

BOOK REVIEW

Pernille Rieker (ed.), External Governance as Security Community Building, The Limits and Potential of the European Neighbourhood Policy, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 218 pages, ISBN 978-1-137-56169-5

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Since the latest events which negatively affected the immediate European neighbourhood, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has become a much debated topic among academics. With the open conflicts in Ukraine, Syria, and Libya the European Union's neighbourhood could be better described as "a ring of fire" rather than as a "ring of friends" (p. 1). In this context, the book *External Governance as Security Community Building, The Limits and Potential of the European Neighbourhood Policy* undertakes an excellent investigation into the main challenges of the ENP, seeking to respond to two fundamental questions: *Does this mean ENP has failed and that an alternative policy towards the EU's neighbours is needed? Or should these developments be seen as temporary setbacks caused by external factors beyond EU control?* (Rieker, p. 3) As argued by the author, much has been written about the role and impact of the ENP, but what is still lacking is the systematic comparison between various ENP countries in order to really identify what actually went wrong and why. The book aims at providing a better understanding of the functioning of the ENP throughout the time and inquires whether this policy could be in the future a major European instrument of security policy. The purpose of this book is ambitious, since there are clear challenges in the measurement the effects complex policies, such as the ENP, have on neighbouring states. The book is the result of a collective endeavour undertaken under Rieker's coordination, senior researcher at Norwegian Institute of International Affairs. With strong expertise in European security and foreign policy, Rieker perceives the ENP, first and foremost, as an instrument meant at building a broader security community in the wider Europe.

First chapter presents the main argument and methodology which underpin this volume. Rieker notices that the reality *on the ground* has not been in line with what the ENP had initially envisaged. Afterwards, the author develops a theoretical framework linking the Security Community concept with the evolution of ENP since 2004. Rieker seeks to show that by developing the ENP,

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the EU mainly aimed at security objectives through a permanent diffusion of European standards, norms and values. In the second part of the chapter, Rieker explains the methodology employed by attempting to measure how close or far the ENP countries are to the characteristics of the European Security Community. According to Rieker, a high level of Europeanization should fulfil at least two conditions: generate higher association/integration with EU and emanate attractiveness. As such, the level of integration with the EU is dependent on three dimensions: “the scope of agreements, the level of adoption of the EU norms and rules, and the level of participation in the EU policies” (Rieker, p.7). The level of attractiveness of the EU is expressed through domestic support for closer integration. Having this as a backdrop, the following chapters investigate the process of association and integration between the EU and six ENP countries from both Eastern and Southern neighbourhood.

Thus, from this point onwards the book is divided into two parts: chapters 2, 3, and 4 investigate the relation between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries – Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, and Georgia –, while chapters 5, 6, and 7 analyse the relation between the EU and three countries from ENP South (aka Union for Mediterranean), Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan. These countries have been chosen, since all of them have developed extensive agreements with the EU.

Using empirical data, Chapter 2 examines the level of integration between Ukraine and the EU. Energy, trade and visa issues are the most important fields of cooperation between the two. The results of research show that Ukraine is still far from being an integrated part of the European security community. Nevertheless, the interaction between the two has recorded an upward trend, since the EU currently appears to be the only available partner of Ukraine (particularly since the conflict with Russia begun). As Batora and Navratil argue, the processes of building a security community to include Ukraine is still fragile, especially when Russia impedes any EU initiative in the region. Consequently, the paramount objective today is the preservation of the very existence of the independent Ukrainian state, rather than the construction a security community.

Chapter 3 looks at another EU eastern neighbour, namely at Republic of Moldova. The analysis portrays Moldova as a front-runner among the ENP countries. In spite of finding the ENP/EaP policies relatively successful in stepping up Moldova’s political and economic integration into the EU (e.g. Moldova actively participates in key areas like migration, justice and security), the process of building a security community is still not yet mature enough to “lock” Moldova into a sustainable path towards European integration (Baltag and Bosse, p. 62).

Chapter 4 focuses on the last EaP member analysed, namely Georgia. Similarly, Georgia has been a front-runner in most areas, sharing a leading position together with Moldova. Having the most efficient system of legal

approximation (Bolkvadze and Lebanidze, p. 97), the Europeanization process appears to be the most advanced in Georgia. One of the relevant observations regarding the attractiveness of the EU is the highest pro-EU stance both among the Georgians and at the level of the political elite.

Another country which has the most extensive agreements with the EU is Morocco. In Chapters 5, according to Bremberg and Rieker, Morocco is a pioneer in the ENP South, since cooperation between Morocco and EU is very broad, and the level of participation high. Nevertheless, the main fields of cooperation continue to be trade and internal security, while the other domains (such as financial services, social policy, environment, taxation or industrial policy) remain still untapped. From the author's standpoint, Morocco is already closely coupled to the European security community frameworks.

In chapter 6, Dandashly shows how Tunisia is gradually becoming more integrated into the EU security community. The author argues that Tunisia is, paradoxically, more advanced in the drafting of agreements and policies than many of the Eastern European countries. Similar to the other ENP countries, the EU remains for Tunisia the most important partner in the political, economic and social field. Nonetheless, the author highlights that in the MENA region the existence of authoritarian regimes pose a serious threat to the EU security community objectives.

Finally, in Chapter 7, Seeberg argues that Jordan's strategic position is of utter importance for the EU, since Jordan could be a useful pillar for establishing a future Mediterranean security community. It is noteworthy that the EU has accorded Jordan an advanced status, the prospect of participating in a DCFTA (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area), despite the country's limited progress in political reforms. This indicates that, in the EU's approach towards Jordan, security and stability are more important than reforms and adaptation to the EU norms.

The last chapter summarizes conclusions which point out the different challenges faced by the research team in analysing the impact of the ENP in the neighbouring countries. First and foremost, the obvious conclusion is that there are serious differences between ENP South and ENP East, since the eastern partners are *European* countries, while the other countries are not included in the conventional geographic boundaries of the European continent. Whereas for the EaP states, future EU membership is perceived as a future possibility, the countries from the South do not have such a prospect. Another observation pointed out in the conclusions is that the EU has different approaches towards its vicinity. For instance during recent negotiations with the EaP countries the EU has been much stricter in requiring real adaptation to the EU *acquis*, whereas in ENP South a modest alignment to the ENP norms seems to suffice.

Overall, the book claims that the ENP is an efficient instrument for building a security community even if the goals of the neighbourhood strategy were not

fully achieved. The EU has the potential to contribute to regional security, but this means it has to come first with a different approach, one which takes into account the current geostrategic realities in both East and South. Moreover, building a security community depends also on the determination of the domestic factors in the partner countries. Finally, the author considers that ENP has to be perceived mainly as an important foreign and security policy instrument and not simply as continuation of the integration process.