geographical, political or economic sense. Because of the destruction of spontaneous transborder co-operation[11] it may produce a degradation of the whole regional context, as it happened for instance in the Ukrainian case. At the same time, the political consequences of the border are quite evident. Countries excluded by the enlargement still show serious problems of modernisation, a high degree of disorder and political instability, rising criminality[12], emigration pressures, populist authoritarian regimes, dictatorial tendencies (Timmermann 1997; Beichelt 2004) and political systems affected by bureaucratic exploitation, institutions and politicians locked in a bitter internal struggle for power, social disintegration, organised criminality and state-owned lands. Old oligarchies and obsolete structures flourish on economic stagnation. The same permanence of barriers continually renewed by "strategists of border control" (Andreas 2003) despite all efforts of the excluded to be included, raises a sense of segregation of people beyond the border, the perception to be part of a hopeless different European reality (Kamann in: Ratti & Reichman 1993, p. 92) and the potential revolt against 'included' countries. Indeed, the perspective of an EU accession in too long term might be an obstacle for changes in these states and even a catalyst for permanent political and economic stagnation. Indeed, fixing permanent borders would deprive the Union of a part of its attraction and would de-motivate if not frustrate countries that are left out.

Moreover, European protectionism, openly using the border, damages the prevalent agricultural economies of Eastern European regions beyond the border hindering their development. Commerce suffers from barrier effects, and these economic activities cannot contribute to the formation of economic wealth. Particularly countries of small dimensions, which inherited from the disintegration of former empires the reduction of their internal market, need to open outwards, otherwise they can fall into stagnation and decline (Pavliuk 1997; Batt & Wolczuk 2002), because of the unavoidable high costs of autarchy. The 'economic' justification of these barriers isn't clear: Why can only 'internal' economic openness of the Union produce advantages, while beyond these borders start disadvantages? The answer is that the border depends only on political justification, which means the political principle of exclusivity. The border is thought as an effective tool to control the relations between an 'internal' and an 'external' market. The EU's enlargement to East has been undertaken with the intention to create in Europe security and stabili-

[11] One can easily envisage negative implications of hardening the border between the new EU member states and their neighbours further south and east for transborder co-operation. For instance, the re-introduction of visa requirements between Poland and Ukraine has drastically reduced cross-border trade and investment, causing severe economic problems and devastating effects on regions such Transcarpathia [Zakarpattja] (Wolczuk 2000, pp. 46–55).

[12] "A hard border creates extra demands for organized cross-border crime." (Zielonka 2002, p. 1).

ty, economic development and co-operation. In fact, especially the EU's Eastern border maintains a destabilising effect outside the EU. Trying to expel 'disorder', EU's border stimulated it, as it has been shown by the Ukrainian crisis.

5 European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the idea of *territorial cohesion*

After the first enlargement, the necessity for closer ties to neighbouring states without offering outright membership to the EU became quite clear, because the neighbouring countries are the EU's essential partners. The EU has tried to enhance constructive multilateralism and interconnectedness with immediate neighbours. In some cases, this regional co-operation has resulted in a dense network of associations. However, even if EU is presently (after 2009) building a new model for regional co-operation, co-operation and security-oriented agendas are competing with each other and are in deep contrast to the EU's prevalent border policy and its evident 're-territorialisation'. Hardening the EU's external borders would make it difficult to continue this kind of co-operation. The EU is a geopolitical actor with different and often conflicting agendas.

In fact, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as well can be understood in terms of an ongoing project of 're-territorialisation' that combines geopolitical concerns with a new focus on mutual interdependence and partnership. But 'securitisation discourses', an increasing 'territorial cohesion' as a goal to achieve and conditionality that affects the EU's evolving relations with neighbouring states highlight new tensions between them and the EU, its socio-cultural project of community (soft power) on the one hand and its institutional and territorial hardening on the other. The emerging de facto geopolitics of the EU also concerns the ENP undermining this project.

Indeed, cultural and economic anxieties as well as a perceived loss of control over local affairs have been increasingly evoked in European debates influencing not only many discourses about the possibility of 're-bordering' of national states, but also, consequently, a heightened demand for more defensive EU's external borders. The same challenges facing the EU in its drive for a more prominent international role and continued lamentations on the fact that the EU lacks a common foreign policy are the proof that still a discourse about bordering and geopolitics of a territorial kind prevails. The existence of the EU as territorial unit, re-inforced and renewed after the Cold War, is an evidence of an emerging discourse about the presence of a de facto foreign policy. While the ENP strives to provide the foundations for a new regional community, it also contributes to a politics of difference, strengthening already existing and perceived distinctions between the EU, 'non-EU Europe' and 'non-Europe'. Despite 'post-national politics' of regional co-operation are evident in the ENP, elements of traditional state-centred politics are being re-affirmed and reformulated by the EU, partly in an attempt to strengthen its formal political and united status. As BIALASIEWICZ, ELDEN & PAINTER (2005) have pointed out, EU's territoriality is both 'hard' in the sense of institutions, borders and policies and 'aspirational' in terms of a space of values and an area of co-operation with its new Neighbourhood Policy as tool of stabilisation and promotion of better collaboration. However, paradoxically, the ENP

signals a culmination of post-Cold War 're-territorialisation' stressing the same idea of neighbourhood.

At any rate, the institutional thickness of most co-operative projects remains limited as is their political weight making the impact on the neighbouring countries more a theoretical assumption than something concrete. In the ENP there are more political fora than political-territorial levels of concrete action. The EU supported many efforts promoting the establishment of Euroregions and other organisations that should facilitate interregional networking. However, national governments often view such border-transcending exercises with scepticism and try to regulate cross-border co-operation in ways that serve national interests. The EU must navigate between these competing territorialities and as an international actor it simultaneously confirms and transcends its external borders. In sum, the EU is engaged in politics that combines both 'neo-Westphalian' re-inventions of territoriality as well as many elements of possible 'post-Westphalian' perspectives (such as relativisation of borders). This hybridism is reflected in the central contradictions of the ENP. On the one hand, the EU is seen to pursue "a new model of multidimensional regional relationships", in which the neighbours are inclusively treated as partners. On the other hand, the EU's desire for a state-like political authoritativeness, combined with exclusionary populist discourses emanating from the member states has promoted policies of conditionality that encumber these partnerships (van Houtum & Pijpers 2007).

For instance, long before the enlargement process had started, the EU preferred to define its relationship with Ukraine mainly in terms of security (Marcinkowska 2011, p. 33). As early as 2004, Ukraine was already a member of the European Neighbourhood Policy. However, to date, it has not been provided the opportunity for medium- or long-term accession into the EU. In fact, the ENP's vision is different from the idea of enlargement and de facto involves a ring of countries sharing the EU's fundamental values and objectives. Consequently, Ukraine is assigned the role of a bridge or a 'buffer state' between the EU and Russia (Marcinkowska 2011, pp. 26–27).

EU's hardening of its external borders clearly affects the ENP radically transforming it. In fact, cross-border co-operation at the EU's external borders simply does not enjoy support commensurate with the EU's discursive exhortations to greater regional neighbourliness (Borkowski 2009, pp. 214–217). As a matter of fact and not surprisingly, very few funds were allocated to cross-border and interregional co-operation with neighbouring states. Neighbourhood Policy announces a substantive change in bordering practices, but is unable to develop it. Recently, some scholars have argued that the ENP has not been a success and is not an answer to the chaos on Europe's southern and eastern borders (Godement et al. 2014, pp. 1–2).

6 The migration crisis as litmus paper of territoriality and bordering

The explosion of migrations at the EU's southern flank (Africa, the Middle East) has shown, how decisive the EU's 're-territorialisation' is. The Hungarian-Serbian border case clearly shows the crucial role of the bordering for a country in order to be recognised as an

integral and loyal member of the Union. In other words, soft border could show the weakness of the country and its inability to fulfil the conditions (a new barrier superimposed on the old state border) fixed by EU as a prerequisite for accession and enlargement. Indeed, individual member states controlling, regulating and securing their borders are pre-conditions for joining a visa-free Europe. Consequently, member states are building even more physical walls to keep unwanted migrants away.

These preconditions had been a nightmare for political classes of candidate countries before the enlargement, but the problem is still at stake. Being Hungary only a transit country[13)], the dramatic and fast re-inforcement of the border by fences, barbed wires, policemen and the army (at the same time refusing of any other form of help except financial aid) is a demonstration that the country wants to show its adequacy to the EU's territorial borders and conditionality. Consequently, the new Hungarian border is part of the EU governance system. Basically, European leaders share a view of migration as a security problem, often using a militaristic language. The European Commission exhibits the same approach in proposals to strengthen the powers of the European Union border agency Frontex to fingerprint, detain and expel migrants. It includes putting pressures on European countries that are not member states using a threat of restoring mandatory visa requirements.

7 Conclusions

Imagined frontiers of Europe have shifted over several millennia. Anssi PAASI showed that different images of Europe and different narratives on European identity imply different forms and conceptualisations of spatiality (PAASI 2001). Different scenarios for the future of the EU are possible, but nowadays the building of the 'institutional Europe' still largely contains an old conception of territoriality and boundaries, which is related to the popular conviction that the 'EU/Europe' has always been a fixed territory and that some countries cannot belong to it. The Treaty of Lisbon also made a step forward to the creation of a territorial polity at the European level (MARCINKOWSKA 2011, pp. 70–79).

The contemporary EU's concept of territoriality contains characteristics of a 'neo-Westphalian' model in an era of neo-Westphalian rising powers. It is self-contradictory and highly problematic. It argues on the one hand that the EU is a polity that evolves towards a weak empire or a "maze Europe" with soft and flux external borders (ZIELONKA 2006, pp. 6, 144) and says that the inside/outside division is blurred because the EU's authority does not stop at its own external borders (BÖRÖCZ 2001, pp. 18–19). On the other hand along the EU's eastern border controls and surveillance will not be loosened, but, at least for now, intensified: It is a border without a good chance of disappearing. The inside/outside dichotomy shows the reality of the EU's predominant conception that is based on the Westphalian clear-cut borders as well-defined lines.

[13)] It must nevertheless be pointed out that with 41,215 asylum applications in 2014, Hungary is facing a serious migration challenge. Amongst EU member states only Germany and Sweden had more asylum applications than Hungary.

Co-operation efforts across the EU's external border, a kind of peculiar mix of regional, national/bilateral and pan-European/supranational initiatives cannot be generalised. In any case, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), soft policy instruments as Tacis and Interreg are not enough to neutralise the 'barrier effect' of the renewed 'European' external border. More 'inclusionary' initiatives towards the EU's eastern neighbours have had a marginal impact (Debardeleben 2005). Nowadays particularly in Eastern Europe the necessity for deeper co-operation grows including a visa-free regime, free-trade zones for services and agricultural products, an increasing level of people-to-people contacts as well as closer co-operation in transport infrastructure. Increasing transnational flows of capital, products, services, labour and information have generated a growing need for border-crossing mechanisms. A rising demand towards the development of continuous cross-border contacts confirms the need of optimal dimensions of co-operation, above all in the economic field.

The demand for and the utility of hard borders are overstated. A hard-border regime does not necessarily help mitigate concerns about cross-border crime and migrations. There is little evidence that attempts to control terrorism, international crime and migration at the EU's rigid border are effective (Zielonka 2002, p. 2). In fact, militarisation of external borders creates more problems than it solves. At the same time, hard borders hamper profitable trade and alienate the EU's current and future neighbours.

On the contrary, softening borders encourages sustainable resolutions to ethno-national conflicts and socio-economic development. It could better protect or strengthen relationships and associative obligations through border or transnational networks. It offers a possible remedy to a politics of exclusion facilitating global processes (Mostov 2008, pp. 3–5, 17). As wrote Anderson, it is necessary to radically rethink political borders, hard border assumptions and territoriality (Anderson 1996). Softening borders opens up alternatives for cross-border linkages and new spaces of co-operation.

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