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The Mediterranean beyond borders

In the title of this year summer school three interesting and topical questions and issues come together:
- what is the Mediterranean and what is the relationship of this region with Europe or more precise the European Union?
- what do we mean by ‘beyond’? According to the dictionary beyond does not only refer to what is at the other side, but also to the unknown.
- What is the meaning of borders in this context? What type of borders can we distinguish and are they a hindrance to further developments or the opposite?

The English concept of a region is a confusing one, since it may mean very different things. We can speak about a region when we refer to a few countries or nation-states who have something in common, like at the end of the eighties we talked about Mittel Europa, referring to the so called Višegrad countries: Poland, Hungary and (at that time) Czechoslovakia. A region also can be a part of a nation-state, like the region Catalonia within Spain and thirdly we speak of Euregions, networks of mostly border-areas within a few countries.

As a non-expert in this particular area I understand that the notion of the Mediterranean region became topical since Euro-Mediterranean conference in 1995 and more recently with the attempts of the French president Sarkozy to give this so called Barcelona process a new impetus, which was not appreciated by the other European leaders and in particular the German Chancellor. As a result Sarkozy had to slow down his attempts. These European leaders probably saw it as a hidden attempt to enlarge Europe, to move the center of Europe in southern direction (and away from Brussels) and even to revive the notion of Europe as the heir of the old Roman Empire.

Up until recently it looked as if the borders of Europe were clear at least on the Northern, the Western and the Southern side, simply because there Europe was surrounded by oceans and seas, which form a natural border. It seemed that only at the Eastern side of Europe the borders were somewhat unclear. Does Russia belong to Europe? And what about Turkey?

After the last enlargement with Romania and Bulgaria, the entrance of the countries on the Eastern side is now heavily debated.

Naturally we also have some countries in the former Yugoslavia, which are not yet a member, but their eventual admittance is not a matter of principle (but more one of good or bad behaviour), since no one denies that these countries are part of Europe.

It now seems that a new and complicating factor emerges, the countries of the Mediterranean basin.
In this context the following story is interesting and enlightening.

A number of years ago the king of Morocco received a delegation of the EU and he asked whether Morocco could become member of that organization. Well after some hesitation, for one does not displeases a king so easily, the answer was: Well your majesty, the answer must be no, since Morocco is not part of Europe.

Then the king gave the following and very clever answer:
Oh, is that the problem, well in that case we shall have to dig a tunnel to Europe like England did.

The story reveals a few things.

In the first place it makes clear that Europe is very popular and that everyone wants to become a member of that club.


Whereas in the nineteenth and early twentieth century America represented the ultimate dream of the ‘good society’, it now seems that Europe has taken over that position.

Secondly, by making the comparison with England, which also was not connected with the European continent, but solved that problem by digging a tunnel, the suggestion is made that countries that could do the same are entitled to become a member and it is clear that many countries on the southern side of the Mediterranean could ‘fix’ that.

In the nineties of the former century the main discussion on the future of Europe was centred on two main and (assumed) mutually exclusive concepts: deepening and widening.

The adherents of the first position emphasized that after the Treaty of Maastricht, the time has come to stress the internal development. The EU had become a viable economic and financial union and now the time has come to focus on the social, political and cultural development of Europe to the detriment of further expansion.

It is known that the former prime minister of England, Margareth Thatcher was in favour of expansion, not so much out of solidarity with the newly ‘liberated’ countries of Central and Eastern Europe, but because that probably would mean a watered-down Europe, which she (as a basically anti-European politician) would hail.

It should be stressed however that the majority of the adherents of expansion emphasized the new and unique situation within Europe since the fall of communism, which created a moral obligation to embrace these countries as the ‘lost’ members of the European family.

In the beginning of the nineties I visited a number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe. In some of them elections took place and the most common slogan and shared by many parties there was: Back to Europe. It represented a common feeling of having been cut off from Europe.

Well the outcome of that debate has become clear; widening has ‘won’ even to the extent nobody had expected before with so many new members in such a short period of time.

Although after the last admittance of Romania and Bulgaria there is seems to be some hesitation to continue that process in the near future, but on the other hand this process looks like a riding train that hardly can be stopped anymore.

It seems to me that at present the main issue is not any more widening or not widening (deepening) but more: are there limits to widening and what are these limits, since the expansion is approaching the borders of good old Europe.

Roughly speaking we can distinguish here two positions.

The fist position emphasizes that the EU is in the first (and last) place an economic union and that in principle everyone can become a member as long as he or she adheres to the acquis communautaire, the basic (economic) rules of the organization. This would imply that there are no limits to expansion. This position of no limits to expansion is also supported, be it for different reasons by those who stress the geo-political position of Europe. Here the motto seems to be: the bigger the stronger (on the global political scene).
The second and opposite position claims that the European Union is also a geographical and cultural entity, which implies that there are limits to expansion. For the near future the test case is Turkey. In this context I remember the debate on television between the, at that time candidates for German chancellor: Schröder and Merkel discussing the position of Turkey.

For Schröder it was no question at all. For geo-political reasons that country should be admitted as soon as possible, whereas Angela Merkel had great hesitations, using both geographical and human rights-arguments. She followed what her predecessor Helmut Kohl once said: I did not know that Anatolia is located in Europe.

One can make long lists of arguments pro and con the admittance of Turkey, but it seems to me that the main argument contra is never uttered openly: Turkey is not a Christian country. It is not incidental that the greatest opposition can be found in Christian Democrat parties.

So, in spite of the brilliant remark of the Moroccan king, the chances of the southern countries of the Mediterranean basin to be admitted to the EU are limited for the foreseeable future.

The discussion so far has been rather traditional. It was about being in or out the EU. Formulated like this it becomes an either-or-situation.

We could however formulate the future options from a somewhat different position emphasizing a multi-faceted Europe, which gives more room for a variety of possibilities.

We want to stress that the Europeanization process is not only the development from the nation-state to a higher supra-national level, The European Union of Brussels. We mentioned already the Euregions, two or three regions often located in the periphery of a country and far away from the national capital decide to work together and address for support directly to Brussels.

We could add to that the different networks of European cities that have something in common, like the network of border cities and the most active network of European harbour cities, which have problems with migration in common, since they are the openings to Europe for many legal and especially illegal immigrants. This network like the Euregions also addresses itself directly to Brussels surpassing the national capitals.

We also know that inside the EU we can distinguish between Schengen- and non-Schengen countries between those who have a common currency in the form of the Euro and those who do not.

In other words we want to emphasize that Europe has many faces and that the Europeanization process is a multi-faceted one. What is developing here really is something new, which cannot be put under the traditional labels. In that context, it makes sense to look for a new relationship between Europe and the Mediterranean basin.
Part One

SOCIO-CULTURAL INTEGRATION
MIGRATIONS AND CULTURAL CONTACTS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIO-CULTURAL EVOLUTION

Iris B. Bálsamo

Abstract: The paper proposes the conceptual system by the theory of autopoiesis to observe and to explain the complex phenomena associated to the contact between different and divergent social groups and cultures, and the solutions derived from it to design interventions in the communicative and interactional dynamics of the social environments. The examples given in the areas of Public Health and Socioeconomic Development concern with the research works carried out by the author in Latin-America, monitored by the Pan-American Health Organization and under the auspices of the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, respectively (Bálsamo 2000a). The objective is to make explicit the conditions of observation on the religious, secular, jurisdictional, political, geographical, ethological, ethnic, ethic, as well as the conditions of interactions and interventions for social scientists and policymakers. Thus, evolutionary mechanisms of cultural selection, variation and retention are proposed to explain the dynamics of social phenomena as well as the consequences of different policies. The aim is to discuss how a model of Evolutionary Complex Systems (Bálsamo 2002) could become useful to deal the European problems in the Mediterranean waterfront.

«Paint your village and you will paint the world» (Lev Tolstoy)

The above epigraph holds at least a double sense in the context of this article. On one hand, and from a methodological perspective, it inspires the abduction as inference from social cases in Latin-America by generalization toward the Mediterranean cases in the waterfront of Europe as other cases of the whole world. On the other hand, the epigraph holds an epistemological signification in which “world” is regarded as a “universe”, a domain of discursive coherence -in words and actions - receiving validation by itself, which is to say without appealing to structures or arguments from outside the acts or operations of distinction.

From a social perspective a universe reminds others multiple domains of discursive coherences, in words and actions. So the village evokes a world, and the world evokes a universe in which many worlds and multiple universes co-exist, co-operate and enter into conflict. Each of them is legitimate by its own operations in actions and words, but they are not equal. Only some of them are enabling to embrace the others as legitimate others. A world of worlds, an universe of “multiverses” or many versions of the world/s.

1. Theory of autopoiesis: Original version

The theory of autopoiesis was created in the area of Biology of Knowledge by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela to characterize the dynamics of systems that produce themselves
(Maturana 1970; Maturana, Varela and Uribe 1974). The two authors assert that social phenomena are produced by the acceptance of the others as legitimate others, without refusing their identities. In other words, without acceptance of the other as legitimate other there is not social phenomenon (Maturana and Varela 1984).

The methodological premise has great significance for social sciences. From a biological point of view the identity of living systems is refused when they die. Nevertheless, human systems also exist in language (Maturana 1988): their identities are acquired and held in the communicative dynamic of social environments. Consequently, according to the biology of knowledge, each time a human and social identity is refused, the social phenomenon does not take place.

How this loss of identity may take place? The key can be found in the “dynamics of systems” proposed by the theory. According to Maturana and Varela (1984), a system is basically characterized by two descriptive concepts: structure and organization.

The operative distinction between structure and organization allow the differentiation between systems and class of systems. Organization has a logic-semantic and quantum-physical sense and evokes the Aristotelian organon. Structure and organization are combined with other operative terms, interactions and changes, in order to constitute a dynamic system model. According to it any system as complex unity specifies four domains (ibidem):

- **Domain of change of state or structural change**: those differences a system may suffer without loss of identity. Structural changes are differences in the components and/or in the relations among them, while changes of state are differences in the properties of the system itself.
- **Domain of destructive changes**: those differences in the organization of a system producing loss of identity.
- **Domain of productive interactions**: those actions between the system and the environment producing changes of state or structural changes.
- **Domain of destructive interactions**: those actions between the system and the environment producing changes with loss of identity.

With reference to human beings the loss of identity could mark the passage from an identity to another (e.g., from student to doctor) or add a new identity (e.g. mother plus grandmother). Complexity increases when human beings link each other generating social systems under the risk of losing for a moment or for a long time one or many of their multiple identities.

The key concept for understanding the following section is “cultural pattern”. According to Maturana and Varela (1984) a cultural pattern is a trans-generational invariant ontogenically learned in the communicative dynamics of a social environment. That refers to human behaviors acquired in the everyday life and reproduced through many human generations.

### 2. Two Latin-American cases

The two social research cases presented in this paper were carried out in Argentina two decades ago (Bálsamo 2000a). One of the cases was carried out under the whole responsibility of the author, in the context of an interdisciplinary research project in a rural area of Natural, Archeological and Cultural relevance (Bálsamo 1986). The other research case was carried out by the author as member of a Public Health professional team in urban area (Bertucelli et al. 1985).

The “migrating aspect” is not the most central one in the two cases but the most apt to carry out the research. Migrating networks are operatively defined as “family networks in which some of their members move to another place”.

One of the two cases refers to an area of emigration in the North of the province of Córdoba, while the other refers to three suburbs of Córdoba city receiving migrants. In both cases, migrat-
ing networks are meant to be as sources of socio-affective health (Speck and Attneave 1973). In one case in order to retrieve social and family links associated to a cultural pattern of participation in a socioeconomic depressive community, while in the second case in order to carry out an epidemiological action-research project to save children under risk of death.

2.1. Migrating networks to promote socioeconomic development

Cerro Colorado is a town in the Northern part of the Córdoba province where three districts converge. The rural area had undergone more than thirty years of socioeconomic depression when a group of researchers in natural sciences, anthropologists and archaeologists of the National University of Córdoba - under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) - started an interdisciplinary research project, oriented to retrieve the archeological and cultural patrimony, to protect natural species of flora and fauna promoting the socioeconomic development of the community (Bálsamo 1986).

The central social problems identified as hindrances to the fulfillment of these goals - by a community psycho-social diagnosis (ibidem) - were:

- the multiplicity of conflicting social groups - residents versus emigrants; natives versus foreigners; “criollos” versus immigrants; residents in each one of the three districts of the town versus their neighbors;
- the frustrating history of unfulfilled political promises.

Nevertheless, it was observed trough participant observation that these conflictive relations were dissolved once a year -for more than thirty running years - during three days. This happen in the frame of a socio-cultural phenomenon linking up to four generations, when many of the emigrants return to the town for a religious celebration that includes many “gauchas” activities joint to their families and the whole community.

Considering these celebrations as real socio-affective healthy cultural patterns, a specific social intervention in the community was designed in order to evoke the restoration of social and families networks - fragmented by migrations - taking place during these celebrations, according to catholic ceremonials.

This social networks intervention is called “orthogonal” (Maturana 1984) because it is perpendicular to the criteria that define a system or network in a certain mode: in that specific case, the intervention is perpendicular to those criteria which identify many antagonistic social groups within the community. The social intervention was designed taking into account the symbolic spaces of the cultural patterns reunifying families and community. The intervention consisted in tracking the names of those emigrants returning back home for the religious celebrations each year. It was implemented by means of personal interviews in the family houses of their relatives in the town.

Relatives by themselves set the sequence of family interviews indicating who had relatives coming back home for the celebrations. By this way the orthogonal interaction pointed out, in form and contents, the communicative dynamics taking place each year during the celebrations. The intervention triggered out a socio-affective healthy experience joint to a member of the research group with a relevant consequence for the members of community. That is the socio-affective perception of themselves as member of a network or community that goes beyond the limits or bounders of the town, including even the members of the research group.
This not only facilitated future communications, actions and co-ordinations with other members of the research group but also marked out the real socio-cultural path (via regia) of access to the community.

At the moment, Cerro Colorado is an Archeological, Natural and Cultural Park of three thousand hectares, relevant for tourism in the Center-North of Argentina.

2.2. Migrating networks to solve public health problem

The Community Action Center with jurisdiction in three suburbs in the South of Córdoba was the only center active in the city, at the moment in which the research was carried out twenty years ago. It worked in co-ordination with a Health Center of Peripheral Medical Assistance in different health programs (Bertucelli et al. 1985).

The Community Action Center had a wide professional experience in the working with social and family networks. Health professionals distinguished a few migrant families from the West of the province of Cordoba, with certain characteristics making them unique and useful to implement health programs. These families were deeply religious and had many solidarity relations with neighbors, persons and families of the suburbs.

In a map of socio-affective proximity designed with socio-metric techniques to measure quantity and quality of social relations, these families were represented as nodes in social networks covering the whole jurisdictional area under responsibility of the Center and beyond. Thus, through these families, it was indeed possible to reach thousands of persons with health slogans and health pursuits.

At the beginning of a summer, through neighboring social networks the research group underlined a children morbidity superior to the official statistics. This situation of emergency triggered an action-research project, to be carried out by an a new generated social networks organization formed by well-known persons, living in geographic proximity to the zone of high health risk and identified on the base of their commitment with the community in terms of service and help in the emergence. This group was selected together with a professional team formed by social assistants, epidemiologist, pediatrician, psychologist, psychiatrists, under the co-ordination of a Psychologist, with wide experience in social and family networks in suburb areas and the responsibility for the Center (ibidem).

The action-research project consisted on a four stages: conception, gestation, execution, and evaluation, although each phase brought in germ the others as moments or instances. All of
Migrations and cultural contacts: Opportunities for socio-cultural evolution

them were carried out with the participation of community. Technically speaking, an epidemiological survey was designed, applied and evaluated which included environmental aspects as well as the detection, derivation and assistance of children under health risk.

The main result during the summer was the elimination of the high childhood morbidity without extra resources than those provided by the community - its social networks - and the current Public Health programs of Government of Córdoba, 1985. The additional result was the constitution of an informal social networks organization enabled for health pursuit in the suburbs and available to detect other health problems in and from the everyday experience of its members. As an interim learning the research team formed by professionals and members of the community understood that social networks of mental health may be available - in principle - in any marginal community to afford its own health problems. This means that any health aid not recognizing this social capital could be inefficient - effective at high costs - or could fail in short or long time. Consequently, any health strategy recognizing this social capital as “legitimate other” could reduce fundamental inequalities with the participation of the community in the design, implementation and monitoring of public policies (Roses 2003).

The action-research project in Primary Health Care was observed and evaluated by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAO), and at the moment the professional work in social networks is spread out with reference to many different problems by governmental organisms, non-governmental organizations, and private institutions in Argentina.

Tab. 1 - Synthesis of Latin-American cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>migration associated to</th>
<th>network cultural patterns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>solve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>health problem</td>
<td>promote socioeconomic development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Theory of autopoiesis. Part 2 - Sociological extensions

In Europe and from a sociological point of view, the theory of autopoiesis was extended to social systems by Niklas Luhmann (1984). From his theoretical perspective, the modern society is characterized by the functional differentiation of social systems.

Each social system takes on a specific function. Thus economic, politic, legal, scientific, educational and religious systems have their own programs, codes and a generalized medium of communication: for economy is money; for politics is power; for legal system is justice; for science is truth; for educational system is learning; and for religious system is faith. Each of these social systems reproduces itself by its own communications, and each social system is communications and nothing more than communications.

The Luhmann’s methodological premise (1984) - social systems are compounded by communications and not by human beings who are in the environment of social systems - marks a fundamental difference with the original version of the theory of autopoiesis. While Maturana (1984) asserts that social systems are compounded by human beings, Luhmann (1984) asserts they are in the environment of social systems. The two authors discussed this methodological controversy during a seminary in Bielefeld, 1986 (Izuzquiza 1990), without arriving to any methodological agreement or solution. At the same time, both methodological positions - respectively, human beings inside and outside the social systems - were tested and combined in the area of Human and Social Sciences exactly in field research carried out in Cerro Colorado (Bálsamo 1986).
Grounding it in previous background knowledge in social networks achieved by means of action-research in Public Health (Bertucelli et al. 1985), it was not difficult to understand that both positions are two instances explaining interaction in social networks. Human beings are the components of social systems to design orthogonal interventions, but their communications - in words, silence and actions - are the elements of the emergent social systems to interact with persons. Pragmatics of Communication and Ethology help to de-codify signs, symbols and marks (Bateson 1972).

Both methodological positions may be creatively and usefully combined and/or intersected to design, execute and evaluate public policies in different areas, taking into account that the identities of human beings are associated to each one of these social systems as medium of communications - many times as existential niche - and beyond at the same time, although public policies may refer partially or arbitrarily to any or many of them.

The seminal work by Luhmann resulted in a deep sociological understanding on how social systems re-produce themselves constraining human beings to their environment but requiring them for innovations at the core of their own development and evolution.

Mechanisms and dynamics have been proposed to observe, explain and simulate the evolutions in each of the examined social systems and among them. It is remarkable the research work carried out by Gunther Teubner in Sociology of autopoietic Law (Teubner 1988a; 1988b; 1989a; 1989b) at the European University Institute, Firenze.

4. Evolutionary complex systems

The study on evolutionary complex systems overcomes the theory of autopoiesis since many models and approaches are proposed in different disciplines, in Science and Technology to observe, to study and to simulate this area of knowledge (Bálsamo 2002).

Luhmann asserts, extending the theory of autopoiesis, that each social system develops its own structures of selection, variation, and retention or re-stabilization in their evolutionary dynamics (Luhmann 1984). Thus, complex mechanisms and dynamics describe and explain the growth, development, structural change, and self-maintenance of social systems by the selection of variations that make possible re-stabilizations. In general terms, the three evolutionary functions can be differently grouped - as selective retention and variation, or selective variation and stabilization. The distinctive feature is that the systems have access to a dynamic of selection of variations, which makes it possible to search, to reach, or to attract stable patterns of behavior.

The evolutionary dynamics focuses on the phenomena of divergence, convergence and synergy between effects, according to the internal dynamics of systems and the structural coupling between system and environment. When the structural coupling is referred to systems in the environment of the system, it is called co-evolution. The most complex systems can mirror the systems of the environment in the context of their own internal environment, delineating their contours and constructing cognitive maps, which support anticipative and proactive behaviors alongside their interactive and reactive repertoires of behaviors (Bálsamo 2002). These general conceptualizations on the dynamics of complex systems are differently specified for the different social systems. In Evolution of Autopoietic Law (1988a), Gunther Teubner specifies these evolutionary mechanisms in the legal system. According to him, institutional structures - especially procedures - take over selection; normative structures take over variation; and doctrinal structures take over retention.
5. Conditions to solve European problems in the Mediterranean waterfront

At the beginning of the article we made reference to the cognitive mechanism of *abduction* (Ferrater Mora 1984). Although its value for logic is under discussion - in fact it is not an induction, neither a deduction -, it is accepted its value to construct inferences from cases, rules and results.

The paper reviewed two cases of instrumentation of cultural patterns associated to migrant networks carried out in Latin-America. The basic rule in both cases was the acceptance of other cultural patterns and social behaviors as legitimate others in recurrent interactions. The main result was on one case the promotion of socioeconomic development to facilitate communications between divergent cultural and social groups, and in the other the production of health at low costs with the additional reinforcement of healthy cultural patterns.

By inference, we might hypothesize that under the basic rule as methodological premise, cultural patterns associated to migrating networks could be instrumented to solve problems of local and regional development in the Mediterranean waterfront.

The conditions to observe, to interact and to intervene in different cultural and social groups and communities in the cases reviewed were: a) the transformation of jurisdictional and geographic limits in conditions of possibilities; b) a selective attention to the many different symbolic spaces with views to detect those cultural patterns that could contribute to solve the problems defined by the community.

Theoretically, an advancement in these European applications would contribute to two critical discussions.

- The ethical debate on the instrumentation of cultural patterns of behavior as medium for applying public policies, sometimes founded in different values from those of the community addressee.
- The cost-benefits discussion, not only in economical terms but also in terms of power since the application of public policies is instrumented by the values and cultural behavior of the community addressee.
- The design of public policies regarding cultural patterns of the addressees as a medium to achieve efficiency or effectiveness at low costs could also contribute to reduce hidden inequalities in terms of cultural accessibility to the services, and it is of relevance for the legal system.

The Glossary (Bálsamo 2002) presented below is not only a mere conceptual system of definitions but also, and basically, a system of operative tools to analyze complex situations of cultural and social nature - or other nature - becoming a system of tools authentically cognitive when applied according to the methodology by which Luhmann extended the theory of auto-poiisis to the sociology. That is to say, by generalization and re-specification. So then, the different concepts (*structural coupling*, *co-evolution*, etc.) acquire the meanings of the problem under study and become useful to design specific strategies of intervention and to evaluate their results.
### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coevolution</td>
<td>Structural coupling between two systems whose changes are explained by evolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>Relationality or connectiveness of many parts, by which arises properties that are not found in the parts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>Act by which things are distinguished in a background or environment. The act of distinction implies a criterion of distinction by which a unity is referred. It is the basis of the everyday and scientific activity of pointing out things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Background or surrounding in which a complex unity is distinguished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolution</td>
<td>Evolution is equal to conservation plus variation. Conservation refers to those structures which can not change without loss of identity of class, and variation refers to those structures which can change without loss of identity of class. Evolution is also defined as the triple process of selection, variation, and re-stabilization. Another force, self-organization, is proposed jointly to that of Darwinian selection to explain evolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niche</td>
<td>Condition of existence of a system in an environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Identificatory structure or invariant relations by which a complex unity is identified as unity of certain class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td>Process by which variety is reduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Relations among components with their own properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural coupling</td>
<td>Process between complex unity and the environment - and complex unities in the environment - by which both act as sources of mutual perturbations and mutually trigger changes of state or structural changes. This process of coherence among complex unity or system and environment - and systems in the environment - is called structural coupling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System</td>
<td>Complex unity described by structure and organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Something distinguished by an act of distinction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation</td>
<td>Process by which different configurations from a previous one are produced. The result is diversity or variety.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Migrations and cultural contacts: Opportunities for socio-cultural evolution


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Abstract: Today the world has a new type of migrant, the “transmigrant” and the Senegalese provide an excellent illustration of this migratory mode. Senegalese migrants are a sort of mobile community of individuals that stay abroad without a prescribed time, crossing different territories, creating circuits in which information, ideas, capitals, images and persons are passing through. The aim of this article is to study and analyse Senegalese migration from a transnational point of view, describing the processes created through migrants social networks. It also gives evidence on how this migratory mode can be an excellent way to transmit knowledge and development. With the transmigration the Senegalese migrants became actors and promoters of social, cultural and political transformations (both in Italy and in Senegal), by the creation of projects of knowledge exchanges and cooperation for the social development of villages and homelands. For a possible development of Senegal it could be necessary to activate projects of support in voluntary returns and in the creation of economic circuits between sending and receiving contexts.

«A lasting peace cannot be obtained unless a large part of the population can find means to get out of poverty» Muhammad Yunus (Peace Nobel Price)

Introduction

My personal interest in Senegal and in Senegalese migration in Italy upraised from my travels in this country. Until then I did not know anything about Senegal and, generally, about the African continent. The only images I had were what media transmitted, stereotypes administered to us “ad nauseam”, describing Africa only as a poor continent, in need of help, too far from our western heavens. Moreover the image I had of African migrants was not so different: what I felt was pity, mistrust and indifference. But often the destiny puts us in front of unexpected events and this was the case for my first travel to Africa. One of my friends proposed me to go to Senegal with him, but I had not time available to reflect and decide, I had to take it or leave it. I decided to go and for me that trip was a great discovery. I remember, as it was yesterday, the sensation of warmth and damp-
ness that I had after getting off the plane. I wanted to discover if the image of Africa I had was the correct one or only a little part of reality.

Going home in a taxicab everything flowed in front of my eyes: people, cars, horses and markets. In that moment I felt a sort of confusion, chaos and life: Senegal showed itself as a poor country but at the same time, full of Italianism. Going all over Dakar, the capital city, walking among the people, going into the houses, I realized there was something reminded me of my own country: furniture trades, cars, clothes, shoes, children’ football shirts including music and language. Several times I met Senegalese coming back from Italy, ready to go there or wishing to go one day or persons who had lived there for a lot of time and decided to come back to Senegal forever.

I often met these people occasionally and in different locations: in the streets, in the neighbourhoods and even at gas stations. When people noticed I was Italian they approached me to tell me their own experiences as migrants. I was deeply associated to all these Senegalese by the Italian language and the time they had spent in Italy. In these moments I thought that even if I was so far apart from home, living in deep contact with a completely different culture, I found lots of things which were reminding me of my daily life. How could it be possible? Who had brought the Italian language and all the things connected to the image of Italy, so far away from its boundaries?

My personal curiosity gave me a strong interest in studying and understanding the reasons why an exchange between such different and far worlds has been possible. Another event attract my interest. During my stay in France - within the frame of the Erasmus exchange program - I met many Senegalese students working and studying there, living in economic difficulties like lots of other European students. I was very surprised when I saw these friends in Senegal: in their country they were treated as an elite group just because they were coming from a European country. Once in their country, they were served and respected by the entire family and by all the people living in their villages.

This is what actually happens nowadays to Senegalese migrants coming from Italy. It does not matter if they live a difficult life abroad, often in a precarious way; what is important is to get back from Europe with money: this is their social redemption. Modou-modou (in the Wolof dialect means the typical Senegalese migrants living in Europe) became the new national heroes, symbols of the social redemption in front of all the enlarged families and villages.

Which is the process generating this migrants’ distorted image? How the social construction of this false idea of Europe as the new El Dorado’s is possible? I started my researches about the Senegalese community in Northern Italy to find the answer to my questions. My research was very interesting and positive for what concern my personal and cultural enrichment, but, at the same time, very complex and difficult, still requiring much more work and reflection to be completed.

International migration is a specific form of spatial mobility that involves crossing national boundaries. Immigrant crosses not only state but also geographic, climatic and, above all, social boundaries: between systems, ethnic groups and cultures.

More boundaries the immigrant crosses, larger is the effective distance separating him from the host society. This holds far-reaching consequences: cutting his direct links with his local community and moving into an alien ethnic territory, the immigrant can not easily cross social boundaries separating him from the host society (De Marchi and Boileau 1982). She/he is introduced, it is true, into that country social system, but only in terms of taking a prescribed position in the professional and social hierarchies and, quite often, living in a predetermined area.

Pockets of immigrants of different nationalities form ethnic minorities, which are often culturally distant from Western European societies (ibidem). Thus their presence creates new social boundaries between themselves and the host society. It also forms new spatial boun-
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daries: entire districts of cities - such as banlieus in Paris, the East End in London, via Anelli in Padova (Italy), the “Prealpino” Residence in Brescia (Italy) - turn into ghettos inhabited by migrant workers. Such pockets of immigrants, as well as border regions, develop into foci of tensions and ethnic conflicts.

Many migrants nowadays tend to live their lives simultaneously across different nation-state being both “here” and “there”, crossing geographical and political boundaries, while there have been numerous attempts, from different standpoints, to make sense of what seems to be a new mode of migration. “Transnationalism” and “transmigration” are terms commonly used to conceptualise and define such migrants’ cultural, economic, political and social experience. Furthermore, what really distinguishes new transnational migrants are the high intensity of exchanges, the new modes of transacting and the multiplication of activities they sustain across borders (Riccio 1996).

1. The structure of transnationalism

If people live today plunged into the main trend of globalisation, new migrants in response to this process create communities crossing political borders, being “neither here nor there” but in both places simultaneously (Portes 1997).

A group of social anthropologists who identified this process as pioneers, attempting to reformulate it theoretically, put their findings as follows: «We define transnationalism as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders […]. An essential element is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both home and host societies. We are still groping for a language to describe these social locations» (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton-Blanc 1994).

At the present moment a new kind of migrating population is emerging, composed by those whose networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies. Their lives cut across national boundaries and bring two societies into a single social field; a new conceptualisation is needed in order to come to terms with the experience and consciousness of this new migrant population. This new phenomenon is defined as transnationalism. In more detail:

- transnational migration is inextricably linked to the changing conditions of global capitalism and must be analysed within the context of global relations between capital and labour;
- transnationalism is a process by which migrants, through their daily activities and social, economic, and political relations, create social fields that cross national boundaries;
- bounded social science concepts that conflate physical location, culture, and identity can limit the ability of researchers first to perceive and then to analyse the phenomenon of trans-nationalism;
- by living their lives across borders, trans-migrants find themselves confronted with and engaged in the nation-building processes of two or more nation-states. Their identities and practices are configured by hegemonic categories, such as race and ethnicity, which are deeply embedded in the nation building processes of these nation states (ibidem).

Contemporary migrations are driven by twin forces that have their roots in the same dynamic of capitalistic expansion. These are firstly, the labour needs of developed countries, in particular the need for fresh supplies of low-wage labour; second, the penetration of peripheral countries by the productive investment, consumption standards and popular culture of advanced societies (Portes 1997). Many migrants workers too soon become aware that the pay and labour conditions in store for them in developed countries do not go far in promoting their economic goals.

To by pass the poor jobs that the receiving societies assign them, they must activate their
networks of social relationships. Immigrant social networks display two characteristics: they are simultaneously dense and extended over long physical distances. Second, they tend to generate solidarity to survive on uncertainty. Exchange under conditions of uncertainty creates stronger bonds among participants than that which takes place with full information and impartially enforced rules.

The high uncertainty creates the need to “stick together” and to stay with the same partners, regardless of tempting outside opportunities, once their trustworthiness has been established (ibidem). There are some similarities between today’s immigrants to the European predecessors at the turn of the century. The earlier era featured two significant conditions different from those of today: first, they could find well-paid jobs in the industry sector; second, there was a costly and time-consuming of the long distance transportation. For example, most Italians in the United States become workers and not entrepreneurs (as generally happens nowadays with the new type if migrants) because labour market opportunities in the American industrial cities, where they arrived, made this an attractive option. By contrast, today uncertain and minimally paid service sector jobs strongly encourage migrants to search for alternatives.

For what concerns communications and transportation technologies, they were prohibitive for the turn-of-the-century immigrants, making impossible to have a life in both countries. No trans-Pacific circulating processes were possible. For instance, Italians migrants had no choices to come back home from United States for the weekend and be back to their jobs in New York on Monday.

Although some activities that could be dubbed transnational according to a strict definition of the term did occur the among earlier European immigrants, the present process is characterized by three characteristics: first, the near and instantaneous characters of communication across national borders and long distances; second, the number of persons involved in these activities and third, the fact that, after a critical mass is reached, they tend to become “normative” (Portes 1997).

Once the process begins it can become cumulative so that, at a given point, it can turn into “the thing to do” not only among the pioneers, but also even among those initially reluctant to follow this path. In simple words, what happens in a transnational process is that migrants provide examples, incentives and technical means from the receiving society to develop an economic alternative. By mixing their new technological process with mobilization of their social capital, former migrant workers are those able to imitate the majors in taking advantage of economic opportunities distributed unequally in space.

The long term potential of transnationalism is to weaken a fundamental premise of the hegemony of corporate economic elites and domestic ruling classes: first is that the labour and subordinate classes remain “local”, while dominant elites are able to range “global” (ibidem). For this reason, European countries like France, Italy and Spain started to pay attention to this phenomenon and develop policies of transnational cooperation with transmigrants' countries of origin.

2. The Senegalese transnationalism

A new type of migrant is born - the transmigrant - and the Senegalese provide an excellent illustration of this migratory mode (Riccio 1996). Senegalese migrants are a sort of mobile community of individuals staying abroad without a prescribed time, crossing different territories, creating circuits in which information, ideas, capitals, images and people are passing through.

Senegalese transnationalism constitutes a field of contrasting and complex effects. It is not a system of reified transnational networks but a dynamic process of constant networking that encompasses a wide range of different practices within transnational spaces (ibidem). Senegalese migrants move through social networks that have origin in their own villages or towns and
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spread in all the territories crossed by migrants in their migration processes.

The strength of this community consists in maintaining strong relationships in their country and, at the same time, with other Senegalese migrants living in different European countries. Senegalese migrants create a process of construction and reconstruction of family and friendship networks giving them the chance to move in a well-known contest. These networks allow mutual help and support that every newcomer needs to adapt himself in a new contest.

Thanks to the insertion in these social networks Senegalese migrants do not feel lost in the receiving society but they are introduced in a familiar world. In this way migrants do not find any particular problems in becoming part of a community of people coming from the same country, but this system also makes complex and difficult their integration in the receiving society.

The Senegalese community shows a sort of ambivalence, on the one hand, entering successfully the receiving society but, on the other hand, presented itself as a self-sufficient, even closed community, interacting only occasionally with the receiving context (Marchetti 1994). This ambivalence between entering the receiving society and closure reflects a complex dialectic between different trajectories and strategies within the community.

Senegalese migrants emigrate first for economic reasons. The crisis of the traditional agricultural system produced the following historical pattern: first, an internal rural-urban migration in Senegal, then internal migration within West Africa, then emigration to Europe (mainly France), next internal migration within Europe (from France to Italy) and finally a change of direction of emigration from Senegal directly to Italy (Riccio 1996).

The early Senegalese emigration to Italy started in the 80s and concerned mainly young men belonging to the Wolof ethnic group (1). The proportion of women (5%) has been growing slowly through family reunions but also with the emigration of young women that have decided to emigrate to increase their social power once came back home. According to the Caritas annual statistics there are 1.338.000 migrants living in Italy (3% of the Italian population); among them 50.000 are Senegalese.

3. The modou-modou: A new national hero

One of the most influent pushing factors in Senegalese migration is the image attributed to the migrants once they come back to their country. In Senegal they are identified with the name of modou-modou or baol-baol, words indicating their region of origin.

Anyway they are not all baol-baol: baol-baol indicates a migrant coming from the Diourbel region, a countryside area and one of the most important Mouride centre [Mouridiyya (2) is one

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1. The Wolof comprise almost one-half of the total population, and their language is the most widely used in the republic. Under the traditional Wolof social structure, similar to those of other groups in the region, people were divided into the categories of freeborn (including nobles, clerics, and peasants), caste (including artisans, griots, and blacksmiths), and slaves. The Serer, numbering slightly more than one-tenth of the population, are closely related to the Wolof. The Fulani and the Tukulor combined make up about one-fifth of the population. The Tukulor are often hard to distinguish from the Wolof and the Fulani, for they have often intermarried with both. The Diola and the Malinke constitute a small portion of the population. Other small groups consist of such peoples as the Soninke, rulers of the ancient state of Ghana; the Mauri, who live primarily in the north of the country; the Lebu of Cape Verde, who are fishermen and often wealthy landowners; and the Basari, an ancient people who are found in the rocky highland of Fouta Djallon.

2. Islam is the predominant religion in Senegal. 94% of the country’s population is estimated to be Muslim. Most Muslims in Senegal are members of one of the Sufi brotherhoods. The two main orders are Tijaniyya and Mouridiyya, although the Qadiriyya and the Layenne are also represented. Persons become
of the four Islamic brotherhoods present in Senegal]. Migrants are also called *cayor-cayor*, coming from the Thiès region, *walo-walo*, coming from the Saint-Louis region, *Ndiambour-Ndiambour*, coming from the Louga region, *sine-sine*, from the Kaolack or Fatick region. Despite different proveniences *modou-modou* represent nowadays the new national heroes: in people’ mind they are the ones that have succeeded in their migration goals, they are winners (3).

Generally speaking, Senegalese migrants living in Italy work as street sellers (the so called *vù cumprà*) or as factory workers; others live doing illegal business (i.e. drug dealers), above all in the North Eastern part of Italy, where the concentration of Senegalese migrants is huge.

With money gained in Italy, *modou-modou*, start building big houses, buy cars, dresses and jewels in Senegal thus, for people living there, these migrants appear rich, satisfied and *European* (4). Generally *modou-modou* avoid to talk about the real situation they experienced in Italy or in another European country, because the only important thing to them is social recognition for their migration experiences: this means first of all making money, no matter how. Young people perceive this image as a real one and the idea of emigration becomes the only way to have success and to obtain *social redemption* (5).

Once returned to Senegal, *Modou-modou*, start giving money and gifts to all the members of their enlarged familiar groups (6), go around in big cars and organize big ceremonies to marry the most beautiful girls of their village. But this is only an pretentious triumph, a false and distorted image not corresponding to the real life migrants live in Italy. Rarely money is invested in activities producing an effective development and progress. On the contrary, very often Senegalese migrants ask for a bank loan to have enough money to come back to Senegal, only for a couple of weeks; this happens because it is very important to show to the family and the entire village that they have money. Life in Europe has became in the last years a life goal for a lot of Senegalese; the emigration to Europe or to US is now perceived as: «a passage necessary to become adult» (Zinn 1994). Singers like Youssou’n’Dour, Ismael Lo and Ouza (really famous in Senegal) created a great number of songs speaking about migrants and their emigration experiences, hopes, lives and re-entries.

There is a huge difference among early Senegalese emigration to Italy (in the 80s) and the recent one. In the 80s Senegalese which decided to emigrate to Italy where, above all, poor people living in the countryside, but in the last years it is impossible to categorize the “typical Senegalese migrant” because even people with a high level of education and with well-paid jobs in Senegal prefer to emigrate to Europe. We can conclude that the *modou-modou*’ distorted image is the main reason that pushes so many young Senegalese to leave their country, even if they do not have any economic necessity.

4. Social networks in Senegalese migration

The concept of social network is central in the study of Senegalese migration because almost all Senegalese migrants are moving through family and friendship networks. The term “network” refers to a set of objects, or nodes, and a mapping or description of the relationship be-

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3. See also article 1 in the annexes.
4. See also article 2 in the annexes.
5. See also article 1 in the annexes.
6. The term “enlarged” indicates the Senegalese concept of the family group, composed not only by familiar members but also by neighbors and friends.
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tWEEN the objects. In the case of social networks, the objects refer to people or groups of people. For example, a network might consist of a person and a mapping from that person to each of his or her friends and relatives. These mappings can be directional or bi-directional. An example of a directional mapping would be if person A liked person B, but person B did not like person A. This is a directional mapping from person A to person B. An example of a bi-directional mapping would be if person A and person B both liked each other (Ethier 2006).

One of the reasons social why network theory is widely studied is that by understanding the mappings connecting one individual to others, one can evaluate the social capital of that individual: «Social capital refers to the network position of the object or node and consists of the ability to draw on the resources contained by members of the network» (Kadushin 2003). Basically the more a person is mapped within the social network the more these persons will control knowledge, influence and power. Social capital can have a substantial influence on a person’s life, affecting aspects like job searches and potential for promotions (Ethier 2006).

Networks have a positive or negative role in helping migrants to migrate, to manage the initial settlement, to find a job, with on-going social, economic and emotional support. These migrant informal networks usually consist of at least a core kin network, and then by extension, of a wider homeland-based network. These “natural” networks, based on long-standing traditional links, allow people to draw from the implicit obligations inherent to these relationships (Hu and Salazar 2005). On the “positive effect” side, active networks are widely understood to be essential for sustained migration flows (Massey and Espinosa 1997).

Once they arrive to destination, migrants heavily rely on the help provided by network members to make the often difficult initial transitional period. Migrant networks are the mostly widely used source for finding employment (Waldinger 1997) providing critical information and contacts, otherwise inaccessible to a migrant. It is also the vital element for aspiring migrants, wishing to start their own businesses (Sanders and Nee 1987), a process resulting in the often observed phenomenon of “business niches”, occupied by members of the same network. Once settled, migrant networks still provide vital help in migrants’ daily life, for continuous financial, social and emotional support (Menjivar 2000). On the “negative” side, the burden of migrant networks on individual members is emphasized. Most studies on this line tend to have a cautionary bent against the rosy “positive-effect” argument. Tight networks limit personal freedom, refrain individuals from seeking other resources, levels differences among individuals, or force people to accept a self-exploitative working condition. Moreover, while members can draw resources from a network, their reciprocal obligations can in turn overwhelm them (ibidem).

In the receiving society Senegalese migrants are able to renew a traditional and complex network structure in a very simple way; these social networks are necessary to protect the same belonging and cultural identity of the migrants. Integration and identity preservation are supported by a common religious, psychological and emotional rooting. There is not an individual comparison with the host society but new information are filtrated by the group of migrants in which the newcomer is included. In many cases the migrant is included first, in family networks and, then, in more extended social networks like religious associations or those ones from the village.

Daara are religious networks in which Senegalese are moving in their villages or towns in Senegal. This kind of associations are based on the different belonging to one or another specific Islamic brotherhood (Tijaniyya, Mouridiyya, Qadiriyya and Layenne). Dahira, the daara’s local cells, are created outside a familiar context and these are a very important point of aggregation for Senegalese migrants (see fig. 1).

The most famous dahira in Italy is located in Brescia and it is connected with the religious leader and founder of the Mouridiyya Sufi order, Cheick Amadou Bamba (this association counts 5.000 supporters). Social ties created inside religious networks in a receiving society are
stronger than inside religious networks in Senegal. This happens because, in an unknown contest, religious local cells develop the same functions of enlarged families, assuring the achievement of a certain equilibrium in a state of crisis. From Senegal to Italy Senegalese migrants are always moving through these different types of social networks. In this way they are included into a familiar universe that affords, on the one hand to maintain their cultural identity and, on the other, to face a new reality thanks to the information, help and support transmitted through social networks in which migrants are passing in their migration processes.

Fig.1 - Senegalese migrant’ social networks

5. Towards an understanding of transnationalism

Even though with some criticisms, we consider the Transnationalism approach as a positive step in the study of migration. This is especially true if compared to past perspectives focusing on assimilation and acculturation, avoiding any serious consideration of migrants’ socio-cultural backgrounds and connections to the native context. But this migratory mode can be also an excellent way to transmit knowledge and development. With transmigration Senegalese migrants become actors and promoters of social, cultural and political transformations (both in Italy and in Senegal), through the creation of programs of knowledge exchange and cooperation for social development of villages and homelands.

Through social networks, associations and remittances, migrants contribute to the development of their districts and cities, transmitting also cultural and social influence. Through the realization of transnational practices Senegalese migrants could favour the development of Senegal, by the circulation of knowledge and abilities that goes beyond initiatives aimed only at job recruitments for the European markets.

In Italy the scant evaluation of migrants’ capabilities and their insufficient social mobility,
Senegalese transnationalism within Europe. The case of Italy inhibits the development of transnational practices spreading useful knowledge and information. Therefore, it is by focusing on the migrants’ integration in the labour market that actions can be undertaken to increase their human capital. It is necessary to create transnational policies able to give value to the migrants’ role in the cooperation between the countries as mediators and promoters of initiatives for human development (i.e: education and public health service).

As far as a possible development of Senegal is concerned, it seems necessary to activate projects supporting voluntary re-entries and creating economic circuits between sending and receiving contexts. Moreover, the creation of another type of project could be interesting to increase the value of migrants’ remittances, banks and micro-finance institutions. In this case, regions and municipalities could give a support to create an economic system, for instance contributing with guarantee founds. The local institutions could play the role of guarantors in the relations between migrant clientele, in constant growth, and banking institutes.

These three subjects are the vertices of a triangle in which migrants could play the role of development agents contributing to the improvement of living conditions in their own homelands. Banking activity could grow with profit and the local institutions guarantors could aspire to broaden and improve their international relations and, therefore, to hurl again the cooperation between cities, regions and continents.

Results reached thanks to this transnational approach could be also adapted to these migrants communities, finding themselves involved in migratory strategies similar to the Senegalese mode. In this way it could be possible to produce similar decentralized intervention plans promoted by individual regions.

6. Decentralized cooperation: A new way for development?

The participatory and wide concept of decentralized cooperation, put forward by European Commission, may represent a starting point for the development of the third world countries.

This concept involves not only public, local and regional institutions, but each actor plays an active and innovative role in society and those actors working for territorial development (i.e: NGOs, cooperatives, trade unions, women and youth associations, education, training and research institutions, small and medium sized enterprises, etc.

This definition is based on five main points:

1. Active participation of various groups of stakeholders: for the European Commission, the recipients should become genuine stakeholders and/or partners capable of assuming responsibility for their own development.
2. Seeking consultation and complementarities between stakeholders: decentralized cooperation seeks to promote dialogue and coherence in the initiatives of various stakeholders, as part of a programming-centred approach. It seeks to link action at local, national and regional levels.
3. Decentralized management: delegating responsibility for management (including financial management) to the administrative level more near to recipients is a cornerstone of the approach.
4. Introducing a process approach: time is a central issue, as it takes a while to secure genuine involvement and ownership. The traditional project approach should therefore become an iterative approach with emphasis on listening, dialogue, mobilization of local resources, achieving goals and action as part of a process.
5. Giving priority to the capacity building and institutional development, decentralized cooperation does not focus on material needs; it also seeks to strengthen the potential action and management of local initiatives (Unesco).

In practice decentralized cooperation tends to be planned around three priority lines of action:

- support towards the decentralization process,
support of local development initiatives,
• support of social and political dialogue.

One of the most innovative policy trends is the one emphasizing co-development and decentralized cooperation in sub-Saharan countries. It consists essentially in promoting both partnerships and transnational cooperation through programs aimed at increasing the value of migrants’ resources and capabilities. In fact, only through co-development actions it is possible to increase the production and enhance both participation and involvement of new actors in the international market. The pre-condition for a productivity increase and for the creation of new job opportunities are created by the support to entrepreneurship in developing countries, thus contributing to the limitation of emigration toward Europe.

With reference to the Italian case, an interesting process, potentially ensuring political-institutional involvement is the decentralized cooperation promoted by regions, cities and municipalities.

Migrations chains open and establish ties between the territories of departure and those of destination. These ties are multifunctional networks involving social groups, labour market, cultural relations and so on. The main goal should indeed be the valorisation of the resources and capabilities of African migrants living in Italy, in order to enabling them to be useful in their country of origin too. As Stocchiero says, there are 5 main directions of decentralized cooperation linked to migration (Stocchiero 2002).

• Economic cooperation programs for qualified re-entries of the migrants and humanitarian cooperation for the re-entry of weak groups of migrants, such as women, minors, former prisoners, and refugees.
• Information and educational programs on multiculturalism in schools and universities, mediated by the migrants, including also the relationships with the country of origin, supporting foreign students and cultural associations.
• Economic integration programmes, based on activities directly involving the migrant, as ethnic trade, tourisms, promotion of internationalisation in enterprises, valorisation of migrants’ remittances.
• Programs aimed at managing the migratory flows caused by occupational reasons (projects for the selection and the formation of potential migrants to be introduced in the Italian labour market) or by humanitarian reasons.
• International partnerships for local development aimed at creating a global and integrated frame for interventions, carried out on the basis of institutional cooperation agreements.

Up to present some experimental programs have been activated, such as the program for food security and for the struggle against poverty in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal. The region Piemonte and around thirty other entities - such as local entities, NGOs, research centres and associations, have promoted this program. This is the most relevant regional program for invested resources and people involved. A very interesting project is also the one called “progetto integrato delle province toscane in Senegal” (7) that provides plans of interventions on four territorial axes: health (with a partnership between hospitals and local sanitary districts), social development, culture and economic cooperation.

7. “Integrated project of Toscana’ provinces in Senegal”.

Chiara Barison
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ANNEXES

ARTICLE N.1
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http://news.bbc.co.uk/

As everywhere else in Senegal, children at the Couré Gatteigne school near Tivouane, 90km north of Dakar, are caught up in World Cup fever, following Senegal’s lions of Teranga. But here, along with the Senegalese colours, you see shirts for teams like Lazio and AS Parma.

Many of the children have fathers and brothers working in Italy, and they too want to leave when the time is right. The children chat hesitantly in Wolof about Italy. «The climate changes there». «It’s a country with cars, machines and boats». «In Rome there are two football teams, Lazio and Roma». The school’s director, Amadou Kane, says the patterns of emigration are now well established in this part of Senegal. «There is not much work here», Mr Kane acknowledges.

«In terms of agriculture, you have groundnuts and millet, but not much else. People from here have traditionally been jewellers and shoemakers. They will go to Dakar or to Ivory Coast, or try further a field». Mr Kane says Italy is the target destination for most emigrants heading overseas, and the trend is becoming stronger all the time, with mixed benefits. Unemployment «It’s not just the young who are leaving, but people in their 40s. They will come back with money and be able to build new houses», he says. «But educationally it is bad for us. Many children are growing up in households with no fathers, and the father is a key figure in the child's development».

Mr Kane’s colleague, Sakhoudia Ndir, says there have been improvements in the Tivouane region, «more cars, more houses being built», but argues that unemployment clouds everything «It’s not that everybody wants to emigrate», argues Mr Ndir. «It’s just that they see what is available and have no choice. People finish school and then find they might as well go back to their fields, and that is not what education is there for». Just down the road, in the village of Mbediene, Mamadou Madiara chats with his sons and his mother in the shade of a tree.

Mamadou describes himself as a “trader”. He now lives in Bologna in north-eastern Italy, but is back on a family visit. «I can’t take my family with me», he points out. Mamadou started out by flying to Belgium, then making his way through Switzerland to Italy where he already had Senegalese contacts working in business. He lives with a group of Senegalese friends.

«I left because there was nothing here» Mamadou says. «Twenty years ago, there was a living to be made in agriculture. But now the soil is dry». «It’s simply not worth it. Just look at this place», he says. Mamadou’s brother, Ndiogo, is a griot, a musician and custodian of Senegal’s oral history. «My services are always in demand», Ndiogo says. «I perform at baptisms and weddings. People in the community know me and respect me. But I’d have to say if I was God, I’d travel today. I would be off to Europe at the first opportunity».

In the neighbouring village of Beud Forage many of the houses stand deserted, but there is also a series of stylish new residences, built mainly with money brought back from Europe. The head of the village, Assane Gassama, is sad to see so many friends leave, and says he now depends more and more on the telephone. But Mr Gassama is grateful for the money sent home, particularly as it has helped establish water and electricity supplies. «This is a village with a future», says local teacher, Mamadou Samb. «A good Muslim must always be optimistic», he says. Mamadou Samb sees emigration as inevitable given the lack of opportunities at home. «But it's also a solidarity thing», he emphasises.

«In Africa we share, we are much less individualistic than in the West. Somebody goes off to Europe and they will do everything they can to help their brother make the same journey». 
ARTICLE N.2


Kebemer, 16 August (IRIN) - With five children, a luxurious home and a husband in Italy she rarely sees, Mai Dieng is like thousands of women in her region of northern Senegal. She knows little to nothing of her husband's life abroad.

«Doesn’t he tell you when he comes back?» a curious neighbour asks. Dieng laughs, patting her body to suggest what happens when her husband returns home. Dieng lives in Kebemer that lies on the main road north about 155 km from the capital Dakar. Here in this sleepy town, almost every household boasts a relative living in Italy. «This town lives to the rhythm of emigration», said Mansour Tall, a consultant for UN Habitat which recently sponsored a study with the Senegalese Ministry of Housing.

«In some villages in the Louga region (which includes Kebemer) emigrants’ money transfers represent 90 percent of household income», Tall explained. Contributions from Senegalese living abroad are a pillar of the West African country’s economy. The regional central bank estimated that private money transfers to Senegal were 195 billion CFA francs (about US $3.66 million) in 2003 - nearly a quarter of that year’s budget. And this does not include money coming into the country through more informal means, hand-to-hand or through unofficial ‘banks’, Abdou Malal Diop from the Ministry of Senegalese Living Abroad points out. Much of the money runs from Europe to rural Senegal through the web of Western Union offices that have sprouted up in the tiniest remote villages. Where even a simple grocery shop is hard to come by in some hamlets, Western Union is there. Money from relatives abroad is fuelling erratic migration within Senegal, redrawing the population map for some areas. Census information from 1986 and 2002 show that in the three regions crossed by the main road running from Dakar to St Louis, entire villages have disappeared, their populations moving closer to major urban centres with the help of money from relatives overseas.

Meanwhile, the villages left behind are surviving, thanks solely to emigrants’ contributions. Toby Diop is one such village. A sand track slips away from the asphalt road just outside Kebemer and leads down to the small village, where satellite dishes on fancy villas tower over thatch and corrugated iron roofs. When the track stutters to an end, on a sandy plain dotted with acacias, a brand new mosque stands against the open sky. This is Mzenguene. Here, white concrete houses are covered with antennas and solar panels. An assortment of increasingly modern construction themes testifies to the effects of money coming in from Europe-based relatives. Senegalese abroad commonly combine efforts to finance the construction of mosques, schools, wells and dispensaries, or to pay for electricity or telephone lines for their communities. Historically, Senegalese have migrated to France, with movement to the formal colonial power beginning in the mid-1940s. But Italy became a destination of choice in the 1980s and ‘90s, says Papa Demba Fall, social geography professor at Dakar’s main university.

«Italy has replaced France in Senegalese hearts», Fall says. Fall points out that while the earlier migrants to France were mostly of the Soninke and Pulaar ethnic groups, the recent wave to Italy has been primarily the Wolof. The villages blossoming with money sent from the land of “la dolce vita” are known as “modou-modou”, which comes from the Wolof for emigrants to Italy, According to a 2004 migration study by Caritas-Migrants, almost 50,000 Senegalese are living in Italy with residence permits. The Senegalese government promotes reinvestment with awareness campaigns aimed at the Senegalese community in Italy, informing emigrants about investment opportunities and prospective partnerships with Italian entrepreneurs. Due largely to an immigration law passed in Italy in 2002 - which slapped tougher restrictions on immigrants - Senegalese movement to the country has been decreasing in the past few years. But Italy and Senegal are working on a bilateral agreement that could increase the number of Senegalese allowed each year into the European country, according to Diop of the Ministry for Senegalese Living Abroad.

Diop said the flow of Senegalese abroad has its advantages and disadvantages. «We do not like emigration because we lose our human resources», he said. «But on the other hand emigrants’ money has a huge impact on our economy. We are Italy’s great friends and we must work together for mutual profit». Italy has become a powerful myth - a promised land, Kebemer residents say.

Fatou Kebe, president of a women’s network in Kebemer whose three sisters and six brothers have
settled in Italy, is troubled by this widespread fascination. «Boys don’t undertake secondary studies because they are obsessed with going to Italy» she said. «Years go by and they don’t study or work; they are just waiting for the opportunity to leave». Most who have made it to Italy continue efforts to invest at home and help their communities, but the undertaking is not without its complications, Professor Fall says. For one thing emigrants often have a hard time dispelling the myth that they have vast sums of money because they live in the West. «Emigrants think the European way, but they still cannot say no to their families», he says. Mamadou Niang is a case in point. He arrived in Italy five years ago, with a university degree and a tourist visa in his pocket. It was difficult to adjust, but he’s now quite integrated in a town near Turin where he coaches a boys’ basketball team. His dream was to go back home to visit his family in St Louis, after securing a 3,000 euro loan, he set off for his one-month vacation.

But after only three days in Senegal, Niang is desperate. His family and friends seem interested solely in the gifts that fill his suitcases and the money he’s expected to dole out. Neighbours make a queue to say ‘hello’ to him and each one asks for something. «I want to go back to Italy», he says. Niang tries to explain how hard his life in Italy is, but he can’t quite convey it. The general impression among his family and friends is simply that if you live in Italy, you must have money, so you have to share it. Niang ran out of money a few weeks into his stay home in Senegal. The final week was financed by an emergency gift, from his friends in Italy via Western Union.
Abstract: The paper will discuss the primary data of a research into public policies aimed at the integration of immigrants, in particular focusing on the insertion into the labour market through vocational training. The central issue is related to the extent of responsibility that different status actors have at a local level and the manner in which active networks of partners function in the territory we have studied: Marseille (France). The aim is to understand how actors coordinate at a local level with other institutional and informal actors that claim different levels of competence. In a multilevel perspective we integrate the European dimension with our object of analysis, in order to have a supplementary analysis tool to interpret the normative and structural characteristics of the analysed territory and the policy formulation and discourses of actors.

Introduction

The role and intervention capacity of local authorities is increasingly confronted with new issues that are questioning their effectiveness and its legitimacy, both on the level of their capability to promote new models of professional inclusion and on the level of social integration of the immigrant workforce.

Government policies and actions carried out at local level in the field of professional training seem to constitute a favourable measurement scale to analyse those instruments supposed to promote the integration of immigrants (Lascoumes and Le Galès 2005). On one hand in fact vocational training was the object of a transfer of responsibilities towards the Region, on the other hand public assistance to facilitate insertion in the labour market cannot be separated from the other interventions in the field of housing, social aid, family benefits etc. and it makes it possible to take into account the consistency of these policies and the ideological design which underlies their implementation (Duran and Thoenig 1996).

This focus on observations at a territorial level does not diminish in any way the need for developing a multilevel approach to public action, insofar as funding, standards, objectives, discourses and procedures can concern different political qualification levels. These programs can range from the plans locaux d’insertion par l’économie (PLIE) of the French municipal authorities to European programs such as the “Lisbon strategy”: the aim is indeed to understand how territorial actors adapt European interventions, how they use EU opportunities and how they refer to national policies. Europeanization, as a two-way process of downloading and uploading, provides elements to understand the origin and the constant change of international dynamics and configurations of actors we suppose have consequences on policy formulation and discourse at the local level too.
This multi level approach appears to be capable of clarifying the multiple forms of coordination between organisations of different competences at the territorial level.

- What are the politico-normative referents of the actors? In other words, what integration designs do they develop?
- What are the relevant categories of the public action? Are there specific categories such as first generation immigrants, young people born of immigrants etc. or do policies address other general groups on the labour market such as young people, seniors, women, people with low job skills? For this reason, we underline the relevance of a critical analysis of the categorizations adopted by the public action, in order to highlight the extent to which one clarifies or on the contrary, how the population in question is made invisible (1).
- What role is given to vocational training in the process of integration of immigrants and more in general in social cohesion? How is it articulated with the policies fighting discrimination, exclusion and segregation in the labour market (2)?
- What are the configurations of actors directly dealing with the problems of integration and insertion into the labour market? Is a political intersection between these two sectors visible at the local level? And at a European level? What kind of exchange and influence can we observe between the regional, the national and the European policy-making level?

This paper deals with the latter two kinds of questions (3). We would like to defend the following thesis: more and more, professional training is considered to be the key resource of public action in order to achieve the objective of integration of the people in difficulty on the labour market (Guitton 1998).

The ever increasing importance of training is in phase with the general evolution of the public policy towards unemployment in France and in general with European Strategies (4) (Lallement 2006). It consists of making the development of human capital and the individual qualifications the main tool for improving job security and making workers more competitive on the job market. Vocational training is considered a crucial resource to decrease exposures to unemployment and to equip people with durable recognizable resources.

Life Long Learning (LLL) seems to represent an important political-economic issue, which can highlight the importance of the UE influence on national and local labour market policies, which can affect immigrant integration as well. To analyze this multilevel public

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1. This interest is reinforced by the important difference existing between the statistical categories used by the authorities in France and Italy in approaching problems regarding immigration and the local public policies; we will proceed by a deconstruction of statistic and institutional categories (who are immigrants or foreigners in France and Italy? What’s their definition/s and their statistical visibility?) to avoid misleading formal analogies; see Simon, Clément (2006a; 2006b).

2. At first sight, the regional programs of vocational training (PRDF) of PACA area do not identify actions or projects intended specifically for the immigrant people but on the other hand, they develop master agreements of branch with the State and the professional organizations of building, of hotel trade (restoration, of IAA, etc...) which traditionally employ a big labour force of foreign origin. On the other hand, the regional delegation of the ACSE’ (ex-FASILD) implements actions turned specifically towards the immigrants, but essentially, in social matter (language courses, etc.).

3. This contribution is the fruit of a first exploratory survey carried out in Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur. It is done within the framework of a Ph.D. research which aims to analyse the basis, the implementation and the results of the local public policies which are intended to achieve a “reasonable” (Zincone 2000; 2001) integration of the immigrant populations living in PACA and Liguria.

4. EES (European Employment Strategy) 1997, the Lisbon Strategy 2000, the European Strategy for Science and Innovation, etc.
Recomposing the puzzle. Europeanization and the integration of immigrants

action, we take as a starting point the following hypothesis:

- The concrete practices tend to be redefined from the bottom, as the logic of the political references is produced from the “top”, in a two-way influence process working more evidently under specific economic, political and historical contexts.
- Vocational training programs could be regarded as instruments of integration for the immigrants, but under specific “societal” conditions which remain to be revealed and contextualised.

The paper focuses, in its first part, on the concept of Europeanization and its link with the “regional” perspective of our research. The second part aims at reconstructing the cognitive dimension of the European Scenario where immigration issues are treated, in order to explore the links between political areas, actors and discourses. In particular, the objective is to identify the connections between vocational training, professional inclusion and the integration in the hosting society. Then, we concentrate on France and the specific case of Marseille.

A pre-inquiry into the categorization of the problem by PACA public and private actors (semi-directive interviews) was realised in 2007; a census of networks, dealing with issues related to immigrants’ integration has been realised at a local level; it underlines, in particular, actors’ configurations and political discourse, to analyse what kind of influence-mechanisms are on-going between local, national and European dimensions.

1. The multilevel approach

At the methodological level, this research will refer to a “revisited” (Verdier 2000) societal analysis (Maurice, Sellier, Silvestre 1982).

The central step will be qualitative (5), and it will aim at unveiling the degree of implication of actors of different obedience and at measuring their influence on the design and the realization of public action in the field of training and professional insertion. Decentralisation and the appearance of new local forms of government means that the rules can be declined differently in the same territory (Bel, Méhaut, Mériaux 2003). Nevertheless, the diffusion of European standards of categorization and action could drive us to think about a progressive convergence of political instruments and vocabularies of Member States in this policy making area.

In this respect, the multilevel approach aims at highlighting the impact and the two-way influence of actors, procedures and discourses on local policies. We will integrate the European dimension to our object of analysis: thus we will dedicate a more specific and deeper look into the EU policy making areas dealing with immigration and to communitarian directives and orientations, in particular in the field of vocational training and lifelong learning, immigration, social cohesion and unemployment in order to have a supplementary analysis tool, or a European entry to analyse what we suppose to be a “societal coherence”: Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur (PACA) region.

The EU programs and the trans national orientations promote the diffusion of “ideas” but they also impose a sort of “rule-packages”, that modify the intergovernmental relations within the member states and also the instruments, the representations and the strategies of actors who are responsible of their implementation. This supra national dimension will permits us to qualify the European intervention in terms of political learning and territorial re-composition of political debate. In this contribution we proposes to discuss the primary data on the Marseille case.

5. Semi directives interviews.
2. Some theoretical remarks on Europeanization

The literature on Europeanization has been wide and rich for at least fifteen years, but often the impression of scholars is that the academic debate didn’t transform the term into an operational concept. Olsen (2002) argued that Europeanization was a fashionable idea defined in many different ways. An interesting starting point was the position of Ladrech (1994: 70), who defined Europeanization as «an incremental process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national logic of national politics and policy-making». This was the beginning of a rich debate on Europeanization as “downloading”.

Radaelli for example, propose a wide interpretation of Europeanization, characterized by «processes of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, (c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, “ways of doing things” and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and than incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and sub-national) discourse, identities, political structures and public policies» (2000: 4).

He also provided an analysis scheme through four ways by which member states react to EU spurs and changes: the first was “accommodation”, when the download process is compatible with national discourses, political structures and policies; the second was “transformation”, when the member states adapt and evolve internal structures to fit to EU orientations; the third was “inertia”, when a political will oriented to change is not visible at the member level; the latter, “retrenchment”, when the download process provoke or reinforce anti-European positions. In a positivistic perspective, this approach provides an interpretation tool with independent and dependent variables, capable of make the concept operational. The problem is that these definitions deal exclusively with downloading, without considering the influence that uploading processes may have on the four ideal reactions mentioned above.

Goetz and Hix (2000) try to relate European integration and Europeanization using the former as the independent variable, and the latter as the dependent one representing the change attitude in national systems. However, they had to consider the possibility of a change provoked by the domestic level on EU, which could affect European integration. In this case, variables are reversed and from that point of view, Europeanization becomes an interactive process where the distinction between independent and dependent variables is meaningless. Thus, Europeanization suggests the co-existence of bottom-up and top-down processes.

Other authors enriched the debate, like Börzel and Risse (2000), all sharing the position towards the “Ladrech Europeanization”, interpreting it as only a part of a larger two way process. Europeanization started to be used in many different ways, sometimes to refer to reception and implementation of EU laws, other times in order to highlight policy learning processes within the UE institutions and actors. In a more wide perspective, it indicated the bi-directional effects on political discourse, policies and governmental structures; in a more restricted approach it maintained its reference on the effects of European integration on national systems.

Academics started to talk about a “conceptual stretching”: Radaelli synthesized the impasse by arguing that all things that have a link with Europe have been Europeanized and that if Europeanization is used to analyse «cultural change, new identity formation, policy change, administrative innovation and even modernization», the concept is condemned to lose any sense. The solution for this author is to section the concept and to use related analytic instruments like political integration, convergence and harmonization, and to introduce the use of “modes of governance”. Bulmer and Radaelli (2004) proposed a typology of Europeanization where they used different modes of policy-making, related to positive and negative ways of coordination.
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Another interesting conceptualization of Europeanization is proposed by Howell. He constructs his reflexion on Europeanization as a meso theory in terms of process and “situations”. The first situation identifies Europeanization 1 (En1) as downloading [...]; the second situation, or Europeanization 2 (En2) incorporates up-loading or bottom-up Europeanization [...]; the third situation, Europeanization 3 (En3) can be found in the context of policy transfer. [...] It conceptualises Europeanization in terms of vertical policy transfer and cross-loading, [...] distinguishing between vertical policy transfer and horizontal policy transfer. Vertical policy transfer emerges through EU policy or European integration processes. Horizontal policy transfer incorporates learning from, and assimilating other member state policies without EU involvement» (2004: 5).

Conceiving a more complete analysis instrument, Howell recomposes an approach that doesn’t interpret the national structures as passive recipients of EU impacts. Moreover, the idea of impact refers to something static and quasi mechanistic.

The bottom-up cluster doesn’t start from European policies as independent variable in order to analyse the impact for national and local actors, policies and discourses. On the contrary, this perspective identifies actors, policies, discourses and resources at a local level, in a perspective that highlights the system of interaction, in our case at the regional level. As Featherstone and Kazamias he argues that «Domestic and EU institutional settings are intermeshed, with actors engaged in both vertical and horizontal networks and institutional linkages» (2001: 1) and that «Europeanization is assumed to be a two way process, between the domestic and the EU levels, involving both top-down and bottom-up pressures» (ibidem: 6).

We think that a similar theoretical approach would be profitable in order to construct our analysis, providing «empirical validity and the “interwoven relationship” at work in the EU» (Howell 2004: 10). In this perspective, where variables are changeable, where we select relevant facts and organize concepts, where we reconstruct the narrative of actors, we refer to a constructivist approach (George 1976).

3. Europeanization and regions

As underlined before, member states and regions are not «passive takers of European demands for domestic change» (Howell 2004: 6). They may act proactively shape European policies, institutions and processes to which they have to adapt later (Börzel 2003).

Moreover, we argued that Europeanization produces multidirectional processes: vertical and horizontal dynamics. The EU provides the cognitive frame, the terms of reference (not only in a normative perspective), and the financial and “political socialization” opportunities to develop exchanges on policies, ideas, organisational tools, between local actors.

For example, Europeanization, as a top-down process but also as a horizontal dynamic of mutual influence between member states, has progressively changed the vision of governance by establishing its common interpretation, based on the collaboration between private and public actors, and on the empowerment of regions as protagonists of the decision-making dynamic (Kohler-Koch and Eising 1999).

In many EU documents it is possible to identify the European investment in the proactive engagement of local actors: within the objectives of the European Council of Lisbon (2000), the role of local institutions and social actors is reinforced. “Social partnership” and “open method of coordination” are the two key-elements of the EU strategy which insists on the opportunity of a bottom-up policy-making process, where a protagonist role is assigned to regions and local...
actors (ISFOL 2004). The EC specifies also that employment policies are to be implemented at a local and at a regional level within a “collaborative strategy”, able to consistently use the EU structural funds in order to adopt new initiatives to answer to territorial needs (CNEL 2001; 2002; 2004). The region, from the EC point of view, would become the political level where local actors have to test innovative administrative and legal measures, in order to implement EU directives and to reach the goals defined at the supranational level. Some programmatic instruments related to the regions actions (DOCU P, POR, etc.) have already been adopted, in order to allow the EU to control and evaluate the regional policy-making effectiveness and consistence with the EU guidelines. EC has been very proactive towards sub-national political actors (regions and cities), often providing an alternative arena far from frustrations with their national referents. As argued by Favell, «Among the richer sources of funding are those devoted to regional development, urban policy, and - in Southern European - development links with southern Mediterranean partners, that often use NGOs and associations as go-betweens». Linked to the socio-economic inclusion issue and thanks to the Commission’s attentions on local dynamics, many funds have been allocated for interventions which address «disadvantaged minorities and immigrants, present in disproportionate numbers in these targeted urban areas» (1998: 13).

This mode of governance is typical of benchmarking exercises. The EU objective is to promote the diffusion of good practices and to catalyse mutual learning. The open method of coordination (OMC) could be seen as the institutionalisation of governance by learning and policy transfer.

But it is difficult to demonstrate if and how much changes in local policies and discourse are to be considered as consequences of OMC or EC.

Some empirical researches (Borràs and Greve 2004) argued that Europeanization, by institutionalising coordination, provoked a sort of ideological convergence where the cognitive and normative frames of national and local policy makers tended to approach. However, local policies could continue to diverge: OMC seems to be effective in a discourse-community building, but not in a real change in national and local labour market mechanisms or social inclusion indicators.

4. Recomposing the puzzle: The many faces of the “immigration issue” at the EU level

4.1. Immigration, integration, labour market, social cohesion: The EU political areas

The EU agendas on immigration, social cohesion, integration, employment, and education-training share a general common objective: promoting participation, coordination and the social, economic and cultural development of the European Union. Nevertheless, substantial differences can be noted in their approaches and discourses, and it is often difficult to find a clear link between these strategic areas. We will try to identify the different political EU areas where immigration finds a place of discussion and confrontation; then, we’ll refer to the key documents and texts in each political area so as to highlight the links between these sectors of the EU intervention, legislation or the influence exerted by the actors.

4.2. Immigration and integration

Before starting our overview on EU immigration area, it is important to make a distinction between immigration policy and immigrant policy (Hammar 1985). Immigration policies concern border controls, inflow regulation, admission conditions of Third Country Nationals
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Including legal measures, procedures, administrative practices related to selection and entry of TCN.

Immigrant policy combines normative and administrative practices regulating the immigrant’s life in the new country, including social security, education opportunities, political participation, etc. Martiniello (2006) remembers us the importance of this distinction because the first deals with the managing of flows, the second aims at regulating the migrants’ living standards which affects their integration level as well. Martiniello (2006) and other authors like Guiraudon (2006) highlight also how these two branches of migratory policy are also frequently associated in political discourse. A much-used argument for a very strict immigration policy is that it represents an essential condition for ensuring the success of immigrant policies put in place (Martiniello 2006: 308).

Historically, until 1989 migration entered in the European agenda mainly as a consequence of the debate dealing with the construction of a common market. Since 1989 and in a more decisive way, since 1997, migration became a European issue in its own right.

The Treaty of Amsterdam, signed on 2 October 1997 and entered into effect 1999, consolidated the cooperation on justice and home affairs, transforming freedom, security and justice in matters of Community legislation. Visa policy, conditions and regulation for issuing residence permits to immigrants, asylum procedures are to be treated as matter of communitarian regulations. But everyone asserted a tepid satisfaction in relation to the “progresses” of a common immigration and asylum policy.

Actually, the security-oriented approach which was the protagonist in the Amsterdam process, is re-proposed also during the Tampere European Council (October 1999), where the main proposal for a common immigration policy (6) has been constructed on: a) the management of migration flows; b) the rights and obligations of TCN, that must tend to those of citizens in the member states in which they reside; c) the partnership with the origin counties and d) a European asylum system. At this point, it is difficult to identify links between the new-born EU immigration policy and the integration, social inclusion and employment issues, with the exception of the purpose of bridging the gap between the rights of TCN and EU citizens. How and what kind of rights is not specified and discussions did not led to interesting results.

A timid step is done with a Communication of the EC in November 2000 (7) which re-propose the acknowledgement of a legal status for TCN closer to EU citizens and also a series of proposals to combat discrimination. This document highlighted the close link between migrations and integration dynamics of TCN, which supposed “promotion of diversity” and an equal treatment as regards employment conditions, education, social protection, etc.

Thus, Art.13 of Amsterdam Treaty provides the legal base to the initiative of the EC, who in 2000 adopted two directives on anti-discrimination: the first directive (8) deals with racial equality; the second (9) with equality on the labour market.

Following the last communication, EC put forward a proposal for a directive on the condition of entry and residence of immigrants for economic purposes (10) in 2001; although the support of the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions, some member states objected the proposal and also the legal basis of the initiative.

In June 2003, EC presented a Communication on immigration, integration and employment

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8. 2000/43/EC.
9. 2000/78/CE.
(11), based on a “holistic” approach which aimed to treat all aspects of immigration and integration. The target population of this text are migrant workers and their families, refugees and persons under international protection. The communication purpose dealt with the creation of the basis for a common European integration policy, and it suggested a frame of reference for the implementation and the evaluation of current and future national initiatives. Institutional participation and a certain degree of acculturation constitute the elements for the definition retained by the EC in this occasion. The key elements necessary to integration were: a) respect for the fundamental values of democratic societies, b) the right of every migrant to maintain his/her own cultural identity; c) rights and duties of immigrants comparable to those enjoyed by EU citizens; d) the active participation in all aspects of life in equal degrees (economic, social, cultural and political). Nothing binding, but an interesting approach that begins to bring employment and integration closer to each other and that started, through benchmarking promotion, to develop the instruments of the potential influence of the EU on the matter.

It is within this framework that in 2004 the First Report on Integration and Immigration in Europe was published and subsequently, in addition to the Handbook on Integration, the Green Book on Immigration, and the Action Plan on Legal Immigration were also published in 2005. The reports (12) on Integration and Immigration have at least the merit of collecting data and information on migration and immigration national policies, insisting on benchmark and on mutual learning between member states. The statistical collection of data has increased the awareness of the danger within the inhomogeneous way of treating the questions related to immigration in Europe, which will be at the heart of a successive proposal of the Commission (13).

A specific step towards the definition of “integration” and its operational value is done by the Council on Justice and Interior Affairs (JAI) in November 2004, with the following objectives: a) to assist the member state in the political formulation of integration policies; b) to explain how local, regional, national and European authorities could interact in order to implement integration policies; c) to help the Council members, at a more political and decisional level, to define the European mechanisms and policies suitable for the implementation of integration policies at a national and local level. In this occasion, the JAI also adopted a Manifesto on integration, composed by eleven fundamental common principles. Again, nothing binding but an interesting way of linking different aspects of immigration and different EU areas of intervention: at point three we can read, «work is a key element of the integration process, essential to the participation and to the contribution of immigrants within the hosting society and to their visibility».

This is the interest of the new EC Vice President, Franco Frattini, that reopened the political debate through the submission of a Green Paper (14). The discussion involved member states but also employers’ organisations, trade unions, NGOs, Universities and civil society representations. The issues of competitiveness and demographic trends started to be discussed within the immigration issue. In a schematic way, we can summarize the content of the document dividing it in four pillars. The first concerns the challenges, or the economic development and the demographic aging; the second refers to the procedures of admission, including two kinds of propositions: an approach based on the categories of demanders; an approach based on the typology of the admission procedure (normal, accelerated or ex-ante); the third pillar treats the rights of legal migrants; the last one developed the issue of the cooperation with the countries of origin and transit.

12. The first was published in 2004, the second in 2006.
Then, the Hague Programme (15) was approved by the European Council in November 2004, and pointed out the necessity to develop «a policy plan on legal migration, including admission procedures capable of responding promptly to fluctuating demands for migrant labour in the labour market» (point 1.4, III Specific Orientations, Presidency Conclusions, EC 2004).

The EC returned on December 2005 to a proposal, through a Policy Plan on Legal Migration (16): «a road map for legal migration to enable the European Union to meet its economic and demographic challenges and manage the phenomenon of immigration and [...] a policy plan which identifies a set of legislative and non-legislatives initiatives» (Bertozzi 2007: 9).

The four axis of the Policy Plan were: a) legislative instruments for entry and residence of TCN for employment reasons; b) actions and policies aiming at the exchange of information in the immigration sector; c) policies and funding in support of the integration of migrants and their families in the employment market and society of the host country; d) management of the international flows, in collaboration with countries of origin.

Four different legal instruments were proposed, concerning (only) entry conditions for highly qualified workers, seasonal workers, workers relocating within multinational companies and paid trainees. The EC proposed a second direction, to be put forward in the second half of 2007, which will treat the conditions of entry and residence for all kind of workers.

But the two most significant elements of these initiatives are the links between immigration phenomena and, on the one hand, integration issues, on the other, labour market dynamics. In particular, when stressing the importance of the cooperation with the countries of origin, EC also mentioned the opportunity of setting up vocational training and language courses in the countries of origin. The acquisition of professional skills is regarded as the beginning of an “adaptation” process before departing for the host member state.

The recent position of EC experts and academics becomes more and more sceptical towards the security-oriented attitude of member states: «The fact is that if the member states of the EU do not change their attitude to legal migration, the future competitiveness and living conditions of the old continent will be put at serious risk» (ibidem: 15). Also the industry voices increasingly pressure EU and governments in order to counter the highly skilled manpower shortage in specific productive sectors, or unskilled in others. Other actors, and the EC the first with its Green Paper in 2005, see immigration as one important solution to the EU demographic impasse, and an important contribution to the safeguarding of the social security system. NGOs and the humanitarian advocacies point our attention on the respect of human rights. Nevertheless, “fortress Europe” doesn’t seem to crumble. Security and Control are two omnipresent symbols of EU priorities in the immigration sector.

The construction of a consistent policy strategy to overcome these obstacles was already laid down by the Lisbon European Council, which set the objective of an EU as «the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion» (Presidency Conclusions, Lisbon European Council, SN 100/1/00, Part I, point 5).

5. Social inclusion, employment, vocational training and life long learning: A new “social protection mix”? 

Since the Essen Summit of 1994, the EC has always defined the “activation policies” as a key element conceived by the European Employment Strategy (EES) (Barbier and Sylla 2001).
The Luxembourg Jobs Summit in November 1997 formally launched the EES, the ambition of which was to achieve decisive progress in employment rates within five years (17).

Since 1998, “activation” started to become very visible within the directive lines of the annual reports on EES: in 1998 we find an accent on the necessity to reform the compensation and training systems, in order to actively promote the professional insertion capacity and to incite unemployed persons to search and accept a job or a training course; in 1999 EC started to talk about “compensation, taxation and training systems”, to be updated according to the need of an activation of unemployed and inactive persons to reinforce their professional insertion capacity, and to promote new job opportunity creation by the employers.

In particular, in directional line 9, EC highlighted the importance of promoting the professional integration of «disabled persons, ethnic minorities and other groups that could be disadvantaged», adopting an approach more similar to antidiscrimination than to “activation” (Barbier 2006). In 2000, “activation” and “prevention” are clearly associated and become part of a unique reform project of the public employment service, and in 2001 we observe the emergence of the “make work pay” formula.

Meanwhile, at the Lisbon European Council (March 2000), the European Union set itself a new strategic goal for the next decade: «to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion». The strategy was designed to enable the Union to «regain the conditions for full employment and to strengthen cohesion by 2010».

The Stockholm European Council (March 2001) added two intermediate and one additional target: the employment rate should be raised to 67% overall by 2005, 57% for women by 2005 and 50% for older workers by 2010. The Barcelona Council (March 2002) confirmed that full employment was the overarching goal of the EU and called for a reinforced EES to underpin the Lisbon strategy in an enlarged EU. The directive lines of the EES continue to follow the recent plan and to sketch new operational formulas, like “the active ageing” (DL 4, 2003).

Following the Mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy conducted by an independent high level group, the Commission presented in February 2005 a Communication on growth and jobs, which proposed a new start for the Lisbon strategy refocusing efforts on two goals: delivering a stronger, lasting growth and more and better jobs. This included a complete revision of the EES governance so as to maximise the synergies and efficiency between national measures and Community action.

The Lisbon Strategy for Economic Growth and Employment is undoubtedly an ambitious political Manifesto. It included a social pillar which aimed at modernising the European Social Model, through the investment in human resources and in the fight against social exclusion. The Lisbon Strategy introduced also an instrument to help member states in the implementation of policies oriented to the convergence towards common EU objectives: the Open Method of Coordination [OMC (18)].

Member states have to coordinate their national policies on the base of an exchange and mutual learning process. The concrete implication of the OMC adoption is the publication of reports on the development and the implementation of national policies. These reports are the National Reform Programs [NRP (19)] and they are submitted annually to the EC, to be

17. In 2002 an evaluation of the first five years was carried out identifying major challenges and issues for the future of the EES. It also emphasised the need to revamp the EES with a view to aligning it more closely to the Lisbon goal of sustained economic growth, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion by 2010.
19. Until 2005, these reports were named National Action Plans (NAP) for growth and employment.
evaluated in accordance with the EU orientations. The EC encouraged member states to include measures on the fight against discrimination based on sex, race/ethnic origin, religion, handicap, age and sexual orientation, within the policies implemented in order to promote social cohesion and social inclusion.

Member states are also invited to identify three or four political priorities in these annual documents. Despite the attention accorded by the EC and despite the importance within the objectives of the Social Political Agenda 2000-5 (20) and 2005-10, social inclusion and antidiscrimination have been rarely mentioned as national priorities.

In December 2005, the European Council adopted a new framework for a coordinative policy on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, aimed to «assure active social inclusion for all, through the encouragement of the professional participation into the labour market and through the fight against poverty and the exclusion of marginalized persons and groups»; and also, «guarantee the access to fundamental resources, rights, social services for all, fighting the extremes forms of exclusion and discrimination» (21).

Member states submitted their PAN/NRP to the EC and the latter published a common report on social protection and social inclusion in 2005 and 2006, where the Commission highlighted the seven priorities to be pursued by future policies of the member states. The first priority remains the increase of the participation into the labour market, followed by a modernization of the social security system, the treatment of the disadvantages in education and training, the elimination of child poverty, a more effective housing policy, the better accessibility of social services, and, dulcis in fundo, the elimination of discriminations and the promotion of the integration of disabled persons, ethnic minorities and immigrants.

Member states remain free to develop ad-hoc policies, according to their priorities, but EU provides important instruments to catalyse reforms and interventions in the direction indicated by the EU actors: first of all, the OMC and the benchmark attitude; then, four financial programs dedicated to antidiscrimination, employment, gender equality and fight against social exclusion. In 2007, another instrument is introduced, PROGRESS, which is a communitarian program for employment and social solidarity, including the four existent programs.

Indeed, for at least a decade, we have witnessed a progressive increase of visibility of the EC political initiatives in a domain which, as immigration, depends normally of the national level regulation: education and training. Devoted to the promotion of the individual employability, “the lifelong learning” (LLL) rhetoric is becoming one of the main tools of the “European Strategy towards the Knowledge Society” and of the open method of cooperation, in order to influence the employment national policies (Barbier and Gautié 1998; Barbier 2006).

Linked to the development of «competence pattern», the ‘Lifelong learning’ rhetoric replaces the previous «permanent education approach» shaped during the sixties by Unesco and Council of Europe. The ideological success of LLL stems notably from the failures of the vocational education and training policies: too high selectivity and inequalities of the training in the firms (Gauron 2000), relative inefficiency of the ‘second chance’, stigmatisation of the unemployed by the special training programmes, declining legitimacy of the famous figure of the qualification model, like the German “dual system”, etc.

The EC accent on LLL and the new EU political discourse on vocational training seem to reinterpret these concepts conferring them an important role in the public debate on social protection reform. “Employability” and “flexibility”, are concepts inextricably related to the individual strategy of social protection promoted by the EU, in the way workers and unemployed

people are called to build their own strategy to face risks on the local, national and trans-national labour market (Gazier 2006; Beck 2001). EU members maintain specific political prerogatives concerning education, vocational training and labour market, although the rhetoric and the language mobilised by national referents tend to converge.

Moreover the link with vocational training and social inclusion through work is sometimes visible when Lisbon documents deal with the issue of discriminations on the labour market and of the economic development as an element necessary to reinforce social cohesion. The missing link is the connection between vocational training and integration for the immigrants. Except for the explicit association to frontier controls or integration, immigrants become a blurred category, visible only among a variety of elements composing the “weak social components of the society”.

6. Some considerations

The prevalence of the security issue within the EU immigration policy has an important consequence on the effectiveness of the EU interventions. Immigration is treated mostly as a question of inflows control and of entry and residence regulation; the other aspects of migration and the conditions required for a progressive and effective integration into the hosting society are discussed separately or sporadically, without being the object of binding decisions.

Many EU political sectors deal with aspects of migration management, immigrant workforce or immigrant social inclusion, but the panorama is broken into pieces and political consistency is not visible, because sectors’ priorities are not often congruent. As argued by Hollyfield (1997) EU lives a flagrant contradiction between market logic and political logic. From a liberal perspective, member states are obliged to support the permeability of frontiers in order to answer to their free-trade economy needs; on the other hand, they’re worried about the negative impact that immigrants could have on national identity, social cohesion etc. «[…] This paradox of liberalism, is at the heart of public debate on immigration in Europe and one of the major causes of the slow progress towards a more generous proactive common immigration policy in the EU» (Martiniello 2006: 321).

Concerning EU immigration policy, Martiniello (ibidem: 320) also talked about a sort of “schizophrenia”, arguing that «on the one hand, they (member states) declare they want to set up a common immigration policy. On the other, national bureaucracies cling to their national sovereignty». Than, «the restrictive, security-oriented approach is widely accepted by most Member states».

This accent on security and frontier controls has consequences on the visibility of the other aspects of immigration and EU policies on migrations. The more common association in EU policies and probably in EU citizens’ minds is between immigration and insecurity, and only marginally between immigration and labour market needs or demographic changes. It is also important to highlight the importance of the kind of documents and actors which construct, with their political discourse, these kind of associations: EC and JAI have pointed out their attention on the missing link between integration and professional insertion into the labour market, discrimination and integration, social cohesion and equality of treatment, and have invested in some political instruments, like the OMC, in order to catalyse a sort of common movement of national reforms, oriented by EU guidelines. Nevertheless, the documents presented and discussed by these actors haven’t produced a political effect able to transform these intentions and principles into legislative measures: the Council and the interest of some member states to defend their own sovereignty on matters like immigration remains strong. As

What complicates the reconstruction of the “immigration puzzle” is also the constant rehierarchization of concepts, procedures, actors and influences at the EU level. The cognitive dimension of the EU immigration policy, if one exists, is something blurred. Other EU political areas, like the European Social Policy, have been integrated in more concrete programs on employment and social inclusion, being accompanied by substantial financial instruments. The EES is a cognitive frame and a political discourse which permits member states to construct, to confront and to evaluate their national policies in a common framework. This doesn’t mean that an effort of coordination produces a convergence of policies. Nevertheless, some legislative-ambitious works, as documents produced by EC or OCDE, compete to the construction of the symbolism of the political sectors. The process dealing with the normative construction of political-action categories is visible: the “validity” of some terms as “workfare”, “social inclusion”, etc. is accepted through their penetration in the current language of policy-makers. If convergence of national normative references isn’t evident, a common “verbal substrate” justifies and legitimises some political orientations to the detriment of others. As synthesised by Barbier (2004), the example of “activation” within the framework of social security reform is emblematic: «As a policy notion, activation certainly belongs to the current mainstream discourse and its international jargon. It is grounded on the very common assumption that welfare states are now inefficient (too ‘passive’) and no more sustainable (especially the continental ones); consequently, “activation” strategies are deemed to be universal answers for reasons of increased efficiency and equity (‘the work pays’ motto)».

In considering the place of immigrants in EU discourses on employment, social security and vocational training, the problem shifts to categorization: immigrants become one element composing the wide population of a “weak part of the society” that needs help in order not to be excluded, as underlined in DL 9, 1999. What kind of political consistency can we find between this vision of “migrations” and the liberal approach, which see in immigrants one of the keys of the economic progress?

An important consideration has to be done in regards to vocational training and immigration policies: in the European political discourse, vocational training and Life Long Learning are strongly related to new labour market needs, to policies oriented to the decrease of unemployment rates, to “flexicurity” and to the new forms of auto-social-protection against precariousness. The cognitive framework tends to strongly associate social protection, labour market policies and fiscal policies, when the traditional distinction between social, family and labour policies is vanishing.

No mentions to the immigrant workforce contribution and to the potentialities of vocational training and LLL as instruments of the immigrants’ integration into the host society. The only explicit link between immigration, vocational training and integration is the EC declaration of intention, concerning vocational training programs and language courses to be implemented in the countries of origin, in order to «help immigrants more specifically to acquire new professional skills and to set in motion an adaptation process before departing for the host member state» (Bertozzi 2007: 11).

Are we to think that the fight against precariousness in EU is a political discourse concerning only EU citizens? Why are integration and professional insertion into the labour market clearly linked and vocational training and integration of immigrants are not?
Are we to think, as suggested by Lødemel and Trickey (2001), that “workfare” is becoming the paradigm of a new “ethic of citizenship”? In this perspective, “work” becomes a due counterpart for social services, which symbolise a change into the balance between the rights and obligation of a citizen vis-à-vis the social assistance, and more generally vis-à-vis the state. Does this new ethic of citizenship draw up immigrants’ rights and “classic” EU citizens’ rights?

Actually, EU documents on legal immigration for economic purposes, consider immigration as a resource only in two cases: the first, entry and residence of low qualified workforce, in specific productive sectors where workforce is insufficient; the second, entry and residence of high skilled immigrants, supposed to increase the “scientific” capital of a Europe forced to compete with more and more dynamic markets.

In this perspective, no need to invest in vocational training as an element of integration: if a re-qualification process is necessary for the immigrant workforce, it will be the matter of professional sectors and their local/national actors, and it will be a process much more linked to the evolution of the market needs that to “integration dynamics”.

7. Actors and political discourses

EU policy-makers and stakeholders are responsible for the construction of Europe, as a mix of institutions, decisional processes, financial tools, political socialisation opportunities etc. From a multilevel Europeanization point of view, active networks of stakeholders and coordination procedures need a local humus to be effective and to catalyse policy change: a receptive civil society, an administrative flexibility and adaptation, a capacity of absorbing and reformulating other political experiences.

In the plural “immigration area”, two institutional actors are the core of the networks between EU, national and local protagonists of policies construction and implementation: the DG Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities (DG Employment) and the DG Justice, Freedom and Security (DG Justice). The former has competences on employment, labour market and vocational training, social inclusion, social protection and equality; the latter intervenes on legal immigration, asylum and frontier controls, civil justice, rights and citizenship, internal security and penal justice.

The European Commission, the European Parliament, the JAI, and in particular agencies linked to the two DG mentioned above, have opened up spaces for autonomous action to a series of new actors: in the case of the immigration issue, the fragmentation of responsibilities and the reference to a multiplicity of EU sectorial areas, make the coexistence of different status groups and contradictory discourses possible. EU empowerment is also this: to openly encourage actors, specific forms of organisation and their discourse, to take advantage of the gaps between EU and the states.

The mobilised instrument is, before legislation, the language and the diffusion of a political discourse (Kallestrup 2002). Schmidt and Radaelli (2004) talk about “discursive institutionalism”, where discourse becomes a transformative force in EU policies: «discourse can change the preferences of actors, reformulate policy problems, make a style more confrontational or more cooperative, and can also increase or decrease the value of resources» (Radaelli 2004: 8).

Discourse represents an interactive process implying: 1) the construction of a set of ideas actors use to make sense of reality, to formulate problems, etc; 2) the stage for policy formulation and the search of a political coherence; 3) the communication with the public and the confrontation between the actors regarding various discourse.

At the EU level, the discourse on labour market needs and that on immigration have different characteristics and potentialities, in relation to the “influence capital” towards other politic-
Recomposing the puzzle. Europeanization and the integration of immigrants

In this perspective, it seems that the EU discourse on labour market has a more evident connotation of “governmental mode” compared to the immigration discourse. Indeed, it combines: a) a series of common representations, b) a series of political-power technologies and, c) a sort of codification of the relationship between the government referents and their recipients, in a new wide citizenship perspective.

The immigration discourse is still plural. This does not mean that all actors of the EU labour market area share a common vision of problems and policies to solve them. Nevertheless, a common way of thinking of problems is clearly increasing its diffusion, also thanks to a shared and “comprehensible” vocabulary.

The immigration issue, as underlined before, is treated in a number of ways and political areas. The links between these areas are complicated and not always consistent. It’s impossible to find a common approach on immigration, both in a “securitising” and in an “integration” perspective. The grammar of the immigration EU discourse is still under-construction: integration, despite the efforts of EC and the EU advocacies to clarify the term’s significance, it has not a unique meaning and its interpretation is still strongly linked to the national immigration history and tradition; “immigrant” has different meanings too, according to national citizenship legislations. Even in an EU perspective, “immigrant” carries a set of different associations with positive and negative phenomena, which contribute to the elasticity of the term’s utilisation.

In this perspective we point out our attention to the strategy of local actors and policymakers to disguise or to justify domestic policies and definitions, under the umbrella of Europeanization, by using Europe as a sort of legitimizing label for local choices, or by the reference to a national tradition (Guiraudon 2006; Favell 2001). Radaelli notes that «Domestic actors can use Europe in many discretionary ways […]. They may get entrapped in European discourse and socialisation processes that cannot be captured by a narrow notion of impact» (2004: 4).

Börzel and Risse (2003) also point out the attention to actors and their capacity to react to pressures and opportunities. The authors concentrate on “veto players” and “supporters of formal institutions”, capable of creating new opportunities and redistributing resources to national and local actors. In this way they contribute to differentiating the empowerment of actors, to political socialisation and learning. But as noted by Radaelli, «Domestic actors can use “Europe” even in absence of pressure. They can adapt domestic policy and produce change independently of pressures arising out of institutional misfit […]. Actors can also choose and learn from Europe outside adaptational pressures» (2004: 7).

8. The French case and Marseille

We will focus now on the French case and on Marseille, by using in particular the political discourse of actors to highlight some processes related to the relationship between local policies and political vocabulary, the national heritage and the European orientations.

8.1. The “French integration attitude”: Work and training

Modern society became a wage earning society; to be integrated into the labour market means to have a paid job and the rights attached to it to benefit from the social security system. However these benefits are frequently proportional to the status of the employee, and therefore
the matrix of integration in society.

The French republican model of integration functioned so long as employment and social protection were controlled by the Keynesian convention of full employment. The irruption of mass unemployment completely put out of order the “integration machine”. The rationing of employment sharpened the competition between the outsiders (Salais, Raynaud, Bavarez 1986) and relegated some of them to the periphery of the internal markets, and therefore made it so that integration through work, in particular for the immigrant populations, has become less automatic (22).

In the model of integration operating until the middle of the Seventies, the qualification was the solution. It was built on the basis of seniority and only marginally through training. This was particularly the case for immigrants who integrated frequently informal job markets (23). Access to an employment carried a double advantage: the acquisition of a professional status and the accumulation of human capital by the means of seniority.

The ability to climb the social ladder has increasingly been weakened and the field of vocational training is particularly emblematic in the search for new collective regulations. It is thus relevant to analyze these training programs, in particular to understand the way in which they are implemented, on various levels and fields of the public action (24), and the way they treat the question of the immigrant workers (Ambrosini 1999, 2001; Paugam 2000; OECD 1998).

8.2. From France to Marseilles districts: The heritage of the République?

In France, no representative legitimacy is accorded to any organisation which has an obvious link with religious or ethnic minorities (De Rudder, Poiret, Vourc’h 2000). French migratory policy has been for a long time based on a form of assimilation’s republicanism, i.e. immigrants are to be integrated via insertion on the labour market and an equal access to the institutions of the Republic (Guiraudon 2006). Public initiatives are inextricably related to the concept of equality, which is at the base of any official intervention and which automatically implies the refusal of “affirmative actions” towards ethnic categories. The actual tendency in France is to target specific groups (25) while excluding to take into consideration ethnic differences and wanting to ensure equal opportunities. Moreover, Virginie Guiraudon reminds us that, «the political solutions depend on institutional installations carried out before» (2006: 269), by underlining the weight of certain “pathologies” (Favell 2001) bestowing legitimacy on specific actors, while condemning a priori certain other measures.

However in certain French towns, as in Marseilles, the immigrant population suffers from multiple socio-economic disadvantages, concentrated in urban geographical areas. This has

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22. Precarious employment and the situations of “lack of a statute”, today, as in the past, are more frequent among the young people, women, non-graduates, the immigrants and the populations of foreign origin, these last often joining together several of the preceding conditions (Tripier 1991).

23. This integration by work (Castel 1995) and the social protection which was attached to it, never functioned very well in the case of the immigrants (Beaud, Pialoux 1998) but nevertheless it remains that stabilization in employment made it possible for many of these workers to reach the principal attributes of the social citizenship.

24. Crucial is in this sense the recently developed analysis by Lascoumes and Le Galès stating the following definition: «an instrument of public action constitutes at the same time a technical and a social tool which organizes specific social relationship between the public power and its recipients according to the representations of the significances which it is carrying» (Lascoumes, Le Galès 2004), translated by the author.

25. Disable people, unemployed people, seniors.
created a sort of cognitive dissonance between the French model and its capacity of adaptation vis-à-vis the challenges of social cohesion and the republican equality principle.

The importance of “ethnic” categorization and the methods of their production within the public institutions were underestimated for a long time. These institutions always functioned in the name of an “egalitarian legislation” and for the general interest. However, as Damian Moore underlines, «they have sometimes, with the image of the FAS (Fund of Social Action), introduced into their operational system and their treatment of the populations some specific standards and differentiated procedures when allocating resources, legitimising the idea of «foreign minorities» on the French territory» (pag. 7). The French State does not deliberately create new categories. However, through its efforts to create employment, to promote vocational training, to reclassify the employees, the State is forced to use some sort of classification. Which kind of cognitive referents and which ideological constructions underpin these categories (26)?

Moreover, since 1974, France has developed an immigrant integration discourse, the effects of which are contradictory: on one hand the government claims that to integrate immigrant populations it is necessary to prohibit all new economic entries into the country; unfortunately, this policy discredits the immigrants already living there and helps create a social category with a negative connotation. The risk is to develop a perception of the immigrants as a “problem”, distinguishing between those who have the characteristics to be integrated and those who are supposed to return home (27).

French public opinion is not favourable any more to the reforms which bring direct advantages to the immigrants (Ethnobarometer 2003): in this context, as underlined by Virginie Guiraudon, «the decision makers developed several strategies of dodging [...] by reducing the visibility of the reform» (2006: 275), a fact which also implies a restricted range of political action on the matter. On one hand, some employers call for more immigrant workers, and human rights groups call for a higher level of immigrant rights and freedom. On the other hand, voters tend to punish political positions judged too “soft” in immigration issue (Luedke 2006).

The state avoids involving itself in measures favouring integration of the immigrants. France shows a preference for more discrete forms of intervention i.e. to fight against discrimination or to promote “social cohesion”.

8.3. The investigation in PACA: The regional dimension of the local observation

The exploratory investigation in PACA represents the first step towards an analysis of the categories adopted by the authorities in the field of migratory policies. The institutional framework has evolved with the introduction of decentralization by conferring an important place in the regional dimension of the regulations, on vocational training (Bel, Méhaut, Mériaux 2003) and partially on local management of the immigrant presence (28).

This pre-investigation aimed at locating the political-normative frame of reference which

26. To describe these processes of categorical assignment, the Anglo-American social sciences have adopted since the ‘70s the concept of “ethnicity”. The word “ethnicity” is in France carrier of phantasms which insinuate the existence of ethnic groups and their constitution in political forces within the Nation. They evoke the idea of an “ethnic community” in complete opposition with the French national tradition, which melts the democracy on the direct bond between the citizen and the State. This last refuses essentially the collective mediations to be addressed only to individuals.

27. Declaration of the last Minister of Interior Department, Nicolas Sarkozy, appeared in the article “Immigration: the turn on the right”, Le Monde, 28th April 2003.

28. We refer in particular to the implementation of the CAI (Contrat d’Accueil et d’Intégration) Platforms at the departmental level.
determines the implementation of the territorial policies in PACA and in particular in the districts of the town of Marseilles. One of the analyzed elements is the language of the actors and the way of defining their actions.

We make the assumption that in PACA local authorities tend to remain discrete in the field of “integration policies”, preferring to tackle the question through more general policies i.e. fighting against exclusion and discrimination following an egalitarian principle. The discourse of the territorial actors can thus be analyzed as a reflection of the political-normative tendencies of the French approach, but also as a strategic choice of local actors in order to profit from the different financial opportunities, like the FSE programs.

Moreover, by analysing some specific policies and the transversal case of vocational training, we will be able to decipher the inter-institutional dynamics and the relations of collaboration, negotiation, or competition between the institutions concerned with hosting newly-arrived immigrants and those who accompany people in general towards employment opportunities.

The basic assumption of our exploratory investigation is that public assistance targeting the immigrant population is limited to the phase of reception of the newly arrived immigrants (29). The object is to pursue the goal of orienting them towards common law institutions, where the egalitarian principle is respected. In regards to sectorial policies, for example employment or vocational training, we assume that the target categories defined by the public bodies are of a more general nature i.e. age, income level or the status on the labour market (unqualified young people, seniors, unemployed people, RMIste).

This first investigation consisted of semi-directive interviews with administration managers, elected officials, heads of department and representatives of associations which in one way or another take part in the definition of problems. The analysis of the documents, which were produced by the workgroups and the teams piloting the analytical tools of the policies, accompanied the investigation throughout.

8.4. Marseille: The missing link between immigration, social cohesion and vocational training policies

We chose to analyze in more detail the Departmental Plan of Reception [PDA (30)] and the Politique de la Ville, or the Urban Policy (31).

29. The institutionalization of a category of “newly arrived immigrants” is more visible in France (“primo-arrivants”) since the creation of the CAI in 2005, proposed to newcomers into the French territory and immigrants having the conditions to remain thanks to a residence permit for reasons of work, family reunions, asylum or regularization (in this case, to be newly arrived is not a condition for signing the CAI).

30. The Departmental Plan of Reception is one of the public instruments specifically conceived to facilitate the reception, the integration and the orientation of the immigrants towards public services. It intervenes at the department level (Bouches du Rhône) and it constitutes a network of partners (institutional and associative, specialized in the immigration field or not) in charged of the policies to prepare foreigners for life in France. The Prefecture is the legal referent and the DDASS (Direction Départementale des Affaires Sanitaires et Sociales) is in charge of animating the network.

31. The Politique de la Ville (PdV) is a contractual policy between the Prefecture, representing the State, the Town of Marseilles, the Regional Council, the Departmental Council and the ACSE’ (Agence pour la Cohésion Sociale et l’Egalité). The object of PdV is to deal with “difficult” districts and their resident populations, according to social-economic imbalances relating to the rate of unemployment, failure at school, levels of insecurity, the degradation of housing, etc.
8.4.1. Vocational training: A transversal analysis

A first analysis of the PACA investigation data underlines the poor investment in vocational training done by the partners of the PDA. The role of the Points of Support (Réseau des Points d’Appui), within the PDA, is limited to a reorientation of immigrants towards the specialized structures of the vocational training programs such as AFPA (32) or towards the competent professional institutions [ANPE (33)].

At the territorial level, associations set up training programs. These programs are of short duration and lack formal recognition i.e. the recipients do not perceive an economic indemnity (as in the case of the training programs with the Region label) and the training does not give access to real professional skills but rather to basic complementary knowledge (ex: PC basic skills, etc.). In the framework of the PDA, the major interest is to assist immigrants in the very first phase of acclimatization and/or resolution of administrative problems. This relegates the importance of investing in a qualification for integration via the labour market. In most cases, the precarious social status of immigrants prevents them from starting to look for a specific professional skill.

Despite the presence of a sectorial axis on “access to the vocational training and employment” in official documents of the PDA, concrete actions have not been realised. Normally, within the framework of the CAI, the ANPE and the Local Missions are supposed to invest in facilitating access of immigrants to national job agency…but the principal obstacle seems to be the lack of communication between the ANAEM (34) and these public services, which do not have sufficient human resources and instruments to look after the immigrant population.

The ANAEM limits its action to trainings only in the field of civic behaviour (35) and French learning, reorienting the immigrants who want to get a professional qualification to general services of ANPE.

In the case of PdV, the training activities implemented in the districts of Marseille are reduced to micro-actions that couldn’t be defined as professional ones, but rather actions that aim to “re-activate” a marginalised public from the employment system (36).

Young people interested in a more structured training are reoriented towards the specialized services of the ANPE, the AFPA and the Regional vocational Training programs, which however are not effectively coordinated.

In general, the effectiveness of the decentralization process and the transfer of duties to the Region in the field of vocational training, has resulted in a total disengagement of the other organizations that before the reform had invested themselves in the implementation of specific training activities. The administrative reorganization and the sectorial reform play a fundamental role in the redefinition and the negotiation of duties of local actors, and territorial collaborations.

8.4.2. The influence of national political-normative referents and their diversions

In PACA as in France in general, the programs aimed at improving the conditions of the underprivileged, while not taking into account ethnic background as a criterion in resources distribution, seem to occult their target public: the Politique de la Ville for example, worked

32. Association nationale pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes.
33. The national job agency (Agence Nationale Pour l’Emploi).
34. Agence Nationale pour l’Accueil des Etrangers et des Migrations, in charge of the CAI policy.
35. Based basically on French culture and institutions knowledge.
36. Ateliers on CV redaction, meetings with employers, etc.
out forms of public intervention based on the place of residence whereas these measures were intended firstly for categories of immigrant origin. These policies were defined through the formula of “positive territorial discriminations” (Béhar, Estèbe, Epstein 1998). By way of this territorial approach of redistribution, immigrants profit in a disproportionate manner from some actions, because of their residential high representation in the districts named “problematic”.

Other indirect elements take part in the definition of the problematic of certain urban territories, where ethnicity emerges timidly: in the case of the Zones d’Education Prioritaire (ZEP), the percentage of foreign residents as well as the rate of unemployment are transformed into criteria for obtaining additional public credits which allow the implementation of specific educational activities (Morel 2002).

The militant voices of PdV defend the indirect “discriminating” approach while rejecting the ethnic dimension as a way of synthesizing the peculiarities characterizing the target populations: «la politique de la ville c’est faire de la discrimination positive là où ça déconne» (int.). The territorial approach becomes a privileged instrument that is able to intervene on problems whose ethnic dimension is indirectly visible, without exposing the public actors and by presenting the actions as general practices in favour of the residents of the city’s “exclusive” geography.

The principle of equality is thus diverted, without the risk of a direct posting of ethnic categorizations of public interventions. However, the city’s authorities’ policy aims at «thinking about accommodating the territorial practices to laws and vice versa» (int.), wishing that the national context would adapt to operational mechanisms of these local interventions by changing national orientations on the matter, in a bottom-up perspective.

8.4.3. Political discourse

The majority of actors do not assert an “integration policy”. Many public and private actors prefer to talk about fighting discrimination and striving for equal opportunities rather than about promoting integration. That is in phase with the governmental stress on these concepts since 1997 (Guiraudon 2006). Some actors refuse to define their actions as integrative ones in the very name of integration: according to them, a policy targeting immigrants implies specific instruments which would cause stigmatization. Programs that are conceived especially for immigrants, if not in a first phase of reception, are rejected and a general and territorial approach of social problems is preferred.

Within the framework of the Politique de la Ville, for example, the integration of the immigrant population is promoted by means of “district” actions, which represent an accepted diversion from the equality principle (Béhar, Estèbe, Epstein 1998), which allows the State and these local referents not to be accused of inconsistency. The ethnic dimension is indirectly visible and is associated to other “disadvantaging” characteristics, but it is not presented as a determining factor for the eligibility to particular rights.

Within the framework of the policies we have analysed (PdV, PDA), the development of a decentralized territorial approach is realised so that public and private actors can target specific groups while the central government avoids ethnic ways of intervention.

In the case of procedures introduced by the CAI (Contrat d’Accueil et d’Intégration), the relevant actors speak about integration without initially agreeing on the term’s significance and its concrete implications. It is understood that everyone comprehends what the objectives are: blurred concepts finally allow a dialogue whose terms are apparently familiar, but whose actors pursue extremely different goals.

As underlined by Gaxie, «polysemy and the ambiguity of concepts [...] feed misunderstandings» while pushing discourses on integration and immigration “to diversified political uses”
PDA actors also prefer to use the concept of “accompanying”, which refers to the provisional statute of newly arrived immigrants that require particular and temporary assistance to be integrated in the system of the “common legislation”. In general, territorial public actors prefer the “fight against discriminations” or “accompanying” of underprivileged persons to the “integration” formula.

The generalist dimension of the policies fighting discriminations, which includes sexists forms of discrimination and those related to physical and mental handicaps, makes it possible to render the ethnic dimension of the problem “invisible”.

Hence, from the late 1990s on, France chose a progressive engagement in the construction of a policy fighting discriminations that can be found as much at the national level (38) as at the local level. This policy is supposed to solve the failures of the republican model of integration. As for public consensus, this policy is much more able to avoid radical forms of rejection than actions openly in favour of immigrants. This “new” policy of fighting discrimination does not seem to have introduced a real operational revolution in the manner of treating the question of immigrants integration.

At the local level, the public and private actors’ discourse seems to reflect the governmental approach: anti-discriminations actions are the core of the Politique de la Ville, as exemplified in the accompanying actions aimed at facilitating employment, and it seems that concrete practices reflect the logic of institutional visions perceived “at the top”, at least from a language point of view.

Nevertheless, at the territorial level, practices, which are more or less formal, are distinguished and untie themselves from the national strategy and vocabulary. The Marseille example of Confluences Méditerranéennes association is interesting: originally financed by the Departmental Council to follow only the reintegration of immigrant beneficiaries of RMI (39), it currently collaborates with employment public services (40) by assuring the accompaniment of immigrants, mostly women. The centre of its activity is based on training constructed to “integrate” the multiple cultural registers of unemployed immigrants that frequently constitute handicaps to their employability, in particular in the case of women’s mobility (41). Confluences Méditerranéennes works thus as a complement of public action.

The fact that collaborations are irregular and that the number of recipients is small, when compared to the scope of potentially concerned individuals, are obvious limits. But that does not prevent us from seeing an indirect awareness of peculiarities of some categories, such as immigrants, in the financial and symbolic recognition of this action by public services. Moreover, this recognition may imply an awareness of potentialities regarding experimental forms of intervention in the private field, whose effectiveness sometimes forces national actors to modify the normative referents and the categorization approach.

Marseille can be regarded as a local mirror of the French system of immigration management, if we limit our analysis to the public action in the field of immigrant “integration” or non-discrimination policies and their formulation in formal discourses; nevertheless, certain

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37. Translated by the author.
38. A major result of this process was the institution of the HALDE (Haute Autorité de Lutte contre les Discriminations et pour l’Égalité) as a referent for this policy.
40. In particular ANPE, Local Missions and the referents of the Politique de la Ville.
41. In the case of women, often of Maghreb origin, they’re forced to refuse job opportunities that imply regular trips towards places disserved by public transports: they haven’t an owned car, and relatives prohibit or sometimes discourage the autonomous movement with motorcycles or similar which have been loaned by public services.
specifications must be developed: on one hand, there is the different effectiveness of the decentralisation process in the vocational training sector, where competencies are truly transferred to the Region and were local declinations are much more visible; on the other hand, examples like Confluences Méditerranéennes show us the elastic definition of categories at the local level, which can contribute to highlighting the specific territorial chemistry that results from the negotiations between local public and private actors.

Conclusions

The intersection of duties, the blurred definitions and the multiplicities of local policies show how difficult it is to establish an “integrated” system of establishing responsibility regarding the integration of immigrants firstly into the labour market, but also in a more enlarged conception (42).

Territorialized public action is divided between specific actions of receiving foreigners and more general interventions whose beneficiaries are people “in difficulty” or defined according to general characteristics like age or qualification level. This is in phase with the French approach, well synthesised in the French contribution to the second annual report on immigration and integration in Europe (43): when the EC asked for information about the French legislation on equality of rights and opportunities for immigrants, France listed all social and economic aspects of life; but when the question touched the specific initiatives to promote the access of immigrants to health services, housing, employment and integration, answers were much more brief and “empty”. The French initiatives addressed wide categories of persons in difficulty, without a specific mention to origin or ethnic belonging. In this perspective we cannot assert that the Open Method of Coordination produced significant results, or a convergence trend.

Local actors in Marseille adopt a very similar discourse: anti-discrimination policies are implemented in every city of France, by the Politique de la Ville, Regional and Departmental Councils, etc. Affirmative actions are not diffused and if “integration” policies are implemented, they are not dedicated to a specific category: the objective is the “social inclusion”, which has impressed the Lisbon European Council and the French Presidency (44), and which is composed by a set of recipients where immigrants play the walk-on part. We feel that the fact the EU grammar of the immigration discourse is still under-construction plays a role in this liberty of action: integration has not a unique meaning; why should France and local actors feel the need to converge towards an indefinite (and not binding!) conception of policy making in the immigration field?

Within the local political discourse on immigration in Marseille, “transversality” and “collaboration” are two key elements. They are regarded not simply as two instruments, but as two basic needs and, one would be tempted to say, as the basic criterion to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions. In matters of “integration” and social inclusion, the coordination between different fields of intervention is conceived as the only way to deal with these kinds of problems. The actors’ vision of the collaborative dimension, as if it were an objective in itself, highlights the danger caused by the fact that the actors’ attention is more directed at the concret-

42. Economic, political and social inclusion; see Zincone (2000; 2001).
44. Since 2005 the Labour Minister has included the concept in its denomination and France adopted the Loi n°2005-32 du 18 janvier 2005 sur la cohésion sociale.
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Although the accent on transversality, the French system seems to remain a sectorial one and the fragmentation of the specific duties of each public actor has become an obstacle to the implementation of a coordinated public service addressed to immigrants: the actors’ specialization is translated into sector-based policies (social, housing, culture, employment), which pain at finding transversal platforms of discussion and coordination. The articulation between policies specifically intended for immigrants (newly arrived) and the common right policies at the sectorial level is often difficult to achieve or is at most discontinuous. In the case of Marseille and of the two analysed policies, we noted that the Prefect’s role appears central, and with regards to questions related to the immigrant population, he has the capacity to catalyse a series of collaborations between actors that would not spontaneously work together. However, if collaborations are born thanks to political good-will of a Prefect, these same collaborations are likely to disappear following institutional changes. The personalization of institutional relations is sometimes synonymous with “informality” and “instability”.

The territorialized dimension of public action was on several occasions indicated as one solution, as an advantageous dimension that can catalyse coordination processes.

However, the analysis of the local policies in Marseille highlighted territorialisation effectiveness only as an element of proximity, involving access to a certain number of services for recipients, but not necessarily implying coordination between actors.

The analysis of a city case as Marseille shows us that local reinterpretations, even in a state characterised by a long centralisation tradition like France, are visible and that local priorities and political tools are constantly re-defined. The example of Confluences Méditerranéennes is emblematic.

Specific actions towards immigrants in the vocational training field are not visible, so that motivated people are continuously reoriented towards public services, according to the egalitarian principle and to the “non-discriminative” creed. Policies of vocational training are developed and regarded as instruments of integration into the labour market and in society. The link between social inclusion and work is strongly visible. France is one of the member states which has dedicated a particular attention to the European approach on LLL, and is one of the national contexts where the local public and private actors, firms and employers associations, have been the most reactive. But in the case of immigrants, the link between integration and vocational training concerns them from the moment they leave a first transitional stage of acclimatization: immigrants are called to take advantage of qualification opportunities “like everyone”. For this reason, vocational training does not represent an element of the immigration policies, but of the “social cohesion” general plan. Our hypothesis is that better integrated immigrants are more likely to seize these qualification opportunities, and that a transitional stage of “weak” insertion (45) into the labour market is a sort of a precondition to the mobility through training.

A comparison is likely to be useful in order to put French peculiarities into perspective via the analysis of the Italian case and the characteristics of a regional situation.

The comparison allows us to contextualise the governmental references and the “societal coherences” of the two regions (Maurice 1989: 175-191), emphasising the differences and the analogies between them in the way they try to control labour market functioning and to integrate foreign workers within the framework of vocational training.

45. Informal jobs, precariousness, limited social protection, undervalued professional capital and qualifications, concentration in “Three D” employments; see Ambrosini 1999; Tripier 1991; Viet 1998; Carchedi 1999.
The study of local policy evolution and implementation could be seen as an interesting element of analysis of the “societal coherences” (Verdier 2000) identifiable in the two selected territories. The goal is to verify local dynamics and territorial specific policy making processes, to highlight both regional “societal coherences” and the specific city-level capability of negotiating ad-hoc political solutions, according (or not) to national judicial and ideological traditions.

Moreover, it would be interesting to integrate the macro-sociological approach with a step aimed at rebuilding the migratory and professional courses of immigrant workers in order to compare “official” strategies to individual logics. Thus, would vocational training be the solution desired by immigrants to avoid the risks of mobility and precariousness? The integration of the institutional and the individual dimension will thus permit us to consider the evolution and the shift of “integration” meaning, according to the perspective of the different actors. Do immigrants and institutions speak the same language?

The analysis of some specific labour sectors in which immigrant workers are more represented, such as construction, could be an interesting dimension for focussing on specific policies and relation dynamics of actors at a local level.

To analyse the impact of vocational training and qualification level on the ascending mobility of immigrant workers, a specific attention will be dedicated to the career trajectories of immigrants that have evolved from a dependent worker status to an entrepreneurship position. The discontinuity of the career trajectories towards an independent occupation and the mobility through many different dependent employments highlight the role played by a set of factors: the social resources linked to the personal and familiar networks, and the characteristics of the local socio-economic and institutional context, where a “mixed embeddedness” (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993) paints the “opportunity structure” for the social mobility of the immigrants (Lodigiani 2006).

In this perspective it would be interesting to use the concept of social capital as an instrument to analyse the interactions between the dimension of the individuals and the institutional level, as the setting of policies and political instruments. In particular, we will distinguish between different typologies of social capital: to the classic dichotomy of “bonding” social capital and “bridging” social capital (Putnam 2004; Zanfrini 2003), heritage of the distinction introduced by Granovetter (1973) between strong and weak ties, we will integrate a third type of social capital, the “linking” one (Woolcock 2001). The linking social capital relates different people in different social contexts, characterized by a differentiation of economic and power positions, beyond the community of belonging. Thus, this kind of concept concerns the relationship between the immigrant and the institutions (46), which concurs to the construction of social networks and also to the development of a specific “opportunities strategy”, that orients the immigrant in its employment course.

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46. Local administrations, job agencies, associations, schools, vocational training institutes, etc.
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Recomposing the puzzle. Europeanization and the integration of immigrants


Abstract: The paper is divided into seven parts. The first part provides a brief historical background about Lebanon (periods of clashes, periods of peaceful coexistence, the situation before and after the pullout of the Syrian troops from the country, the fragility and deadlock of the current situation and the failure of what is termed “consociational democracy”. Furthermore, part I exposes a brief description of the delicate political makeup of the country. Some questions are arising nowadays: Will the Lebanese communities achieve friendly relations and peaceful coexistence based on fruitful dialogue and understanding? How to achieve a viable democratic stability in the present fragile Lebanon? The second part exposes well-established facts about the Lebanese identity. It includes historical and documented facts about the Lebanese Christians identity and their Canaanite - Aramaic origin. This part also addresses the Lebanese Identity at the constitutional level and suggests recommendations to redefine Lebanon identity (Aramaic and Arabic, not only Arabic) according to the well-established historical facts and commensurate with the real identities of its inhabitants. The third part entitled “the consociational democracy at risk: critical reflections and challenges” explores issues related to the democratic deficit in Lebanon, flaws in the electoral system and unfair elections, issue of corruption, lack of confidence in the State, wrong policies adopted by the Government, irresponsibility and delay in action, problems of the public administration, lack of tolerance, fundamentalism and polarization of the different communities, and challenges of accommodating Hezbollah. A sub-section exposes some remarkable deficiencies in the performance of some international actors vis-à-vis Lebanon, mainly: inaction, political expediency, and oversimplification. Part four tackles prospects for the future and some possible scenarios: Partitioning, Domination of one community over the other communities, Keeping the status quo, and Federalism. The fifth part is devoted to federalism and related issues: Can federalism be the solution?, Minimum essential requirements of Federalism, Some Barriers (the issue of power and the issue of community leadership, territorial difficulty to apply federalism, number of parts of the federal regime, duplication of the infrastructure, the Palestinian problem). Part VI provides some interesting recommendations related to: Lebanon identity, working on changing the blind ideologies, working on promoting a culture of tolerance, dialogue and understanding, reform of the educational system (including human rights education), state laicism and abolition of political confessionalism, fighting corruption, reforms and priorities, recommendations concerning the civil society, and the necessity to adopt a self-help mentality. The last part exposes some concluding remarks.

Lebanon is a country with a very delicate population structure and with a special formula of political power sharing, where people pertaining to the different religious affiliations are living side by side, coexisting together but far away from conviviality.

This country witnessed 15 years of civil war, and is still suffering from Syrian backed terrorist bombings destabilizing its security, and from continuously rising cleavages between the Lebanese as well as from escalating tensions in the internal political scene. Furthermore, Lebanon as a part of the Middle East constellation has endured and is still enduring the frustrating
realities and complexities of this region as a land of the long lasting Arab-Israeli conflict.

1. Background

Throughout the history, the different religious communities in Lebanon entered in clashes with each other: periods of co-existence and wars followed, in an endless circle of coexistence and conflicts. The multicultural society of Lebanon has experienced dark moments and still under the effects of its inherent darker side.

Ralf Dahrendorf explained this inherent darker side of a multicultural society arguing that «it does not take much to turn people of one group against those of others with whom they had apparently lived in peace» (Dahrendorf 2005).

One deleterious black mark in the Lebanese history was the 1861 massacre of Christians in Mount Lebanon (Malik 2005). Lebanon was ruled by the Ottoman Empire until WWI, and then it entered under the French mandate in 1918.

«Lebanon gained independence from the French mandate in 1943 and adopted an unwritten national covenant, agreed upon between Christians and Muslims, based on the principle of Co-existence between the country’s religious communities within a united, sovereign and independent state, member of the league of Arab states» (1). As a matter of fact, Lebanon has not lived, from the mid of the 19th century, in a period of genuine stability that exceeded 25 years. Prior to the Lebanese Civil war, Lebanon was regarded as a land of freedom, openness, pluralism, prosperity and stability - characteristics that lack in the neighboring Arab regimes (Malik 2003).

The different communities enjoyed a relatively equitable power sharing. However, the country was divided between two factions: a pro-Arab one, composed mostly of Muslims, and a Lebanese nationalist one, composed mostly of Christians.

From 1943 till 1975, «Lebanon enjoyed a financial success, while ethnic tensions remained unsolved» (2). From 1975 to 1989, the war destroyed the country, causing major massacres (3) between the two communities, but more on the Christian side. It resulted in extensive human losses, high level of migration, destruction of properties and of the country infrastructure, and a deteriorating economy.

This civil war resulted in remarkable losses at all levels and the impact of conflict on the Lebanese financial conditions was very profound (4). The military and political events during the war impacted the Lebanese economy in a tremendous way and this left negative traces on the Lebanese lifestyles (Corm 1998: 324). Furthermore, this war has eroded the foundation of the balanced institutional arrangement and the social conviviality in Lebanon (Bose 1991: 106).

As for the environmental infrastructure, it has also suffered from serious deterioration due to this war and after the unregulated activities of the reconstruction period (5). Lebanese democra-

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3. For instance year 1975 marked several massacres among them Damour and Jiyya massacres, two coastal Christian towns.
cy has been substituted by a distribution of powers and “sharing of the pie” among the different communities in Lebanon (Tueni 1991: 21).

1.1. Fragility and deadlock of the situation

The Taif agreement of 1989, ended the war, and called for the abolition of political sectarianism in favor of “expertise and competence”, and for the establishing of a “committee for abolishing confessionalism” (ibidem).

However, there was no progress vis-à-vis this matter and the committee has not yet been formed. This agreement has not rectified all the problems infecting the Lebanese society. Christians and Muslims in Lebanon have lived side by side for generations, but not really together. There was no effective dialogue between the two communities. The Lebanese have been unable to agree upon a common history, neither on the symbols of this history. One community’s hero could also be recorded as another community’s traitor (6).

Furthermore, Lebanon is characterized by a delicate political makeup. Politics in Lebanon are based on the principle of religious representation, which has been applied to every conceivable aspect of public life. The president, the prime Minister and the speaker of Parliament are Maronite Christian, a Sunni Muslim, and a Shiite Muslim respectively (7).

It is worthwhile to mention that Lebanon is made up of eighteen different religious sects, namely: Muslims (Sunnites, Shiites, Druses, Alawites) and Christians (Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Protestants, Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Latins, Syriac Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Copts and Jews). Each of the eighteen different religious sects in Lebanon is represented in numeric proportion throughout Lebanon’s government and civil service.

This matter of religious balance, was and still is a sensitive political issue in Lebanon, for that a national census has not been conducted since 1932. But the approximate numbers are 70 percent Muslims and the rest is Christian (ibidem).

Similarly political parties and movements are purely organized across confessional lines i.e. composed mostly from the same religious affiliation. Furthermore, they are associated to external regional actors and countries from this same affiliation. The “Future Bloc”, for instance, is upheld by the Sunni Saudi Arabia, while “Hezbollah” and “Amal” maintain close ties with the Shiite Iran and benefit from its support (International Crisis Group 2005).

This Taif political arrangement has not redressed the problem. The relations between the Christians and Muslims in Lebanon are still distorted. Lebanon’s First Postwar Parliamentary Election, in 1992, deepened the internal sectarian divide on the one hand and the divide between state and society on the other (Al Khazen 1992).

Extremists from the two sides (Muslims and Christians) are still conducting, from time to time, some terrorist activities in detriment of the other group.

For instance «in October 2001, there was an arson attempt at a Christian church in Tripoli and another explosive package was detonated at another church in a predominantly Muslim city. Two days later, a mosque in a Christian town was subjected to the same destiny» (ibidem).

Lebanon, which was considered once as the ‘Switzerland of the East’ (8), is nowadays

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suffering from a lot of problems, a deteriorating state of human rights, a democratic deficit as well as a crippling debt as a result of the wrong policies and strategies adopted by the Government. This debt (Net outstanding public debt) has reached at the end of March 2005 a value of LBP 49,261 billion [around $33 billion (9)].

This resulted in a lack of confidence and trust in the Lebanese State. During the Syrian occupation the pro-Syrian Lebanese troika and ruling élites were continuously undermining the picture of Lebanon for both the national and international public opinions and on the international political scene by contributing in the delay of a durable solution to the long-lasted Arab-Israeli conflict and by performing their outstanding role as puppets in the hands of the Syrian Regime.

1.2. After the Syrian troops pullout

Syria ended its 29-year military presence in Lebanon on 29 April 2005 (10). However, it is very naïve to assume that Lebanon has become a free and democratic state. The political landscape was not altered after the Syrian pullout from Lebanon. We are witnessing a political deadlock between the different political actors. The same ruling elites are still sharing the same pie. Nabih Berri, Amal leader (Shiite) and pro-Syrian, was overwhelmingly re-elected as speaker of the Lebanese parliament with 90 out of the 129 votes (11). Furthermore, the polarization of the Lebanese across confessional lines has been intensified.

The main participants of the anti-Syrian demonstrations and the so called “Cedar Revolution” which, coupled with a genuine pressure from the international community, led to the withdrawal of Syrian troops on 26 April 2005, were mainly Maronite Christians, Druze, and some Sunni Muslims. The Shiites (Lebanon largest community), guided by Hezbollah and Amal decided to support the prolongation of the Syrian presence in Lebanon (Ash 2005).

Everything can evolve into a confessional confrontation. There are no conclusive solutions in Lebanon. Everything is based on compromise even the number of the population, jobs, laws, and sometimes legal judgments.

Low level of political discourses and the use of a language saturated with aggression. We witness in Lebanon a deputy speaker of parliament who used publicly on the national television the expression: «they won’t eat our heads, (intimidate us), we will eat theirs» (Young 2005).

It is a system based on a culture of intimidation and on a “culture of fear” while the ruling élites are manipulating a “sectarian - clientalist politics” (Quilty 2005a).

The ruling élites themselves admit the presence of this delicate political reality in Lebanon. Former Minister of Interior and pro-Syrian Suleiman Franjieh, put it plainly «…we know the Lebanese, if they do what they want in politics, within a week we will tear each other up» (Ghattas 2005).

All this is exacerbated by the security services low level of performance and religious leaders influence in Lebanese politics.

Never before was Lebanon as detached and marginalized in the international system as it is today. «There is today an unprecedented lack of vision, lack of strategy, and lack of purpose among the Lebanese» (Al Khazen 1994). Lebanon is still stuck between consensus and confrontation.

Any political observer can undoubtedly notice that the current political landscape in Lebanon does not differ from that before the outbreak of the civil war.

In sum, Lebanon is undergoing a failure of its consociational democracy. Some questions are arising nowadays: will the Lebanese communities achieve friendly relations and peaceful co-

existence based on fruitful dialogue and understanding? How to achieve a viable democratic stability in the present fragile Lebanon?

2. The Lebanese identity

The Lebanese perceptions of their respective identities and of the State identity are still issues of primordial importance.

A public attitude survey conducted in August 2005 by Information International SAL commissioned by the Center for Democracy and the Rule of Law (CDRL) in order to examine the Lebanese choices of identity, found that 37.3% of the sample surveyed identify with their respective religious communities while 34% of those surveyed identify with Lebanon first (12).

The same survey showed that in the event of conflict between national interest and religious interest, 76.8% of the choice of identity change was in favor of the respective religious community (13). This survey shed clearly the light on the fragile and shaking national identity among the Lebanese. Lebanese loyalty to their communities surpasses their national one.

2.1. Historical facts about the Lebanese Christians identity

The fact that Lebanese Christians master the Arabic language does not make them Arabs. The same logic applies to the Lebanese who are highly skilful in both French and/or English language/s. This does not make them Frenchmen or Englishmen. A language may be an indication, but was never the sole determinant, of someone’s ethnic origin and it would be extremely naïve to consider it as such.

Denying the cultural and ethnic specificity of the Lebanese Christians and forcing them to assimilate their identity with the neighboring Arabic countries amounts to erasing their history and suppressing their culture.

The distinguished philosopher and theologian of Dialogue, Martin Buber described the deleterious effect of dominant power on determining history when he depicted it as «the most pernicious of all false teachings, that according to which the way of history is determined by power alone» (14).

This coercive suppression of culture exercised by the dominant culture, coupled with attempts to distort the reality, and the lack of interest of these minorities to uncover the truth, will exacerbate the erosion of their identity to a point where even its tiny traces will thoroughly disappear. Lack of knowledge and misleading transmission of expectedly true information can contribute in worsening the matter.

Will Rogers once said: «I’m not afraid of what people don’t know! I’m afraid of what people know and think is true!». For sure, Arabic culture left its marks and influence on Lebanese Christians. However, they still retain their pre-Arab historical legacy and their non-Arab identity.

2.2. At the constitutional level

The Lebanese Constitution of 1926 and its modification by the constitutional law of 9 November 1943 do not define Arab as the identity of the State. However, article 11 defines Arabic

as the official language of the State.

Article 11, as modified by the constitutional law of 9 November 1943, article 2, states: «Arabic is the official national language. A law shall determine the cases where the French language is to be used» (15).

The Taif Agreement of 1989, after 15 years of civil war, stipulated Arab as both the identity and belonging of Lebanon. «I. General Principles: B. Lebanon is Arab in belonging and identity …» (16).

2.3. If Lebanese Christians are mainly not Arabs, so what are they?

If we take into account the entire Lebanese population (Muslims and Christians), Lebanese are traced back to either one or a mixture of several ethnicities namely: Phoenician, Aramaic, Greek, Persian, Arab and Armenian (17).

As a matter of recorded historical facts, the first inhabitants of Lebanon were Canaanites. The Canaanites included the Hebrews and Aramaeans. The Aramaeans who settled in the present day Lebanon were known by Phoenicians (ibidem).

Ibn Al-Ibri said: «Chaldeans and Syriacs are from the same nation which is the Aramaic nation as referred to Aram, son of Sam who is the son of Noah» (Mrad 1974: 11).

This Aramaic Nation was divided into several states and princedoms. Every one of them was assigned a specific name, which distinguished it and was preceded by the word “Aram”. For instance: Aram Sour, Aram Damascus. And Lebanese inhabitants, as it is known, were the Phoenicians, which in their turn are a generation descending from the Syriacs (ibidem: 13).

Different armies, from the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Romans, conquered this geographic land, which was called Lebanon in the contemporary history. Christianity reached Lebanon from neighboring Galilee soon after the time of Jesus of Nazareth (18). The widespread of the Maronite faith was in the 5th and 6th Century by the disciples of St. Maron who fled from the present Syria and moved to Lebanon.

By the end of the 5th Century, the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon had been converted and had become Maronites (19). At that time the language practiced was Aramaic or Syriac.

Youssef El-Debs, scholar and Maronite archbishop and Maronite Chief of bishops of Beirut, reiterated several times in his Encyclopaedia “The Mundane and Religious History of Syria” the historical fact that the Maronites are a Syriac group. In the preamble to Volume 9 of his encyclopedia, archbishop El-Debs stated that: «the Maronites are a group of Syrian Syriacs who believed in the Christian faith from its inception and they stayed attached to the Catholic faith during the eruption of the storms of hearsay in Syria with the guidance of Saint Maron and his disciples …» (20).

This provides the clear explanation why the spoken Lebanese is quite different from the written Arabic (21). Spoken Lebanese is a mixture of Syriac and classic Arabic. The Maronite Churches still, to this moment of time, use partly the Syriac language in their liturgy (22).

The end of the 7th Century marked the advent of Arab and Persian newcomers to nowadays Lebanon. They took the Lebanese coast and the Bekaa valley as their settlements (23).

Another recent scientific finding adding more assertion to this historical fact is a recent study carried out by the National Geographic’s Committee for Research and Exploration. This study published in a National Geographic issue in 2004 entitled: “Who Were the Phoenicians?” revealed that a meticulous DNA testing has led to the conclusion that the Lebanese, Phoenicians and Canaanites are the same people (24). Therefore, it is a well-established historical fact that the origin of the majority of the Lebanese Christians and a part of the Lebanese Muslims is Canaanite-Aramaic (25).

2.4. Recommendations

It is of utmost necessity to redefine Lebanon identity according to the well-established historical facts and commensurate with the real identities of its inhabitants. This identity should be enshrined accordingly in the Lebanese constitution.

As a compromise, the article should read as follows: «Lebanon is Aramaic-Arabic in identity and belonging».

3. The consociational democracy at risk: Critical reflections and challenges

3.1. Democratic deficit in Lebanon

Lebanon has a very delicate structure. Its population is made up of seventeen religious communities [Sunnites, Shiites, Druses, Alawites, Maronites, Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Evangelicals, Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholics, Latins, Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Catholics, Chaldeneans, Assyrians, Copts and Jews (Committee on the elimination of racial discrimination 2003).

It has three branches of government: legislative, executive and judiciary. The Parliament (legislative power) is composed of 128 members divided equally between the two major religions (Muslims and Christians). And each sub-group or religious affiliation has a certain quota of parliamentary seats (26).

The Council of Ministers (executive power) is composed of thirty ministers according to the Taif Agreement that ended a fifteen-year civil war (1975-1990). Dividing power between Muslims and Christians in Lebanon is always ‘the rule of the game’. The President of the Republic is always Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister is Sunni, and the Speaker of the parliament is Muslim Shiite (ibidem). All the positions of the Public Administration follow the same ‘logic’ of sharing the ‘pie’. The public offices are distributed according to a quota for keeping communitarian equilibrium and not according to the competence and expertise.

This contradicts with the principle of ‘democratic participation for the public interest’ (Mes-sara 1997).

As for the political system in Lebanon, Lebanon illustrates a relatively failed power-sharing

arrangement (Steiner and Alston 2000). Politics in Lebanon can be classified as “pork barrel politics” (Mistry 2002).

Lebanon still suffers from, but not limited to, the following deficiencies.

The government is characterized by a weak internal cohesion, and the political system is governed across confessional lines and controlled by foreign interference, and has not yet recovered from the Syrian interference (27). The Syrian-Lebanese relationship is an imposed cooperation (Calleya 2002: 13).

In Lebanon, there are a lot of indicators about a serious democratic deficit. These are, but not limited to:

- the foreign interference, namely Syrian, on both foreign and internal policies and decision-making in Lebanon;
- the ruling elites are often former militia leaders who committed a lot of war crimes, confessional leaders and large capitalists. Most of them are corrupt and lack accountability (28);
- high government officials are using their power to involve in important real estate and large contracts to feed their own interests. This contradicts with the principle of separation of public from private interests;
- public corruption is widespread;
- the funds of municipalities are controlled by the Central government that allocates them according to a random way governed by the degree of loyalty to the government;
- activities of the civil society are limited by the governmental policies;
- the printed press is self-censored and high government officials own the majority of audio-visual media;
- political parties are constructed across confessional lines (Salem 1996);
- the judicial system in Lebanon suffers from problems as delays in cases, interference of the government (29).

Furthermore, Lebanon has a very bad record concerning the level of freedom. It is classified as a “Not Free” country. It has an index of 6 concerning the enjoyment of political rights, and a 5 index concerning civil liberties on a scale where 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free according to the Freedom House Index which uses 14 factors for its assessment such as - but not limited to - press free of censorship, freedom of assembly and demonstration, freedom of religion and free trade unions. Furthermore, Lebanon has a high corruption rank of 71 on a scale range 0-100 with a press freedom rank of 105 and democracy rank of 113 on a scale range of 0-149 (30). A noticeable political intervention in the work of the Judiciary. The parliamentarians


28. Even Jamil Al Sayed, the former Director General of the Lebanese General Security, outspoke in a defensive stance and reminded some of the ruling elites of their past by declaring that “… a criminal is not allowed, even he has become a minister or a parliamentarian, to accuse a security officer before the latter is indicted, and a chief of a gang is not allowed, even if he has become a minister or parliamentarian ...”. “Our pride is not a commodity to be manipulated by who lost his pride and by chiefs of gangs”, An-Nahar Newspaper (Arabic), Friday 18 March 2005, accessed from www.annaharonline.com.


amend laws according to their whims and their narrow personal considerations.

A recent illustrating example is the promulgation of a “mercy law” or an “amnesty bill” (31) for the Chief of the “Lebanese Forces” Samir Geagea and his friends and another one for the Dinniyeh and Majdel Anjar suspects under the disguise of national reconciliation process and the consolidation of peace and national unity.

3.1.1. Impartiality of elections

The same flaws and irregularities in the Lebanese elections are recurring in every round of elections. An illustrating example is the Baabda-Aley district Election Day in 2003 that was affected by series of irregularities facilitated by the Ministry of Interior in Lebanon. These irregularities included, but were not limited to: no secret balloting, outdated electoral lists, voting without the mandatory electoral card, change of the location of a voting center, non-availability of the list of candidates or blank papers in some voting centers at the start of voting operations, etc. (32). Elections in Lebanon are held but with limited choice like the elections held in non-democratic countries (Al Khazen 1996).

The Lebanese electoral mechanisms function according to the saying ‘money talks’. Campaign finance rules are absent. What is at stake is the role of money in politics and favors in exchange of votes. It is a typical patron-client relationship (Sader 1996). The recent elections of May and June 2005 exposed the fragility of the Lebanese system. It shed the light on the fake and temporary alliances aiming at temporary political gains and narrow personal considerations. International Crisis Group depicted these alliances as “opportunistic new alliances” (International Crisis Group 2005). They were overshadowed by strange alliances as of “Hezbollah” with “Amal” in the South, with “Saad Hariri” in Beirut, with “Walid Jumblatt” and the “Lebanese Forces” and “Qornet Chehwan Gathering” in Baabda- Alei”, and with “Free Patriotic Movement” in Jbeil (33).

No one was able to distinguish between the allies and the foes and what were the ideologies of the coalitions and their action plans. It seems that the Lebanese politicians have memorized well and are abiding by the famous saying “the ends justify the means” of the famous Italian political thinker Niccolò Machiavelli, no matter how unethical, mean and stingy these means are.

3.1.2. The issue of corruption

There is a widespread corruption among the officials in the Lebanese public administration at all levels and grades.

They are acting corruptly by «putting personal gain before public or corporate interests in their professional decision-making capacity» (Jones 1993). This corruption is the main obstacle to good governance.

A corruption assessment report on Lebanon released in January 2001 illustrates starkly the scandal of corruption in the Lebanese political system and its devastating impact on the Lebanese economy. This report, researched by Information International, and commissioned by the United Nations Center for International Crime Prevention, estimated that the Lebanese state squanders over $ 1.5 billion per year as a result of pervasive corruption at all levels of govern-

33. These parties were staunch foes during the Lebanese Civil War.
ment (34). This corruption infects the entire government hierarchy from the top governmental officials to the lowest grades employees in the public administration. This corruption has also led to a devaluation of productive work and work ethics in Lebanese society in general (35). Furthermore, it is noteworthy to say that the corruption in Lebanon is exacerbated by the confessional system (Salamed 2005).

3.1.3. Lack of confidence in the state

Citizens of Lebanon think that policies are untrustworthy and that politicians are mainly feeding their private interests (Chartouni). These politicians do not have the will to reform as to reform for them means to relinquish their power and influence.

If Lebanon will not reflect confidence, it will not grow and enter the globalization era. Thus it will remain isolated, and begging for the external assistance and the establishment of international conferences instead of attracting the fruitful investments (Hobeika 2002: 6).

3.1.4. Wrong policies adopted by the government

There is a current misallocation of public resources. One important aspect to notice in Lebanon is the useless high expenditures on defense and internal security. The fiscal crisis in Lebanon was the result of the Hariri government inappropriate policies and disorganized plan of reconstruction, increase in public wages for an inflated, unproductive bureaucracy. This combination of large expenditures and low taxes led to the continuous widening of the budget deficit and hence to the accumulation of debt (Dibeh 2000: 95) still heading towards the same trends. There is an obvious neglect of the “essential tasks of government” (Ward and Bauer 1996).

3.1.5. Irresponsibility and delay in action

There is always a systematic delay in approval of the budget, delays in project preparation, inability to meet conditions imposed by certain donors, and delay in action to identify and mobilize donor interest for specific projects, etc. (36). Delays by the government in taking appropriate steps are resulting in the withdrawal of funds available from foreign donors for aid projects (37).

3.1.6. Problems of the public administration

There are traditional problems not specifically introduced by the war, such as: sectarianism, nepotism, favoritism, patronage and the spoils system (appointments and promotions are not made on the basis of merit), legalism (the bureaucracy still adopts outdated legal practices, sometimes inherited from the Ottoman and French systems). Besides, centralization, absence of information (no reliable data about the country), low planning still exists (ibidem: 44-45).

Moreover, problems related to the rapid demographic change and emigration. There is no precise statistics concerning the demographic distribution in Lebanon and the estimated number of population can vary significantly from one source to another. The CIA World Fact book

37. Marwan Iskandar, op.cit.: 82.
estimated that the Christians form about 39% of the population (38).

Will the Muslims in Lebanon continue accepting the same power sharing formula if the percentage of Christians will be less than 20% of the Lebanese population?

3.1.7. Lack of tolerance, fundamentalism and polarization of the different communities

When the religious minorities feel threatened, and when the dialogue is facing a deadlock, these minorities rely on violent means to protect their prerogatives (assuming that they have) and to ensure their survival (Seaver 2000: 247). This was the scenario in Lebanon during the 70s and the 80s. And currently, this scenario is resurfaced on the political scene.

Violence is enshrined in daily political practices. It includes different forms: verbal and material and direct repression. The fundamentalist groups are persistently advocating for racist hatred and promoting religious intolerance, anti-pluralism, stereotypes and brainwashing the new generation and their followers by their outdated dogmatic principles. For them hating and killing the “infidels” is the norm and what should be done.

An acute polarization of the different Lebanese communities is far from being unnoticed. Lebanon is still a country of “we” and “them” (Ignatius 2005).

This polarization is further stimulated by the irresponsible political discourses and declarations of the ruling elites. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah labeled the “other group” as “enemies of the interior who are more dangerous than Israel” (39).

Another example is former Minister Assem Kanso, Lebanese Baath Party chief and a staunch ally to Syria, who bluntly, during a demonstration supporting the Syrian occupation of Lebanon in March 2005, uttered threats against what he called “agents” and said: «their heads will be broken» (Abu Charaf 2005). This level of political discourse can serve only to undermine what remained from the national cohesion.

3.2. Challenges of accommodating Hezbollah

Hezbollah (Party of God) political stance does not seem to be conducive to stabilizing and quenching the arising societal and political tensions. In a country emerging from a civil war and where the rules of the game are supposed to be based on consensus, provocative declarations are far from contributing to the consolidation of national peace.

Besides, the other communities do not feel secured and will not be able to accept, under any pretext, that Hezbollah withholds its arms while the militias pertaining to the other communities were dismantled and disarmed (40).

Hezbollah is not showing any flexibility even regarding the possibility to engage in a dialogue regarding their arms. The leaders of the party are even stressing, not only on keeping their arms, but also on improving their effectiveness.

Hezbollah MP Muhammad Ra’ad put it, «the acceptable dialogue is on raising the efficacy of the arms of the Resistance in confronting the Israeli enemy» (International Crisis Group 2005: 22).

This position about retaining its arms was reiterated, in another occasion, by a member of the party’s political bureau Ghaleb Abu Zeinab. He declared, «Hezbollah will not disarm even if the Israelis withdraw from Shebaa Farms» and «these arms constitute a balance of terror in the face

40. Israel withdrew from South Lebanon in 2000.
of Israel» (Hatoum 2005). The party leaders have to be aware that it is meaningless to engage in an inter-communal dialogue if one party insists on keeping its arms (Young 2005).

Furthermore, the party is not only defying the international community, but also both the Lebanese government and the other Lebanese communities by threatening that Hezbollah can destabilize the country if any attempt to disarm it will be undertaken.

Ali Fayyadh, a prominent Hezbollah thinker, puts it this way: «if the army tries to intervene, it will be divided because the majority of the army is Shiite, and Hezbollah will be forced to defend itself» (International Crisis Group 2005: 17). On another occasion, Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah declared: «if anyone thinks of disarming the Resistance, we will fight them like the martyrs of Karbala and cut off any hand that reaches out to grab our weapons ...» (ibidem: 18). In its approach to this problem, Hezbollah is undermining the Lebanese Army role and stature.

The new discourse of Hezbollah is that their arms should be kept to defend Lebanon from the threats of Israel (ibidem: 20). As opposing to this perspective, one can argue: what about rearming the former Christians militias to safeguard Lebanon against probable future Syrian threats?

3.3. Remarkable deficiencies in the performance of some international actors vis-à-vis Lebanon

3.3.1. Inaction, political expediency, and oversimplification

We are confronted with increasingly deceiving policies and political expediency adopted by several international actors.

Some members of the international community hold erroneous views about the political reality in Lebanon (Bakri 2005). Others use the same poetic jargon concerning democracy, freedom, and liberty and reiterating the same mantra of “free and fair elections” (41). Furthermore, security and stability can trump over democratization and human rights for political considerations. President Bush acknowledged the U.S. support of authoritarian rule in the Middle East for security and stability purposes. Bush said: «U.S. policy is no longer geared toward supporting authoritarian rule in the Middle East in the name of stability» (ibidem).

The oversimplification of the concept of democratization to “fair and free elections” stands as a main impediment to a viable solution of the Lebanese dilemma.

Thirty-seven Syrian workers were killed and 150 were subjected to physical harm leading to serious disabilities and 130 were subjected to minor physical harm (42) due to aggressive acts of retaliation against the Syrian regime in the aftermath of the killing of former Prime Minister Hariri (43). None of the foreign powers representatives in Lebanon has condemned the attacks on these powerless Syrian workers during the, so called, “Cedar Revolution”. Do democratization and freedom entail attacking and killing powerless, poor Syrian workers? And what is the “Cedar Revolution”? The political scene is still unaltered in Lebanon. The same confessionals fanatics and former warlords are still sharing the same pie. Besides, we are still witnessing a rift between the different religious communities in Lebanon.

41. President Bush quoted one Lebanese observer who said: «Democracy is knocking at the door of this country and if it is successful it is going to ring the doors of every Arab regime». Bush says Authoritarian Rule in the Mideast should end, accessed from http://news.yahoo.com on 08.03.2005.
43. Several attacks on powerless Syrian workers were carried out in the aftermath of the killing of former Prime Minister Hariri. A mob in Sidon (home town of the former Prime Minister Hariri) torched a Syrian workers camp on 17 February 2005; Ayyad (2005).
4. Prospects for the future: Some possible scenarios

4.1. Partitioning

Partitioning and complete independence (can be a best or worst case scenario depending on the modalities of implementation).

The Lebanese have to decide on their fate. If, for instance, one community wishes to identify itself as a Syrian Protectorate, another community favors national identification, or seeks any other form of allegiance and loyalty. Why to hold these communities forcibly together if their worldviews are completely contradictory? The Lebanese have to discuss overtly their options of self-determination. It is inept to continue the forced “marriage” where “divorce” stands out as the inevitable and unquestionably one of the most adequate solutions.

In one of the worst case scenarios, Lebanon will be partitioned in mini-states. Each community will seek independence from the other and adopts a different political regime. These mini-states will lack the necessary resources for their sustainable development. They «will be poor in resources and will be in permanent insecurity» (Fadel 1994: 9).

4.2. Domination

Domination of one community over the other communities (is a worst case scenario). Lebanon will turn out to be an Islamic state. It will be an assemblage of neighborhoods, mostly defined by family, tribal, ethnic or religious criteria, and governed by officials usually military, appointed by the Muslim governor.

The Christians in Lebanon will become second-class citizens; they will be “protected people (dhimmis)”. Dialogue will prove to be unsuccessful in Lebanon and coexistence will be obstructed by a lot of barriers. The local context of Muslim and Christian relations in Lebanon will contribute in rendering the dialogue irrelevant. Even if partial dialogue will occur, it will function as a cover for unequal power relations or as ornament, but the hatred and fanaticism will always prevail.

4.3. Keeping the status quo

This could be a best case scenario, if the recommendations presented in this paper will be strictly followed).

Lebanon will survive, after the implementation of the recommendations, as a free, independent and sovereign state with a pluralist society. Lebanese society will achieve a pattern of coexistence «that doesn’t imply any political or non-political controversy since it has become a natural state of living. This spontaneous coexistence will be regulated by the state through a political system based on democratic participation, equality and human rights» (Al Khazen, op. cit.). Dialogue will continue as an ongoing activity and will be translated into practical programs aiming at strengthening coexistence and addressing and treating sectarian tensions and the root causes of religious intolerance.

As a result of this ongoing dialogue, both Christians and Muslims in Lebanon will reassure their obligation to work together toward strengthening their common and equal belonging to the Lebanese territories regardless of their religious affiliations. This will help foster national unity and strengthen Lebanese nationalism of all the parties irrespective of their religions and will «help them transcend confessional and clannish partisanship so that, all together might work for the nation as a whole». A national Lebanese feeling among Christians and Muslims will be secured with equality under the rule of law in an atmosphere of love and affection.
4.4. Creation of a form of federal regime

This could be another best case scenario, but its implementation can face some fundamental barriers.

5. Federalism

5.1. Can federalism be the solution?

If the different attempts to find a viable solution to “live together” among different religious affiliations have proven to be practically unfeasible, the focus should be directed towards “living in peace” with the neighbor (44).

Federal arrangements have demonstrated to be of a determined utility in peace making and resolving inter-ethnic conflict (Elazar 1991: 1-22). However, in case Federalism is to be adopted in Lebanon, the parties have to commit themselves not to infringe on the rights of other federal partners (Bedanr, Eskridge, Ferejohn 1999: 11-13).

Several scholars and intellectuals propose federalism as a way for getting out of the nightmare of conflicts and disaccords in Lebanon. Prof. Habib C. Malik, a Lebanese scholar and son of the Harvard-educated philosophy professor Charles Malik who contributed in the draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, proposed that a «federal formula of communal autonomy and power sharing» could be an eventual political solution for Lebanon.

In his turn, Prof. Chibli Mallat, EU Jean Monnet Chair in European Law and current candidate to the Lebanese Presidency favors the pursuance of “fuller communitarian federalism” (Mallat 2005: 59-61).

The Apostolic Exhortation holds a similar view in accommodating the specific character and need of Lebanon’s communities by adopting a suitable form of federalism (Najm 2005). Antoine Najm, a Christian intellectual and political researcher, considered that the reality of the historical, social and ideological aspects of the religious communities necessitate Federalism as a logical response to them (ibidem). Federalism is not “one-size fits all” system. It has to be tailored (by talented policy makers) to reconcile the needs of the Lebanese.

5.2. Minimum essential requirements of federalism

If federalism is to be adopted, concrete steps should be made to promote its underlying principles and inherent characteristics. First and foremost, efforts have to be made to shed the light on the fact that federalism does not imply partition. Similarly it does not entail closing borders and living in complete isolation as two distinct entities.

Lebanon has to assume, like Switzerland (45), an internationally neutral role and be considered as a neutral state. This neutral foreign policy will be beneficial for Lebanon vis-à-vis unforeseen foreign meddling in its affairs.

Federalism requires a federal center with defined powers in specific fields. These fields include as a minimum essential requirements, namely but not limited to:

• common Constitution binding on all the federal parts,

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• common defense and security policy (to defend the international recognized borders of the federation),
• common foreign policy,
• financial policy (Chaoul 2005).

5.3. Some barriers

According to what specified as minimum essential requirements, we found ourselves confronted with some impediments in implementing the federal system in Lebanon. The challenge is how to make the different religious communities in Lebanon reconcile on these issues that are perceived fastidiously by them.

The issue of power and the issue of community leadership

Who will be the leader of each part of the federation? We cannot assume that the Lebanese are composed only from two homogenous groups. This oversimplification is irrelevant in the Lebanese case. The consideration of Muslims as one entity and Christians as another, stands as an ignorance of the Lebanese communities’ social fabric.

For instance Sunnis and Shiites in Lebanon cannot be considered as one entity. It is easily observable in Lebanon that there are no mixed villages with Sunnis and Shiites (International Crisis Group 2005: 14).

Furthermore, the contemporary Lebanese history witnessed that the civil war in Lebanon was not only between Muslims and Christians. There were also fierce clashes between combatants pertaining to the same community and even within the same party. For instance, on the Christian side:

• a forced unification of the Christian Militias under the authority of Bachir Gemayel in July 7, 1980 resulted in a lot of deaths amongst the Christians;
• clashes between the Lebanese Forces and General Aoun’s army in February 1989 (both are Christians and mainly Maronites).

Similarly, on the Muslim side:

• “camp wars” between Amal and the Palestinians in May 1985 (both Muslims);
• clashes between Amal and Hezbollah on the outskirts of Beirut and in the South of Lebanon in November 28, 1988 and ended in November 6, 1990 (both Shiites Muslims) (Picard 2002: 176-177).

It fits well to mention in this context a popular Lebanese proverb, which reads as follows «me and my brother against my cousin, and me and my cousin against the foreigner». Needless to mention that even within the same religious affiliation, it is common to find different ideologies and contrasting political aspirations.

Territorial difficulty to apply federalism

The Presence of small religious minorities in a different religious environment constitutes a hindrance on a sound application of a federal arrangement. To mention as examples the Christians who inhabit South Lebanon, a mostly Shiites environment and the Shiites inhabiting Jbeil, a region populated mainly by Maronites or even the case of Qobeiyyat in Akkar, etc. What formula can accommodate these and other situations? Defining the territorial delimitations of every part of the federation will be an extremely bewildering task. However, It may be argued that adopting the federal solution with some costs and limited sacrifice could be a feasible way to impede the development of a recurring civil strife.
Number of parts of the federal regime

How many parts we are going to create? For instance, is it enough to have four parts? Or more parts are needed?

Duplication of the infrastructure

Duplication of the infrastructure of the public institutions and public services (46). This duplication will incur costs. And the costs will sharply increase if we are opting for the triplication or the quadruplicating of the infrastructure.

The Palestinian problem

An equitable and durable solution to the Palestinian refugees has to be devised. An unresolved problem will be a trigger for political instability. Similarly, Lebanon has to contribute in a durable and definitive solution for the long lasting Arab-Israeli conflict.

6. Recommandations

6.1. Lebanon identity

It is of utmost necessity to redefine Lebanon identity according to the well-established historical facts and commensurate with the real identities of its inhabitants. This identity should be enshrined accordingly in the Lebanese constitution. As a compromise, the article should read as follows: «Lebanon is Aramaic-Arabic in identity and belonging».

6.2. Working on changing the blind ideologies

A meticulous work should be carried out on changing the ideologies.

• there is no excuse to relate all the economic and development failures and obstacles to Israel and to the Arab-Israeli conflict,
• there is no excuse to blame also outside intervention,
• there is no excuse to support terrorism.

Syria can play a crucial role in laying a suitable framework of this by acknowledging that Shebaa Farms are Lebanese and to submit an official document to the UN concerning it (Khalifeh 2005; Aziz 2005). Israel will then withdraw from the farms and a durable peace between Israel and Lebanon can be expected to take place (Khalifeh 2005).

6.3. Working on promoting a culture of tolerance, dialogue and understanding

We have to strive on devising mechanisms and methods to instill a culture based on tolerance and acceptance in the minds of youth and children, at homes and in schools. Children should be continuously taught that «explosions are a wrongful act, and who explodes himself in a bombing does not go to heaven but directly to hell» (Friedman 2005).

Christian and Muslim leaders must cooperate to alleviate the stress between their communities. They «can and must find ways of working together to promote a culture of dialogue and

mutual trust» (47). To lay the suitable framework for enabling the Lebanese communities to engage in genuine dialogue and establishing an “I-Thou” relation, a subject-to-subject relation based on mutuality, reciprocity, respect, commitment and responsibility (48). New articles should be inserted in the Lebanese Constitution reading:

- all fundamentalist parties calling for religious fanaticism and hatred are prohibited on Lebanese Territories,
- books of history used in Education are to be revised by a committee of experts in order to reflect Lebanese history objectively,
- all kinds of printed materials including history books that instigate religious hatred are prohibited.

Urgent actions to tackle specific delicate issues, namely but not limited to:

- the history and the past,
- stereotypes,
- xenophobia and anti-Semitism.

The Lebanese Media has to contribute effectively in achieving the above-mentioned goals and should be perceived as a vehicle for diffusing human rights culture.

6.4. Reform of the educational system

Recognizing the importance of education in producing societal change, the Ministry of Education in Lebanon has to introduce human rights education as an integral part of the curricula at all levels and in all the educational cycles. This will aim at anchoring human rights and democratic principles in the minds of the young generation. Furthermore, human rights education has also to be introduced in the curriculum of the military academies (49).

Reforming the educational system in the view of adopting a quality education system, whose ultimate aim is promoting tolerance and understanding, as there is a direct link between the level of education and tolerance. Theodor Hanf mentioned, «Education makes people more inclined to tolerance. The more education they get, the more democratic their inclinations are» (Quilty 2005b).

The educational system in Lebanon should be reviewed to enhance the understanding and appreciation of all religions and their cultural traditions:

- to establish mixed schools (from different communities) and if this would pose some practical difficulties (geographical distance, more time, cost of transport, etc.), the regular exchanges of visits or common social activities, field trips, summer camps should be encouraged. These activities will help to expose the students to other cultures, to change their pre-conceived ideas about the other groups, to communicate with each other’s;
- to include in the educational curriculum at all levels topics addressing “interpersonal perceptions”.

6.5. State laicism and abolition of political confessionalism

Not undermining the contribution of religions in promoting ethics, concerted efforts from educational institutions and religious leaders to instill in the minds of the new Lebanese generation that «morality and ethics have nothing to do with religion» (50).

A laic democratic system and a civil personal status law, which makes provision for civil marriage, should be adopted. Draw the lines between religion and state.

Religious leaders influence should be limited to managing the respective houses of worship and to social services (Najm 2005). Religion has not to interfere in political and social matters. Religion must not be exploited or used to agitate the sentiments of the lay people or for political aims or to exacerbate social conflict. Religious leaders have to hold an agreement between them and refrain from intervening directly or indirectly in politics.

Modifying and updating the current legislation in order to tally with this approach. An illustrative example can be that a new provision should be annexed to the article 95 of the Lebanese Constitution reading: The National Committee for the abolition of political confessionalism should be formed urgently. Its task is the abolition of confessionalism within a time period of two to five years.

6.6. Fighting corruption

The Lebanese Administration has to improve transparency and combat corruption.

Public officials at all levels should have a conviction to maintain a corruption-free mentality and to «adhere to acceptable regulations almost by second nature, rather than by effort» (Jones 1993: 23).

They should seek the benefit of the country and not their own benefit. They should simply follow the advice of James Wolfensohn when he said: «It is not a question of winning or losing internal battles» (Abdelnour 2001).

In order to fight corruption, the legislative power in Lebanon has to enact laws to consolidate the values of transparency in the civil service. Furthermore, the control agencies role in Lebanon (Civil Service Board, Bureau of Accounts, Central Inspection Commission) should be strengthened in order to be able to control the widespread corruption in the Lebanese public administration. Fighting corruption should be a national priority to be adopted by the government.

6.7. Reforms and priorities

Lebanese government has to ratify all the international human rights documents and abide by their implications in order to redress the deteriorating state of human rights and democratization in Lebanon. Lebanon has to accede to the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and abolish death penalty.

Judicial reform is a priority. Raising the awareness of the judiciary organs in Lebanon especially about the recent developments of the Human Rights instruments and mechanisms is of utmost necessity. In order to achieve an efficient judicial reform, the Ministry of Justice in Lebanon and the Legislative branch of the government have to work jointly in order to update the Lebanese laws to be in concordance with the international standards.

Furthermore, the penal system has to be reformed in order to tally with the accepted human rights standards. Lebanese Authorities have to realize that the adoption of sound administrative

practices are becoming of utmost priority. These include but are not limited to: sound economic and political strategies, democratic decision making, transparency and accountability at all the levels of the public administration, fighting corruption, respecting the rule of law, human rights, liberties and freedom of expression (Duparc 1993).

Lebanon has to cut down the budget devoted to military and security issues that exceed what is really necessary in this respect. Moreover it has to redirect the resulting surplus to providing the underprivileged population in the country with social security nets. The Lebanese government as a priority in order to cover the poor and the vulnerable social groups in Lebanon should implement social safety nets.

Lebanese Government has to work in undertaking a policy of administrative reform with a “decentralized development strategy” (Labaki 1991: 87) which favors equal participation of the Lebanese in all developmental activities and encourage the political participation of civil society and take into consideration their feedback and opinions concerning governmental policies and the future reforms undertaken by the government (51).

6.8. Concerning the civil society

The Lebanese have to get out of the “attitude that the state belongs to someone else” (ibidem: 91). They should develop a more civic sense, and not wait for change to come from the outside but to be part in making that change.

The Lebanese should organize themselves into political parties and institutions that are not based on confessional lines. These institutions and parties should reflect their identity, their hopes and ambitions and compete with each other on the basis of Lebanese nationalism and in the aim of achieving the common good for all Lebanese citizens without any form of discrimination.

6.9. Self-help mentality

Lebanese authorities have to adopt a ‘self help mentality’ and improve the state of human rights and democratic records in Lebanon (Calleya 2002: 42). It is not realistic anymore for the ruling élites to depict the problem as being inserted by external actors, Palestinians and Syria for some and Israel for others while dismissing the main psychopathic contagious viruses affecting the Lebanese communities: religious fanaticism, intolerance amongst others. They have to look into the core of the problem and benefit from the special attention of the International Community towards their country and try to devise the appropriate solution to get out from this political stalemate.

Concluding remarks

Lebanese have to admit and acknowledge the existence of underlying problems hampering their conviviality and try to work on devising the appropriate ways to tackle them.

A more realistic approach is to have the conviction that it is more opportune to acknowledge the presence of the problem, confront its bitter reality, delve deeply into analyzing their causes and attempt to figure out the appropriate solution, than to endure the consequences of an outbreak of a civil strife in the near future.

It is the time to move from the rhetoric of “wooden” discourses and the piles of slogans and

disguised patriotic mottos, to the era of tangible and effective actions that can lead to expected fruitful outcomes. We need to adopt a tangible and realistic approach far away from unrealistic rhetoric, which remains a delusion.

This can be achieved through genuine dialogue, not only between Muslims and Christians, but also within the different sects of Christianity and Islam and laics.

Lebanese decision-makers have to benefit from the international community increased interest in Lebanon evidently manifest in the exercise of its “responsibility to protect” (Evans, Sahnoun 2001) to put forward feasible proposals aiming at unleashing the gridlock in the Lebanese political system and power arrangements (52).

State laicism can provide a suitable framework for redressing the imbalances and attain a healthy coexistence. However, it should be coupled with some factors as acceptance of cultural pluralism, true dialogue, common destiny and a just social and political system. Current legislation has to be modified and updated to be commensurate with this approach. Under its protective umbrella, the international community can play a crucial role in monitoring the fragile Lebanese situation, focusing on stabilizing it, and upholding the reform initiatives of the Lebanese government.

Finally, we have to acknowledge that a culture of peace, reconciliation and understanding cannot come overnight. It necessitates hard work and conscience training. After all, when there is a will to reform, a commitment to conviviality, a determination to translate rhetoric into tangible actions, then there is a way.

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Abstract: The urban space has been a reflection of social differences since long ago. It comes as no surprise that separation of some social groups exists in the urban space as the city always used to be a place of coexistence of different socio-economic groups and cultures. It is stated in the paper that the study of urban segregation provides instruments for further investigation and solving a set of social problems that have become significant for the modern phase of urban development. The paper attempts to conceptualize the notion of socio-spatial segregation, develop methodological base for measuring segregation and analyze urban policies influence on it. To develop a concept and an operational definition the overview of researches held on the topic of segregation was made. To analyze the influence of urban policies on the level of socio-spatial segregation several cases of local policies in the Mediterranean cities were analyzed.

Introduction: The phenomenon of socio-spatial segregation as a problem of current interest for Mediterranean cities

The urban space has been a reflection of social differences since long ago (even in the cities of Mesopotamia the certain structure with the elite living in the center existed). It comes as no surprise that separation of some social groups exists in the urban space as the city is and always used to be a place of coexistence of different socio-economic groups and cultures.

The study of urban segregation provides instruments for further investigation and solving a set of social problems that have become significant for the modern phase of urban development. Urban socio-spatial segregation is analysed by different sciences, such as human geography, urban sociology, and urban economics. In the studies we find several approaches giving its definition to the notion of segregation and its indicators to measure it. Here are several definitions of urban segregation used in the frameworks of these approaches:

- segregation (zoning) is separation of urban territories by their functional use (business-district, industrial district, etc.);
- segregation is separation of social groups by their place of residence (districts of elite housing, slums, ethnic ghetto, gated communities, etc.);
- segregation is separation of different social groups in daily life (members of different groups eat in different cafes, restaurants, visit different leisure activities, interact in certain city districts, their children attend different schools, etc.);
- segregation is separation of urban space perceived by the citizens (members of different groups have different perceived city maps, thus cultural borders of the city or districts could be identified).
The notion of segregation is often understood as ethnic or racial segregation, but we should note that it is one kind of it.

• Ethnic segregation is a separation of different ethnics in the city (e.g.: ethnic ghettos) (1).
• Religious segregation is a separation of different religious groups in the city (e.g. in some Muslim countries groups on non-Muslim citizens live separately in special city districts).
• Sex segregation is the separation of people according to sex or gender (e.g., some public places can be closed for women).
• Status segregation is a separation of people according to their status (middle class, elite, etc.).

In this paper I will consider socio-spatial segregation that could be generally defined as separation of a certain social group in the urban space.

The research of socio-spatial segregation is a response to changes in the urban development and need to develop new instruments for urban planning and urban management. Social segregation became an object of the study in the early 20th century in the USA when a set of problems with urban management arose as a consequence of high level of immigration. Thus, the city of Chicago was divided into several zones in which ethnic groups led their life following their own rules. During the post-war period interest to the topic of social segregation arose as a consequence of urban population increase and structure transformations of the urban space [in particular, the processes of suburbanization in Europe and USA (2)]. Since 1960s in the cities all over the world developed (as a mass phenomenon) “gated”, “secured” communities, that fact stimulated research concern on the topic of socio-spatial segregation (3).

Though the notion of socio-spatial segregation as a rule has negative connotations, we consider the phenomenon could have not just negative but positive effects as well. Firstly, we should outline two main social problems related to socio-spatial segregation: its influence on the citizens’ life chances and disintegration. The problem of influence of segregation on the citizens’ life chances in particular can be related to living in the districts of unequal access to social services. For example, residents of “gated” communities do have access to better schools, public services while districts of concentrated poverty residents do not. Concentrated urban poverty may cause the cycle of disadvantage when physical, social and economic obstacles reinforce each other and this leads to the rise of “culture of poverty”. Another problem is disintegration and arising of localized countercultures (according to ethnic, socio-economic characteristics, etc.); this could cause social disorders. For instance, the French disorders in 2005 were caused by several reasons including, as some authors state, residential segregation. Positive aspects of socio-spatial segregation could be, firstly, the comfort of living among the members of the same group, secondly, in some cases - mutual benefits that brings the neighborhood of different districts. The example of the former is the vicinity of a “gated” community and a poor immigrant district in the USA that allowed rich people hire servants, nurses, etc. and poor people - get well-paid job.

The study of urban segregation has its practical contribution in the sphere of urban planning, housing and social policy. The study of the phenomenon allows revealing segregation problems of concrete city and assuming measures to reduce its negative consequences.

Socio-spatial segregation has been the subject of vast theoretical and empirical research for many years in both North America and North European cities. However, the topic was not popular in the Southern Europe that could be explained by the lower level of segregation in South European cities. The topic of social segregation appeared in the literature of Southern Europe

1. Herewith, ethnic segregation could be as residential, segregation in daily life or perceived segregation.
Social segregation of the urban space and urban policies

only after the mid of the 1990s when the level of international immigration to the metropolises of the South Europe increased dramatically. Yet, there is empirical evidence pointing to complex processes that both intensify and diversify existing spatial divisions, thus shaping new forms of segregation in both central and suburban areas of the Mediterranean cities (Arapoglou 2006: 11-38).

The European Union, one of the world’s most urbanized areas, counts approximately 170 cities with more than 200,000 inhabitants and 32 cities with more than a million inhabitants (European Commission 1999). The majority of the European Union’s citizens live and work in urban areas. Clearly the functional urban regions are the vital cultural, economic and innovative centers of Europe. At the same time many of the cities are confronted with serious problems such as high unemployment rates, insecurity, increasing pressure on the environment, etc. Societal problems such as unemployment, poverty, crime, youth delinquency, lack of education and social deprivation accumulate in parts of urban areas. In many of the larger European cities a separation is defining itself between a dynamic segment of the population that shares in the new economic and social progress, and another that cannot share and as a result falls into economic and social exclusion. Such a concentration of distressed groups is especially manifest in cities that have been hit by industrial decline, but also in cities with prospering economy. Thus, the challenges faced by the cities reshape their structure and the accumulation of different but connected problems in the larger cities poses a clear threat to a balanced urban development.

Mediterranean cities currently face multiple challenges some of which are common for all European cities and others - specific for that area. One of the points of view consider one of the reasons for these specific challenges the present trend of globalization, which is unfavourable to these countries and to which they are finding it hard to adapt (Tourret 2006). I would make an attempt to sum up the main challenges faced by Mediterranean cities outlined by researches (Tourret 2006; European Commission 1999; Priority Action Programme 2004). The first challenge is that of demography: the Mediterranean is characterized by strong urbanization, particularly along its coasts. From 94 million inhabitants located in Mediterranean urban centers in the middle of the 20th century, the respective population reached 274 million in 2000. The levels of urbanization in Mediterranean countries are expected to increase from 64% in 2004 to about 75% (378 million) in 2025. The generalized urban spread is the source of many negative consequences: social and economic exclusion unevenly represented over the urban space and generating persisting pockets of deprivation. Furthermore, one of the causes of the increase of the urbanization is immigration. Most immigrants settle in the urban areas, children and young people from immigrant families often are caught “between cultures” that causes marginalization of these groups. This is reflected in urban development and urban space as the emergence of ethnic quarters. The second challenge is the organization and well functioning of services for the population. Surveys generally stress the existence of deficient infrastructures in most Mediterranean cities. This leads to the division of the city to districts with good infrastructure and bad one, that gives rise to social segregation as people start keeping themselves to themselves (Tourret 2006; Regional Activity Center 2004). Finally, the third challenge is the fact that social housing does not spare any of the cities in the South and East of the Mediterranean, where the proportion of non-regulated housing is about 40% to 60% of new accommodation. The cities evidence a dualism, torn between the so-called European modern city and the old city, rich with the heritage of monuments but where large populations inhabit dilapidated and unhealthy dwellings. Over the past several decades many Mediterranean cities have sprawled over surrounding areas, where construction has been either organized and planed or totally spontaneous, unregulated, under-equipped. For instance, unplanned squatter populations account for 33% of the urban population of Alexandria (ibidem).

Socio-spatial segregation of the city can be caused by heterogeneous culture, political and
economical polarization. Thus, social, economic and spatial changes in the Mediterranean cities considered above are likely to cause the processes of socio-spatial segregation. For example, recent evidence in the case of Athens indicates that the concentration of immigrants in both fast growing sectors (such as tourist related activities and constructions) and in declining sectors (such as textiles and garments) is a good predictor for the pattern of immigrants’ settlement (Arapoglou 2006: 11-38).

The city itself is a place of coexistence of different cultures and needs to solve this problem with the help of urban planning, social and housing policies. It is clear that the challenges presented above make high demands on urban policy. In general terms, urban policy can be described as the whole set of government measures at different administrative levels - European, national, regional or local - that is directed to cities. European policy gives framework and as a rule basic guidelines, national policy shapes the framework in legal forms, while regional and local levels develop and implement plans of action. The majority of towns in the Mediterranean region frame their actions within strategic plans that aim to reconcile the attractiveness of the territory towards foreign investment, particularly in the services sector, with the constraints of an equilibrated spatial development. One of the most visible signs is the multiplication of the so-called “projects of urban regeneration” which tries to reconcile social and economic constraints within a single region. It is therefore necessary to note that, according to some authors, these projects have hitherto tended to increase the spatial segregation between a center that is rapidly modernizing and a suburban space that accumulates environmental problems, sanitary risks and problems of access to transport and housing (Tourret 2006).

The main object of the study is conceptualization of the notion of socio-spatial segregation, development of methodological base for measuring social segregation and analysis of urban policies influence on it. To develop a concept and an operational definition of socio-spatial segregation the overview of researches held on the topic was made. To analyze the influence of urban policies on the level of socio-spatial segregation several cases of local policies in Mediterranean cities were analyzed.

1. Approaches to conceptualization and measuring of urban socio-spatial segregation

In this part of the paper I will review and analyze research approaches to the phenomenon of socio-spatial segregation. The following classification is an attempt to distinguish different approaches to socio-spatial segregation research. In respect to the definition of urban segregation and methodology of the studies we distinguished four areas of focus:

1.0 Urban morphology studies: Segregation is separation of urban territories by their functional use.

2.0 Studies of residential segregation: Segregation is separation of social groups by their place of residence.

3.0 Studies of segregation in everyday life: Segregation is separation of different social groups in daily life.

4.0 Studies of the urban space perception: Segregation is separation of urban space perceived by the citizens.

1.1. Urban morphology studies

That area of focus is characterized by the research of distribution of different artifacts (parks, industrial areas and others) in the urban space. The researches as a rule are held with the aim to find instruments for urban planning (real estate, infrastructure, transport development). Within
the bounds of the focus area a set of morphological urban models were developed, such as concentric model (Park and Burgess 1984), sector model, multi-nuclei model (Harris and Ullman 1945: 7-17), model of socialistic city (French and Hamilton 1979).

In the morphological urban models to study segregation the following indices are used:
- functional distribution of the urban land: area developed/not developed; private place (detached house, semi-detached house, multistory blocks), public place (streets, parks, service institutions, etc.) (Bartholomew 1959);
- land price;
- variables, related to access to different kinds of services (medical, educational, cultural institutions in the district, etc.);
- physical district remoteness from the rest of the city, its transportation availability.

1.2. Studies of residential segregation

Within the bounds of this focus area we can identify several approaches by the way of explaining the phenomenon of urban segregation. The researchers committed to the first approach presuppose that place of residence reflects the status in a certain system of socio-economic inequalities. Within this framework spatial segregation is viewed in relation to class, ethnic and religious affiliation, life circle (i.e., segregation of the older people, segregation of the poor) (4). Those who hold to the second approach interpret the urban space as a resource in the system of social relationship. The example of this approach is the concept of prestige addresses that are considered a social good, symbolic value of the urban space. Prestige urban districts are viewed as places in the physical space where the higher hierarchy positions are concentrated as well as the most part of agents taking these positions (Panson, Panson-Charlot 1996; Trushenko 1995). Within the third approach, urban communities studies, the division of the city on the multiple districts is explained by the necessity to reduce the heterogeneity within the district. The phenomenon of segregation by identity is in the focus of interest of this approach.

The main indices used to study residential segregation are:

(a) Variables that characterize place of residence:
- place of residence: census area/district;
- housing quality: average quantity of rooms per person, ratio of households with access to water delivery system, bathroom, etc.;
- type of housing: year of building, number of storeys, quantity of families in the house.

(b) Variables that characterize socio-economic status of the family:
- socio-professional status;
- income, dependence on housing targeting assistance;
- education (number of years devoted to education, level of education);
- immigrants/natives;
- ethnic characteristics.

Within the framework of this focus area the construction of the quantitative indexes is frequently used. The most popular one - the index of dissimilarity, unevenness - measures the evenness with which two groups are distributed across the component geographic areas that make up a larger area (Collinson 1960: 588-597; Twine and Williams 1983: 253-266).

1.3. The study of segregation in daily life

The third area of focus is the study of segregation in daily life as the lack of interaction between members of different groups. The example of the approach is the study of “active segregation” (as different groups not just live in different districts but interact with each other, spend their spare time, work in different places of the city) (Boal, Poole and Murray 1978: 400-401; Schenell and Yoav 2001: 622-636).

The main indices used to study segregation in daily life are:
(a) Variables that characterize usage of urban spaces: place of work; place of educational institutions used by children; place of spending spare time, shopping; social contacts (Atkinson 2006: 819-832; Schenell and Yoav 2001: 622-636).
(b) Variables that characterize interaction with other groups: face-to-face interaction, interaction by telecommunications network (Schenell and Yoav 2001: 622-636).

Usage of everyday life spaces could be described by the following scale (ibidem):
- Vicinity;
- “Cluster” - in gathering neighbors;
- Neighborhood - the territory that characterize the way of life and identity of an actor;
- Territorial communities;
- City;
- Outside the city.

To measure socio-spatial segregation within the framework of the focus area the isolation index could be used. The index measures the level of mixture or exposure to other groups according to two aspects: usage of everyday life spaces and social interaction with other citizens (ibidem).

1.4. The studies of the urban space perception

Within the framework of the studies of urban space perception urban segregation is defined according to the perception of citizens. In other words, the research is focused on the subjective perception of the city rather than the characteristics of the citizens. These researches take into account semantic differentiations of the urban space. The example of this approach is cognitive mapping - developing the city maps by the respondent to differentiate the urban space and the urban population as well. “Invisibility” of some territories is interpreted as exercising maximum social distance (Suttles 1972).

Summarizing the results of the main approaches to segregation research overview I could highlight the phenomenon of the lack of communication, interaction of the citizens with each other. I suppose this thesis to be the basic for the definition of the notion of socio-spatial segregation. The lack of interaction between citizens (and interaction within certain groups) leads to emergence of separated sub-cultures within the urban space. These sub-cultures could be created by ethnic, age characteristics of a group or by its vulnerability; could be “produced” by the group itself or by the society (as in the case of discrimination). Subsequently we could assert that social separation resides in “objective” characteristics of the urban space. On the one hand, existence of a certain social environment in the urban space leads to the change of its characteristics (e.g., levels of delinquency, safety, social strain influences on housing prices). On the other hand, we suppose that individuals live in the district they were able to occupy (in terms of E. Burgess). That is why, for example, poor citizens are constraint to live in the districts with dilapidated housing, far from good job places and spend more time on traveling to job. Another reason for socio-spatial segregation could be characteristics of urban space. For example, if a social group lives in a deprived neighborhood and do not have access to urban public places this
could cause the lack of communication with other groups and lower life-chances of its members. Furthermore, the bad image of the neighborhood could be developed that could lead to stigmatizing of its residents. In the conditions of deprivation, bad quality of educational infrastructure and the lack of job places could cause the cycle of disadvantage that would create obstacles for the residents to change their status.

Considering measuring the phenomenon of socio-spatial segregation a great variety of methods are used by the researchers. Depending on the approach researchers use census data, hold palls, use qualitative methods (in-depth interviews, focus-groups) and visual analysis. From my point of view, for the definition given above palls and visual research are the most relevant methods.

2. Urban policies influence on social segregation in Mediterranean cities

All levels of government could pursue urban policy that could influence socio-spatial segregation. The higher layers of government formulate policy that is not specifically designed for cities but that may still have a major impact on them, such as housing policy, transportation policy, spatial planning policy etc. The problems of urban development cut across different levels of government as well as sectoral and institutional policy domains, they thus require a holistic and strategic approach that integrates different policy domains and levels of government. In this part of the paper the analysis of 3 cases of urban policies in Mediterranean cities in respect to socio-spatial segregation will be made.

In recent years the Commission of the European Communities (CEC), with the support of successive Presidencies, has drawn attention to the problems facing Europe’s cities. The efforts to make European cities places of social and cultural integration as sources of economic prosperity and sustainable development in the EU was made in the Communication adopted in 1997 “Towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union” that was followed in 1998 by the report “Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: a Framework for Action”. One of the main policy aims was promoting equality, social inclusion and regeneration of urban areas. “European Spatial Development Perspective/esdp: Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union” was agreed upon in May 1999. The ESDP highlighted the objective of a polycentric development in support of a balanced and harmonious European territory, promotion of integrated transport and communication concepts, which support the polycentric development of the European Union territory. Several important steps were made in the policy options. The following targets were set: (i) promote strategies of urban development that should be sensitive to social and functional diversity, (ii) improve accessibility via mix of urban functions and public transport, (iii) maintain basic services in small and medium-sized towns, (iv) improve public transport services and provide a minimum level of service in small and medium-sized towns and cities, (v) integration of the countryside around large cities with special attention to the quality of life in the urban surroundings. These policy options first of all aimed at local development planning, secondly, on improving social infrastructure and its accessibility and the quality of life of the citizens. However, the ESDP is an informal document and therefore can only operate on the basis of Member States’ willingness to take its analysis and suggestions into account in their own policies. Some Member States have enthusiastically embraced the ESDP whilst others have largely ignored it (Atkinson, Duhr 2002).

The Lille Action Programme adopted in 2000 was aimed at cooperation in urban affairs in European Union. Among the priorities proposed by the program’s action are to tackle social and ethnic segregation, to help Member States, the Commission and cities to give more tangible form to the policy objectives defined at European level to the challenges facing cities. The
program proposes a common set of nine priorities:
1. a better acknowledgement of the role of towns and cities in spatial planning;
2. a new approach of urban policies on national and community levels;
3. improving citizens participation;
4. action to tackle social and ethnic segregation;
5. promote an integrated and balanced urban development;
6. promote partnership between public and private sectors;
7. diffusion of best practices and networking;
8. promote the use of modern technology in urban affairs;
9. a further analysis of the urban areas to deepen the knowledge of interlinked phenomena in the cities.

We should note that policies that influence socio-spatial segregation could differ significantly. Central state could have or have had a prominent role or local government authorities could be more important for the development of urban areas and dealing with urban problems; the private sector could be an important player.

We distinguish the following policies that could influence socio-spatial segregation:
• policies on integration of vulnerable groups (ethnic minorities, older people, disabled people, young people);
• policies on quality of life;
• policies on transport and infrastructure;
• policies on land use;
• policies on urban development;
• policies on housing segregation.

Analyzing policies we should take into account local context. Thus, the nature of the policy responses is supposed to be bound up with the national pattern of spatial development and urbanization, the administrative and financial framework, and the political priority a state gives to the perceived urban problems and challenges. Another point of program analysis is the description of a problem the program is aimed to solve. Description of the program itself would be focused on its objectives and measures taken. The last point of analysis is the answer to the question if it influences on socio-spatial segregation.

Several local policies that have influenced socio-spatial segregation in the Mediterranean countries were chosen to analyze. Materials on the program description were taken from the library of European Urban Knowledge Network [EUKN (5)] that shares knowledge and experience on tackling urban issues.

3. The municipality of Perama (Greece)

3.1. Local context

Urbanization in Greece took place much later than in the cities of the European north and at much faster rates. Following the First World War, Greece experienced a wave of urbanization. According to the Census of 1991, urban population in Greece represents 58.8 per cent of the total population. Athens and Thessaloniki - the two metropolitan centers - house 37.38 per cent of the population and 63.55 per cent of the urban population. During the 1980s, the increase in urban population started to slow down and was observed chiefly in the smaller urban centers.

In Greece until very recently, central Government was responsible for plan making and regulations at all levels. Local Government has very limited planning power. A locally elected tier of prefectures governing the areas of a nomos - province (54 for the whole country) was introduced in January 1995 (Law 2234/94). The prefecture is the lowest level to which plan making powers are decentralized, although in exceptional cases some power has been delegated to municipalities. The creation of a framework and regulatory instruments in spatial planning in Greece was initiated in the period 1971 -1980, which followed the restoration of parliamentary regime in the country (1975). Law 1337, in 1983, created the legislative urban planning frame. The above mentioned law initiated the General Urban Plans (Geniko Poleodomiko Schedio - GPS) for the urban areas and the Urban Development Control Zone (Zoni Ikistikou Eleghou - ZOE) which are the tools for applicable spatial planning. In 1985 were approved by law the Master Plans for the two Metropolitan Areas of Greece - Athens and Thessaloniki.

The main problems facing the Greek metropolis and the other urban centers are the need for social infrastructure, especially in the “popular” peripheral neighborhoods, for technical infrastructure, especially transport, as well as for parks and the projects that will improve the quality of public space (European Commission 1999). In Greek cities the problem also lies in the fact that, firstly, the mean house available in the existing stock is of poor quality, and, secondly, that the cost of new housing is inordinately high in relation to mean incomes. In this context, there is an obvious process of concentration of weaker social groups in such areas where, apart from elderly and young people, newly unemployed and long-term unemployed, groups of minorities and economic migrants are also concentrated. They are the Municipality of Perama, which forms part of the Athens agglomeration, the Agia Triada area of the Municipality of Iraklio, Crete, and certain districts of the Municipality of Komotini, in Thrace (6). Thus, we could see that three challenges relevant to socio-spatial segregation could be described: firstly, poor social infrastructure in some neighborhood could lead to spatial segregation and increase of the deprivation level, secondly, concentration of “weak” social groups in the districts with poor infrastructure leads to deprivation of certain groups, and finally, the lack of access to public places could lead to the lack of communication between citizens (or communication within a certain neighborhood).

3.2. Problem description. Municipality of Perama

Perama constitutes a case of acute deindustrialization resulting from the downward course taken by the shipbuilding and repair industry, which is a monoculture of employment for Perama. The industry’s decline is due to developments in the shipping industry and changes in the international division of labor, in conjunction with the low competitiveness of enterprises in the industry in Perama and their inability to meet the technological and business requirements of the market. Deindustrialization and an inability to develop other sectors of economic activity have resulted in high unemployment characterized by extremely high long-term unemployment, extremely high unemployment among women and young people under 25 and extremely high rates of casual employment. Phenomena of poverty and social exclusion result from high unemployment, extremely low incomes, deficiencies in social support services and the rundown housing environment. Thus, Perama had a concentration of elements of environmental degradation, faced a problem in their urban fabric, and productive potential. Poor quality of life and concentration of vulnerable groups resulted in socio-spatial segregation of the municipality.

6. Operational Programme “For the economics and social regeneration of Perama, 2001-2006” (2005), Community Initiative Urban II.
3.3. Policy description

The program of the URBAN initiative was aimed at utilizing the long industrial and cultural tradition associated with shipbuilding activity in Perama, for the purpose of the economic regeneration of the area and boosting employment. Alongside this, the ecological renewal of the rundown industrial and residential environment was sought for, along with development of a strategy against social exclusion, particularly the forms associated with long-term unemployment and poverty. The priority areas of the interventions emanating from the objectives of the projects were:

1. multifunctional upgrading of the intervention area and protection of the environment;
2. technical Support for shipbuilding and repair enterprises and promotion of new sources of employment;
3. combating social exclusion/Equality of opportunity;
4. technical support.

The projects had a complex of policies held. One of them are policies to reinforce infrastructures. The area’s infrastructures were reinforced via the implementation of projects provided for under the Operational Programmes for the Region of Attica in the 1990-1994 and 1994-2000 periods. Those projects referred mainly to reinforcement for the following infrastructures:

- water supply and sewage, including completion of drainage works in certain parts of Perama Municipality, construction of parts of the waste water system and connections,
- road network, including construction and improvement of the road network in various parts of Perama Municipality, construction of Lanitou Street, and
- improvement of rundown areas through water supply, road construction and rehabilitation works, pedestrianisation works.

A variety of policies for training and employment was implemented. In the context of the Operational Programme for the Region of Attica, during the 1994-2000 period the city’s Technical Vocational Lyceum was built. Projects to boost employment of the economically active population or groups facing special difficulties in their integration into the labor market, such as women, long-term unemployed, members of vulnerable groups, etc., which combine vocational training and interventions of a social nature, were implemented. For example, the program “Poverty 3” involved transfer of experiences in order to approach and resolve problems faced by the less favored population groups. In the context of the program, infrastructures for the social welfare and psychological support of unemployed people were created in Ano Perama, as well as a Working People’s Club in the Shipbuilding and Repair Zone. The program “Job Spring” provided for the creation of new jobs through operational initiatives undertaken by the Municipality.

In the framework of the initiative “Adapt” a program was implemented in favor of reorientation of workers and enterprises of the shipbuilding and repair industry in the direction of utilizing existing possibilities and know-how and ensuring competitiveness and employment. The program “Saga” created guidance infrastructures for the integration into society of people from the socially excluded population groups: cultural or linguistic minorities, migrants, repatriated emigrants, disabled citizens, single-parent families, ex-offenders, AIDS patients, drug users, alcoholics.

The most important project for environmental protection implemented in Perama Municipality to improve the environment related to the creation of a 60,000-tree forested zone on the rocky Aigaleo mountain range. This project was implemented as part of the LIFE Programme in the 1997-2000 period.

The above projects resulted in a significantly better image for Perama Municipality. In addition, the rehabilitation projects for outdoor spaces and squares were seen to help substantially improve the quality of life for residents, since such areas are used on a permanent basis by
people of all ages. But because of the severe deficits in basic infrastructures in the area, in spite of the above-mentioned interventions there are still problems and deficiencies of infrastructures throughout the Municipality, but principally in its rundown areas. The measures to improve infrastructure decreased the level of deprivation and complemented with the measures to rehabilitate public places gave opportunity to communicate that is important. The priority concerns of policies combating social exclusion were improvement of the position of the social groups threatened with exclusion and promoting equality of opportunity among all citizens, irrespective of gender, origin or employment status. In this context provision was made for improving social services addressed to vulnerable groups and improving the quality and accessibility of public facilities for all citizens. Thus, the measures provided in the Municipality of Perama combined urban development policies (such as improvement of social services, social infrastructure) and social policy (such as providing vocational training for vulnerable groups). Combination of different policies is of current important as it gives opportunity to vulnerable groups to overcome the situation of exclusion and provides possibilities for social integration.

4. Quinta da Princesa neighbourhood (Portugal)

4.1. Local context

Portugal is the least urbanized of the countries of the EU. The estimated percentage of the population resident in the metropolitan areas and urban settlements with more than 2,000 inhabitants is approximately 55. A consistent “urbanization rate” is difficult to establish because urbanization is highly diffuse. The urban hierarchy suffers from serious discontinuities, given the fragility of the system of medium sized cities.

The administrative organization is excessively polarized at both central and local levels. There is a lack of permanent co-ordination at the central level and of regional dependent institutions, and excessive segmentation of central policies with significant urban impact. Urban and Regional Policy is defined mainly by the Ministry of Equipment Planning and Territorial Administration (MEPAT). The Ministry of Environment is also important. The organizations that represent Central Government at regional and local levels do not co-ordinate their actions at the level of the city. Explicit urban policy in metropolitan areas and medium size cities is a very recent development (European Commission 1999).

There is a low level of urban infrastructure and a lack of environment quality (waste disposal, public space, accessibility, etc. despite the last 10 years’ investments) in the areas most subject to urban and tourism pressures. Congestion, unemployment and social polarization can be noticed mainly in the major cities and suburban areas.

The national priorities with regard to urban issues are:
- housing and access to urban public facilities;
- urban mobility: transport and traffic systems and infrastructure;
- improvement of the urban environment and public spaces;
- revitalization of critical urban areas; social cohesion and economic sustainability.

Thus, we could see that the priorities mentioned above could have certain influence on the level of socio-spatial segregation and alleviate social polarization.

4.2. Problem description. Quinta da Princesa neighborhood

In August 2000 the sudden increase in the juvenile criminality was experienced. The existence of emerging groups of individuals with similar social backgrounds, mainly from suburban
neighborhoods, that had criminal and delinquent practices, lead to the Ministries Council Resolution n. 4/2001 that created Programa Escolhas - “Choices” Program - a national, governmental and first program that was aimed at prevention of youth criminality and the social insertion of young offenders. One of the 53 vulnerable neighborhoods where the program was implemented was Quinta da Princesa, a neighborhood in the suburbs of Lisbon, in the Portuguese district of Setubal. The population of the neighborhood is around 1000, not considering recent relocations. It is mostly inhabited by individuals from Portuguese ex-colonies in Africa (55%), with a predominance of the Capeverdian (37%), Mozambican (8%) and Angolan nationalities (7%). The population is considerably young, since 65.9% of the population is aged below 35. It is a neighborhood with high social deprivation and excluded from the rest of the urban center. It has a high poverty level and a high unemployment rate (14%). Based on a participatory diagnosis made with local partners, it was indicated that this was a neighborhood where a complex relation of risk factors took place. The risk factors were associated with school failure and early school leaving, leading to low academic and professional qualifications. Other risk factors were related to the lack of parental supervision and the deficit in Portuguese language skills (“crioulo” is the most current dialect which makes it difficult to learn the Portuguese language and, therefore, all the other subjects). Other risk factors were associated with the negative influence that older individuals, with delinquent and criminal practices, had on children and adolescents, as also the existence of drug consumption. The exposure to these risk factors led to the emergence of juvenile delinquency, criminality and a feeling of insecurity within the neighborhood and in its surroundings, in general. This was a neighborhood where crime and disorder, often, took place, as proved by the data provided by law and justice enforcements, besides local partners. Criminality was mainly related with car theft, drug consumption and traffic. There were also registries concerning robberies made with the use of fire weapons. There were another kind of crime and disorder problems caused by younger people, especially related with bullying, graffiti and misbehaviour in school and public places.

4.3. Program description

A strategy to tackle these problems was defined with the central and local partners. This led to a “Social Diagnosis” and “Intervention Plan”, both created with partners, customizing the local problems, as also committing on a network basis, all the partners and their resources on a common mission. In “Intervention Plan” two different strategies were defined, considering each group’s problems, needs, interests and potentialities (two groups of individuals, age 16-20 and 9-15, and their risk factors were considered).

Considering the first group (age 16-20), the main strategy was to propose them activities that aimed more positive attitudes towards themselves and, ultimately, towards the community. This was intended to reinforce their auto-image and self-esteem, in order to re-establish their links with the community, such as: informatics, controlled risk activities, football tournaments, cooking, cinema. Also, considering the lack of academic and professional qualifications, it was defined with schools, job and training institutions to, gradually, look for alternatives, in order to give them the necessary skills and qualifications to proceed to their social re-insertion.

Considering the second group (age 6-15), it was evidenced a difficulty on the transition from the 1st to 4th grade School (located in the neighborhood) to the 5th to 6th grade School (located outside the neighborhood - about 5 kilometers), with a considerable number of school failures, truancy and early school leaving in this process.

The partner’s council decided to create a third project, on both schools in order to create positive references in the neighborhood and in schools. The objectives were:
• reduction of school failure, truancy and early school leaving;
• development of social, interpersonal and learning skills of the students attending the 1st grade school;
• supervision of students attending 5th grade school (tutor project);
• involvement of parents, and the general community, in school activities and, ultimately, in a more effective educational supervision.

The project’s impact was evaluated both internally and externally. The external evaluation was independent and started on August 2003. The internal evaluation is ongoing, with the presentation of results every 6 months with the council of partners and every 3 months with the coordinators of the project. The latest results show a group of indicators that ensure that main aims are being accomplished. However, the lack of previous records to the implementation of the project made extremely difficult the effective evaluation of the impact. Also schools and police enforcements don’t possess the adequate records. Considering the tutors project, and from the beginning of the intervention, it has been possible to identify positive results. Regarding the tutors project it is possible to evidence that, even though the school transition problem is yet by far of being resolved, the failure indicators and the number of early school leavers in the 1st to 4th grade school seem to have diminished in the year of the implementation of the project. Even though, the lack of previous information hardened the task of evaluating the effective impact of the project.

Thus though the level of spatial segregation was not changed the measures aimed at social integration were taken and proved to have good results. This could be explained by the peculiarities of the targeted group as well.

5. The Via Arquata case study (Italy)

5.1. Local context

Until the 1990s there had not been an explicit urban policy in Italy. Implicitly, many policies concerning cities have been implemented, but so far with no clear distinction between small and large cities. The main reason for the lack of a clear urban policy is the fact that urban policy in Italy has been a non-priority for the central government for a long time. Since 1942 the Italian urban legislation has been based on art.1 of the urban Act n.1159 which favors disorganization rather than managing the process of urbanization. Therefore, at least until the end of the 1980s, urban laws did not permit any programming of the phenomena of urbanization, and not even a correct definition of their economic and social aspects. That weakness is reflected at the administrative and institutional levels, by the lack of coordinated interventions and lack of co-operation among the several institutions that should deal with urban matters at the various levels of government. An attempt to overcome this weakness was made in 1990 with Act 142/90. The aim of the Act is the transition from centralization to decentralization, giving more autonomy to provinces and municipalities, in terms of decision making and management of financial resources.

Unemployment, poverty, traffic congestion, crime and inadequate infrastructure are major concerns of the national urban policy, as these problems are concentrated in cities. To face them, public authorities have focused their attention mainly on projects of urban requalification, protection of the environment and adequate management of territorial transformations. To respond to the above mentioned challenges, the political concern has moved to the need for urban quality and the consequent necessity to regenerate existing quarters. New tools were recently introduced with legislative dispositions. Urban renewal plans, regeneration plans and integrated
programs aim at reorganizing the cities with innovative forms of project-financing that foster the active intervention of private actors and consider the use of inter-sector resources. Collaboration with the EU has already been consolidated and new initiatives continue to be taken to further develop the co-operation with European countries concerning the definition of guidelines about large-scale planning and the development of innovative planning and tools. The ministry of public works responsible for urban areas has presented a frame of development of the European territory (SDEC) and the necessary tools for the exchange of knowledge and the analysis of phenomena of spatial change (Osservatorio sulle politiche territoriali). The general idea is that the EU should favour strategies that are based on a balanced economic and social development, rather than strategies of support for marginal urban areas. To conclude, Italy is going through a period of transition that also concerns urban policy (European Commission 1999).

5.2. Problem description. Via Arquata

In 1920 the IACP (Istituto Autonomo Case Popolari - The Agency for Public Housing) selected a rectangular plot about 3 kilometres from the city center to build a new neighborhood. The area was isolated on two sides by the railway ditches and on the third side by the ramp of the fly-over. Forty-two low rise buildings were erected on just over 9 hectares totalling 500 units built around six tree-lined yards with very good ventilation and lighting. The early residents included workers, craftsmen and some office workers. In the three decades that followed, the post war housing emergency meant that the number of units increased mostly because of the extra storey built on to most of the original buildings rather than because of additional buildings being constructed. In the early 1960s there were about 800 units and in 1968 the low rise building housing the public baths was replaced by a new high rise and a 20 storey building for the Council Housing Agency (IACP). Maintenance problems became apparent in the 1970s: the idea of demolishing some of the buildings - and then reconstructing them from scratch - was suggested. In the early 1980s the area underwent minor refurbishing - such as replacing some of the fixtures - and the IACP Agency decided that severe social cases were to be have priority in the allocation of residential public housing. As a result the existing problems linked to the low income of residents were compounded as the social mix of the neighborhood deteriorated. New residents included elderly people, mentally handicapped people and some who had been involved in criminal proceedings. By the time when the program started there were about 1600 residents of the neighborhood. The problem was clearly two-fold: it was needed to regenerate the neighborhood (physical regeneration) and to identify, strengthen and favor the local social networks.

5.3. Program description (Fubini 2001)

The program was aimed at regeneration of urban environment, including technical assistance, arrangement of public places, professional training for residents.

The program was implemented in several steps:
1 step, 1996 r. - It was decided to held a research (in-depth interviews, expert interviews) among residents as was held and a research report including a number of conclusions resulting from the debate with informed interviewees and residents was presented. At that time actors worked out programs of development of the neighborhood.
2 step, 1997 r. - The process attracted attention within the community but also became a cause of frustration because of its limited application. As a result signatures were collected the year after and 1400 residents petitioned the Municipality asking for the project to be fully implemented.
3 step, 1998 г. - In 1998 via Arquata was identified as an area for integrated urban regeneration within the framework of the Special Project for the Suburbs (Progetto Speciale Periferie- PSP- see Introduction).

4 step. - Public and private parts were involved in the program. Technical assistance was provided by local departments.

5 step, 2000 г. - The Agency for local development was founded. It included 22 members who represented plans for local development.

Local urban regeneration programs called Neighborhood Contracts (NCs) included a number of action projects as well as the more traditional building and urban features: the aim is to promote employment and economic growth with a special focus on declining and downgraded public housing developments in conditions of limited social cohesion and difficult housing conditions.

Public housing came under the remit of the Ministry of Public Works and employment under the Ministry of Labour and Welfare: the two co-operate with a view to favor the development of social and economic opportunities at work paired with the improvement of living conditions. The public notice illustrating funding conditions (bando) and scoring tend to favor resource allocation to the programmes favoring urban and residential regeneration in downgraded areas as well as the improvement of social and economic conditions. The stated aim was to develop pilot projects.

Residents of Via Arquata agreed to create a constant office, place of regular meetings in which residents themselves, public services, planners, NGO representatives took part. In the framework of the program a set of social initiatives was organized: concerts, football matches, trips etc. Many of these events had a twofold aim: fight the suburban isolation getting residents to also experience other areas - such as the free cultural and educational routes in the city and province, day trips out of Turin with teaching material - and to get people from other areas to enter the neighborhood - such as the party at the bowls area inviting children and parents from other neighborhoods. Furthermore, in shifting the horizon from the short to the long term, interviews suggested that nearly all residents were aware of the date of completion and beginning of the refurbishment and regeneration of housing and roads.

The neighborhood experiences a social mix: the residents were very mixed, ranging from the well-off retailer born and bred in via Arquata and currently the owner-occupier of his/her unit as well as owning a second unit, to the recently arrived mental health patient. It was a surprise they had been in discovering the mutual help network among networks and therefore be able to speak about a community philosophy.

Thus a great effect was achieved as measures to overcome social isolation of the neighborhood were taken (getting residents to also experience other areas and to get people from other areas to enter the neighborhood), people got involved in using services, got better acquainted to each other. These measures were mainly aimed at social integration.

Conclusion

The first part of the paper provided theoretical research of social segregation of the urban space, development of methodological base for measuring social segregation. To develop a concept of socio-spatial segregation the overview of researches held on the topic of segregation was made. As the result of the overview the following definition was developed. The phenomenon of the lack of communication and interaction of the citizens was considered the basic for the definition of the notion of socio-spatial segregation. Socio-spatial segregation could be caused by the appearance of sub-cultures in the urban space or by urban space characteristics (e.g., such as deprived neighborhoods).
In the second part of the paper the analysis of urban policies influence on it was held. In regard to policies that influence socio-spatial segregation the first conclusion is that explicit national policy attention for the larger cities has grown during the past decade. However, the general picture for national urban policies is diverse. The former is caused by administrative, political, economic, social, cultural, geographical and historical differences. We have reviewed three cases of programs that influences socio-spatial segregation. To sum up, successful practices is involving citizens in solving problems of their districts, combining measures of urban planning (for instance, improving infrastructure), development of human capital and social integration.

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Part Two

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
Abstract: Today the Mediterranean region has vital importance for global security. This paper analyses the role of Turkey in the Mediterranean region, European policy initiatives toward the Mediterranean and Turkey’s possible effect as being EU member state in the Mediterranean. It argues that Turkey as democratic, secular and modern country with Muslim population is peaceful and profitable for the EU and it could be an important actor in the region for stability, security and development as an EU member state. The paper analyses history of Turkey’s accession in the EU, policies and her effect in the Mediterranean region, the Barcelona Process and moreover.

Introduction

Historically the Mediterranean has been the cradle of different civilizations and a melting pot of cultures. Today’s Mediterranean is a mosaic of different cultures, traditions and civilizations with a conflictual past. The region has been always important due to the geopolitical and geo-strategic system where European interests lie on.

After the collapse of Soviet Union, European enlargement shifted to the Central and Eastern Europe, ten countries in 2004 and two more countries recently became member of the EU in 2007. This big enlargement also had a small Mediterranean dimension by accession of Malta and Cyprus. Accession of these two countries showed an important change of European involvement in the Mediterranean region. It is known that the stability and prosperity of the Mediterranean holds vital importance for European security and Europe tried to have co-operation with the countries in the region. Since 1995, Euro-Mediterranean Partnership had difficulties, such as structural and functional problems, it represented a balance of separate national preferences, rather than a common Euro-Mediterranean interest. Since the Mediterranean region is vulnerable to the emerging global security setting, now it has to be adapted to the politico-economic difficulties due to the enlargement.

The terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001, opened a new era in international politics. The priorities of international relations, the nature of regional politics, the shape of political alliances, aims of US foreign policy, the role of military forces and danger of mass-destructive weapons have been affected by the issues. Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq showed how vulnerable Mediterranean is for the global security. The majority of security analyses suggest that the Euro-Mediterranean space constitutes a zone of strategic and socio-economic instability, migration flows, violent religious and cultural conflicts, varying forms of political and economic institutions, differing perceptions of security and above all differing world views (Stephanou and Xenakis 2006).

The Mediterranean region has been vital with reference to all the security issues such as civil war in Algeria, Palestinian-Israel conflict, terrorist groups, relations of Israel with Arabic coun-
tries, struggles in Lebanon, situation in Cyprus, Turkey’s possible intervention in Northern Iraq, demographic growth and economic situation. As Javier Solana, the EU’s High Representative for CFSP, claimed «if these regions are unstable, Europe will not be able to live in security» (Hill 1993; 1998).

In recent years, Turkey has been seen as a key point for adaptation of Mediterranean region as a candidate and effective country in the region. Turkey now is a candidate country for the EU and has been negotiating. However still some alternatives are discussed for Turkey’s membership and the last one was announced by new French President Nicholas Sarkozy. This latter proposed that Turkey should stay in the Mediterranean zone and shouldn’t be an EU member. This paper analyses the role of Turkey in the Mediterranean region, European policy initiatives towards the Mediterranean and Turkey’s possible affect as being EU member state in the region. It argues on the EU enlargement and answers the questions if Turkey should stay in the Mediterranean zone or be a member of EU by discussing Turkey’s possible effect as an EU member state in the region.

1. The EU towards Mediterranean

Since the 1957 Treaty of Rome, the EU maintained special relationships with non-member states. The first of these relationships were part of the colonial legacy which many European members brought with them, such as the French ex-colonies in sub-Saharan Africa and the British African, Caribbean and Pacific ex-colonies (Parfitt 1997). The 1975 Lomé Convention gave these states partnership status within the Union. European officials soon saw a need to foster relationships with states that were closer to its borders in the Mediterranean basin in an effort to balance the influence of the USSR in the region (Summa 2005: 5). Between the foundation of the EU and 1972, the European Economic Community (EEC) did not consider the Mediterranean as an homogenous region. Turkey was largely favoured over the Mediterranean countries such as Lebanon and Libya. The first time the region gain political attention was 1972, when the Union implemented its “Global Mediterranean Policy” (GMP) creating the European association agreements which opened up trade barriers and gave enhanced aid to association members such as Egypt (Parfitt 1997: 865). While the GMP was rooted in EEC framework, an EPC initiative was launched in 1974, in the form of the Euro-Arab dialogue. This initiative reached out for all states of the Arab League, thus defining in a slightly different way the Southern neighbourhood. However, by the late 1970s, the attention had faded and previous initiatives had lost their momentum (Bicchi 2002: 15). In 1980s, since the enlargement was focused on Greece, Spain and Portugal, the Southern Mediterranean countries were on the point of view of the EU.

Despite the demise of communism, things started to change, the EU maintained an interest in the Mediterranean basin, as «it has a stake in maintaining the stability of the region at least in part to prevent the immigration surges that are straining Europe’s absorption limits» (European Community Economic and Social Committee 1989). This shift in focus towards Europe’s immediate neighbours has been at the expense of the ex-colonies which are no longer given such high priority. The 1992 Maastricht Treaty was viewed by many EU association countries as betraying the 1972 GMP agreement as it was perceived to create an economic “Fortress Europe” with an internal free trade area which non-EU exporters would have difficulty accessing (Parfitt 1997: 867).

«Although security plays a highly important role in Euro-Mediterranean relations, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership is essentially a soft-power projection of the EU in the region» (Tanner 2003). The Barcelona Declaration set a framework of cooperation between the EU and 15 former Member States, and among the other 12 Southern Mediterranean countries. The main objectives
were the establishment of a common Euro-Mediterranean area of peace and stability; the creation of an area of shared prosperity through the progressive establishment of a free trade area between the EU and its Mediterranean partners and cooperation and policy dialogue in several areas. It also aims at helping improve mutual understanding and tolerance among peoples of different cultures and traditions (Panebianco 2003). Since 1995, the EU supports modernization and reform efforts of Mediterranean countries partner of EMP, through the MEDA budget.

One of the main concerns of Southern Mediterranean countries is that of being refused to join the EU. The feeling of exclusion which depends being in a different region or other side of Mediterranean, can be dangerous and can create hostility and the explanation of differences such as religion, culture, race etc. could create frictions in the region espacially in relation to radical groups. The important issue is EU’s willingness and ability to have an active role in Mediterranean area, in resolution of regional conflicts. As expectation Turkey could help for Mediterranean issues on EU agenda.

2. The Euromediterranean partnership (Barcelona process)

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is a long term investment of the EU for peace, welfare and stability directly in the Mediterranean and indirectly in Europe since the European Union noticed that the population in the Mediterranean countries would be 300 million in 2010; if economic development could not be provided, income differences would increase and this issue would affect peace and security. The process started with the Helsinki Final Act (1975) leading to the institutionalisation of an open-ended conference in a substantive regional organisation dealing with security, economic and human dimension issues in an enlarged European area (Prosperini 2003).

In 1992, the European Commission had proposals for Euro-Maghreb (1) partnership called for the bilateral track of the EMP to be complemented by dialogue on ‘all matters of common interest’ between the EU, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia (European Commission 1992). By 1993, Commission proposed that partnership concept should be extended to Israel and the Mashreq countries (2) since the Commission’s expectation was that the Union might come to play a leading role in normalising inter-governmental relations between Israel and Arab states (Gomez 2003). On 27-28 November 1995, at the Conference in Barcelona organised by the Spanish Presidency of the EU, the European Commission, the Foreign Ministers of the fifteen EU member states and twelve Mediterranean partners (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Palestinian Authority, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey) reached a complex agreement designed to promote peace, stability and prosperity in the region. Although Libya had expressed its interest in joining the partnership, it was excluded from the Conference because of UN sanctions over the Lockerbie affair (3).

The Barcelona Process coming out from the Declaration of Euro-Mediterranean Conference

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1. Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania are known as Maghreb countries. In EMP Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia were joined as partner countries.

2. Mashreq is the region of Arabic speaking countries to the east of Egypt and North of the Arabian Peninsula.

3. See: “Prodi Welcomes Libyan Readiness to Join Barcelona Process”, Brussels, 28 February 2004, http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/lybia/news/ip04_279.htm. Libya’s special case results from the recently-removed United Nations embargo which had been imposed for Libya’s alleged role in the Lockerbie bombing of a Pan Am jetliner in 1988 with the loss of 270 lives. Libya has been attending all ministerial meetings since 1999 as an observer of the EU Council Presidency following the lifting of UN sanctions, which had been imposed over the Lockerbie.
was organised into three baskets: a political and security partnership, an economic and financial partnership and a partnership in social cultural and human affairs:

1. A political and security chapter, comprising, *inter alia*, measures designed to promote regional political stability, the non-proliferation of weapons, respect for democratisation and human rights, and specific “confidence building” measures.

2. An economic and financial chapter, including the often repeated commitment to establish a free-trade area by 2010, increased economic, financial and technical co-operation and other forms of support for the economic development of the partners’ economies.

3. A social and human chapter, including dialogue between social organisations, cultural exchanges (between schools and universities, for instance) and other non-governmental forms of co-operation (4).

The Barcelona Process aimed at creating a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010. The possibility to count on the The goals and constraints imposed by Mediterranean countries are stated in EU Commission’s request for negotiating authority as: «in order to be able to enter progressively into free trade with the Union and to take on board a wide range of trade-related Community regulations (i.e. customs, standards, competition, intellectual property protection, liberalization of services, free capital movements) … Mediterranean countries… insist on four fundamental aspects: the need for long transitional mechanisms and secure safeguards; the need to obtain improved access, for their agricultural exports; the need for increased financial flows … (and) the Community’s help to accelerate the modernization of their social and economic systems» (European Commission 1994).

The MEDA program has been the principal EU financial instrument for the implementation of the EMP. Funding priorities for the MEDA program have been:

- support to economic transition (to prepare for the implementation of free trade by increasing competitiveness so as to achieve sustainable economic growth through the development of the private sector)
- strengthening the socio-economic balance (to alleviate the short-term costs of economic transition through appropriate measures in the field of social policy)
- regional co-operation (to complement existing bilateral activities through measures to increase exchanges at regional level) (Xenakis and Chryssochoou 2001).

Since 1995, the EU supported the modernisation and reform effort on the region through the MEDA budget. All MEDA support has been given in the form of grants. In addition the EIB provides loan support. Between 1995 and 2005, total EU financial support for the Mediterranean partner countries is about € 20 billion (€ 9 billion in MEDA grants and € 11 billion in EIB loans) (European Commission 2005).

Although some progress has been made in the economic field since Barcelona, the co-operation both in the cultural and human partnership and the political and security partnership has not materialised to the originally envisaged degree. For the political and security partnership, misconceptions and structural restraints can be specified as:

- the EMP is characterised by a certain degree of asymmetry. Whereas the EU can claim to represent Europe, the Mediterranean does not exist as a coherent partner. This holds true in the economic as well as the political field;
- the EMP’s multilateral approach tends to ignore the different conflicts between and security concerns of the Mediterranean partner countries;
- basic concepts such as “security” have neither been defined nor agreed upon. Partners on both sides of the Mediterranean take divergent views of the overall aim of the partnership;

The role of Turkey in Euro-Mediterranean co-operation:

- hopes for the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict have not been fulfilled, which had a negative effect on the EMP;
- among Mediterranean partner countries the suspicion persists that the EMP might be a tool for “post-colonialist” interference. Some partner countries see European involvement in the politics of the southern Mediterranean as rather problematic since it touches the crucial issue of national sovereignty (CeMiss 2005: 80).

Although during Italian Presidency, there had been initiatives in different areas of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, later Euro-Mediterranean partnership has lost its importance step by step. Euro-Mediterranean partnership had started to be involved in the Middle East Peace Process and this was seen in Malta Conference in April 1997, foreign ministers of partner states concentrated on Arab-Israeli conflict during the conference and as a result of it, at the end of the conference foreign ministers could not have a common agreement on the Report of Conference (5).

When the European Union launched the Barcelona Declaration, its aim was to be the front of the reconstruction of the Mediterranean system after the Cold War. This aim has been achieved but the Mediterranean is not the backyard of Europe. There are many actors in construction and security arrangement of the region and it is a complex region with processes and relations. Not just EU, but also other organizations and states such as United States, Nato and UN, have a role in the Mediterranean.

3. Euro-Mediterranean partnership and Turkey

After the end of Cold War, priority of EU for enlargement became Central and Eastern European countries. Even though Turkey was excluded from the enlargement strategy of the EU in this period, she was invited to participate in the Barcelona Conference. Barcelona Process was seen by Turkey as an important step for stability in the region, economic and financial aspects of partnership and for anti-terrorism. The invitation of Barcelona Conference was welcomed by Turkey to increase welfare in the Mediterranean, to develop trade, to act against drug trafficking, international crime and terrorism. On the other hand, Turkey was sceptic on the process because of the curiosity to stay just as Mediterranean partner of EU in the future. And critics were arguing that Turkey’s status became the same as the Maghreb and Mashreq countries who were at the stage of signing only free trade agreements with the EU, whereas Turkey was about to complete the final stage of the Association, i.e. the customs union within a month (Atina and Stavridis 2001: 205).

One important issue oustdistancing Turkey from the Barcelona process was that she could not benefit from Meda program which is the financial co-operation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. For Turkey’s Meda projects, new conditions put by European Parliament. Between 1996-1999, the number of projects which were contracted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>year</th>
<th>number of project</th>
<th>amount which is contracted [euro (6)]</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.143.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>70.246.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>132.475.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>140.000.000</td>
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</tbody>
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Due to the obstacles put for Turkey in the program contracted by the EU, Turkey lost its desire for co-operation with the EU in this period. In the late 90s, Turkey’s foreign policy has been occupied with three issues: Caspian-Oil Pipeline issue, the Cyprus problem and the relations with Greece. On the other hand, the EU’s decision to start negotiations with Cyprus for full membership after the Luxemburg Summit held in 1997, caused Turkish policy makers to think European clash of interests with Turkish one. For all these reasons, according to Turkish policy makers, the EMP was not suitable for Turkey, since it reduces the status of Turkey in the EU into a neighbouring country. Now, Turkey has a dilemma: on one hand, for its own national interests, it would like to give importance to the relations with its neighbours in the Mediterranean region to carry on and develop the trade and would like to give importance to Euro-Mediterranean relations; on the other hand it is not glad to be seen just as a Mediterranean partner country while it would like to carry on its EU accession process.

4. Eu-Turkey relations

Turkey developed her relations with the Union more on a bilateral basis even before the Barcelona Process. Turkey’s first application for membership in EEC dates back to 1959. The EEC at that time responded by proposing the creation of an association rather than Turkey’s immediate accession (Warning 2006: 11). This first encounter was followed by an Association Agreement (the Ankara Agreement), signed between Turkey and the EEC in 1963, envisaging the establishment of a customs union to bring Turkey closer to the EEC in economic and trade matters.

During sixties and seventies due to its own internal problems (military coup d’état in 1960, Cyprus intervention in 1974), Turkey was not well aware of the developments in Europe especially regarding its Mediterranean enlargement and its implications for the future. Therefore, the Turkish government did not officially apply during the second enlargement of EC in 1977. After a new military coup d’état in 1980, due to the military rule between 1980-1983, Turkey led to a suspension of EC-Turkey relations until the political situation and respect for human rights were improved. Turkey reapplied for full membership to the Community in 1987 and her application was rejected in 1989. However it was not the end of the road for Turkey. In 1995, Turkey entered the Customs Union which was considered a crucial step for full membership. In November 1993, Copenhagen Summit raised very significant issues which Turkey did not pay attention to since it focused all its energy on the completion of the Customs Union. At Copenhagen Summit, the EU was refining existing principles and criteria for being eligible for membership in the Union and also was defining its own identity through these criteria (Baydarol 2000: 22). Copenhagen Criteria can be summarized under three headings:

- Political: stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for minorities.
- Economic: A functioning market economy.
- Incorporation of the Community Acquis: Adherence to the various political, economic and monetary aims of the European Union.

The Commission prepared “Agenda 2000”, the report which Copenhagen Criteria also laid the basis for. However Turkey did not take place on Commission’s “Agenda 2000” report on Central and East European applicant countries for enlargement (Müftüler and McLaren 2002). The report outlined the enlargement strategy of the EU and foresaw the full membership of twelve countries and just suggested a plan for relations with Turkey. Although Agenda 2000 mentioned Slovakia as the only country that did not meet the first criteria of Copenhagen
The role of Turkey in Euro-Mediterranean co-operation: ...

Summit, when the report on Turkey was examined, also Turkey considered as being a country that did not meet Copenhagen Criteria (7). In the report, the human rights problem in Turkey was mentioned in detail and the Commission even proposed helping Turkey in its efforts to improve the human rights situation (8). Although the report expressed satisfaction of the Customs Union, it was reported that Turkey has highly critical political problems such as Kurdish problem and Cyprus issue. It stated that Turkey should give «a firm commitment to resolve a number of problems in the region and contribute actively to a just and lasting settlement of the Cypriot question» (Atina and Stavridis 2001: 211).

Since no reference were made to Turkey’s full membership on Commission’s “Agenda 2000” as Central and East European applicant countries for enlargement, Turkey at the highest official level stated that this meant that the European Council has been unable to recognize Turkey as a candidate explicitly (ibidem).

Since the fall of Berlin Wall in 1989 was a major breakthrough for EU on shaping the priorities of enlargement; the collapse of communism, reunification of Germany and appearance of ex-communist states necessitated to re-shape Union’s Eastern boundaries. This border had to protect the security interests of Europe as well, so the next enlargement had to encompass those East and Central European countries seeking to join the EU. Therefore, the enlargement priorities of the EU changed excluding Turkey (Berksoy 1998: 31-41).

Luxembourg Compromise in 1997 had been another shock for EU-Turkey Relations. Agenda 2000 was confirmed at the highest level at Luxembourg Summit on 12-13th December 1997. The Summit divided the enlargement countries into three main categories and Turkey constituted to the third category (Atina, Stavridis 2001: 212). The first category countries constituted Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovenia and Cyprus. The negotiations with these countries would start in 1998. The second category countries which were accepted as candidates for full membership, yet with whom the negotiations would start at a later stage were Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Letonia. Inviting the Republic of Cyprus while not solving first the Island’s ethnic-political problems, and simultaneously excluding the Turkish Cypriots from the negotiations was particularly galling for Turkey, a clear expression of just how little regard or respect Europe had for her (Nachmani 2003: 55).

Paragraph 35 of the Summit was understood by Turkey as discriminatory treatment compared with the other applicant countries. The Paragraph stated that Turkey should reach human rights standards of the EU level and should respect minority rights and the protection of minorities. The problems with Greece should be resolved by also including the possibility of application to the International Court of Justice, and that Turkey should find a solution to the Cyprus problem in line with the United Nations’ relevant resolutions (9). Luxembourg Summit had a shock effect on Turkey and Turkey decided not to participate in the coming European Conference which means suspending political dialogue with the Union and to have relations based on existing texts as the Ankara Agreement, Additional Protocol and Customs Union. Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz stated that Turkey would not accept the conclusions of the Luxembourg European Council since they put political preconditions for the recognition of Turkey’s candidacy status (10).

After Luxembourg Summit, in March 1998 the Commission prepared “European Strategy for Turkey” which aimed to develop relations between EU and Turkey and to strengthen

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Customs Union. In the same year at Cardiff Summit, it was stated that Turkey should carry on European Strategy for Turkey would be developed and it was stated «European leaders refused to put Turkey on the same footing as other applicant countries until the European presidency and Commission, together with the appropriate Turkish authorities, had pursued the objective of harmonizing Turkey’s legislation and political practices with European statutes» (Cardiff European Council 1998: par. 68). As a result, Turkey stated that it will no longer pursue EU membership as one of its foremost foreign policy objectives.

Turkey approached the December 1999 Summit by saying that this was the ‘final stop’ and she would not reapply if it was not accepted as a candidate (Rubin and Kirişçi 2001: 40). The EU recognised its candidacy for full membership at the Helsinki European Council in 1999 after evaluation according to Copenhagen Criterias. After Helsinki European Council in 1999, Turkey has been evaluated within human rights issues, minority rights and women’s rights. The Copenhagen Summit of December 2002 declared that the accession negotiations between EU and Turkey would have start after December 2004 without delay on condition that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen Political Criteria. Three years after the Helsinki Summit where Turkey had been offered the possibility of full membership but no date had been specified, in the aftermath of the Copenhagen Summit, Turkey was now faced with a clear timetable and a firm commitment on the EU’s part that substantial progress in terms of satisfying EU conditionally would be rewarded by the opening of accession negotiations (Ugur and Canefe 2004: 186).

On December 2004, the European Council comprising the Heads of States and Government of the 25 Member States decided unanimously to open accession negotiations with Turkey on 3rd October 2005. In October 2005, the European Commission opened negotiations with Turkey. This was a turning point in the history of EU-Turkey relations. Nevertheless, the European Union exclusively underlined an ‘open-ended’ nature of accession negotiations. As the Negotiating Framework for Turkey clearly stated: «Negotiations are an open-ended process, the outcomes of which can not be guaranteed before hand. While having full with regard to all Copenhagen Criteria, including absorption capacity of the EU, if Turkey is not in a position to assume in full all the obligations of membership, it must be ensured that Turkey is fully anchored in the European structure through the strongest possible bond» (11).

Immediately after the opening of negotiations, the European Commission started the next steps. The first component is to screen Turkey’s legislation, to see how far it conforms to the chapter-by-chapter breakdown of the EU rules that is used for accession negotiations. Outside the framework of the accession negotiations, Turkey is expected by the EU to normalise its ties with all of its neighbours especially with Armenia and Cyprus before joining the EU, and recognize Cyprus as a member state in the EU. Negotiations are expected to take 10-15 years.

5. Cyprus issue

Cyprus has been a main obstacle for Turkey’s membership into the EU. The EU is urging Turkey to recognise the Republic of Cyprus, to withdraw its forces from the island and lift its embargo on Cypriot vessels and aircraft according to the Ankara protocol. On the other hand, Turkey claims that it has done enough for its own side since the Annan Plan, but both Greece and EU do not do any attempt for the solution of the problem.

Cyprus and Malta became members of the EU in 2004 which was an important step for the enlargement to come nearer to the Mediterranean region. In 1962, Cyprus applied for member-
ship to the European Communities with the consent of two founding communities of the Republic of Cyprus: Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. In 1963, due to the Greek Nationalism, Turkish Cypriots were thrown out of the government and their legal rights in the government were taken off (12). Problems between Greek and Turkish Cypriots had continued until 1974. When the military coup happened against the Greek government with the support of junta regime in Greece in 1974, the main aim of junta was to unite the island with Greece. This was unacceptable for Turkey and on 20th July 1974, Turkey intervened to the island in order to prevent the unification of island with Greece. Then the island is divided into two sides: Turkish Cypriots in the North and Greek Cypriots in the South of the island (Ozturk, Sertoglu and Kaptan 2006: 3).

After intervention of Turkey in 1974, all relations between the EC and Cyprus were carried on with Greek Cypriot Administration in the name of whole island. Customs Union between the EU and Cyprus was signed in 1987. In 1990, the Greek Cypriot Administration on behalf of whole Cyprus applied for full membership. The Turkish Cypriots had objected to the application and explained their reasons by sending a detailed memorandum to the Council of Ministers. European Commission prepared of its proposal as being favor of Cyprus’ membership and Council of Ministers confirmed the proposal in 1993.

Accession negotiations began with Cyprus in 1998, under the European Commission’s reiteration of its view that Turkish Cypriots should take part in the negotiations. Even if in the absence of Turkish part, negotiations would have continue but all chapters could be reopened as they would decide to participate in the negotiations. President of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus refused the invitation of President Clerides for Turkish-Cypriots to join the negotiations without the achievement of a political settlement. Denktas explained his views saying that the Turkish Cypriot entry into the EU would be dependent on Turkey’s membership «Because we will [not] be alone as a Turkish community», Turkey’s rights under the 1960 Treaties will have to guarantee to prevent the union of Cyprus with Greece, Turkish Cypriots will have to be considered as equal partners with the Greek Cypriots under a confederate system (Salih 2004: 49).

The Annan-Plan submitted to both sides by the UN-Secretary General in November 2002, under the clearer instigation by the EU, to solve the problem before the approaching EU summit in Copenhagen, did not produce any result (Aydin and Infantis 2004: 34). The Copenhagen Summit decided to accept Cyprus as a full member by the spring of 2004, without the northern part of the island if necessary. The final plan for resolution of Cyprus problem was presented by Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, in March 2004. As the Commission report acknowledges it: «Turkey supported the referendum calling the Turkish Cypriot community to a yes vote to the plan. The majority of the Turkish Cypriot community approved the plan but it was rejected by a majority of the Greek Cypriot community» (13).

The EU considered the UN final plan, the so-called Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem, as a framework for a settlement. However the EU failed to use it fairly during the accession negotiation with Cyprus (Arikan 2006: 234). Cyprus became EU member on 1st May 2004 without any solution in the island.

12. Greek Cypriots were unsatisfied from the constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, since according to the constitution the vice president of the republic would be a Turkish Cypriot and he would have veto power, and there had been some other measures to safeguard the rights of Turkish Cypriots within the government. In 1963, Greek Cypriots tried to change the constitution and Turkish Cypriots rejected the changes, then they were thrown out of the government by Greek Cypriots, illegally.
6. The situation of Turkey in the Mediterranean

Turkey might be considered as a role model for the other Mediterranean partners who seek to be a part of the EU in the future. If Turkey becomes a member of the EU, as a consequence the EU’s geographic scope will fall just short of the Middle East, with Syria, Iran and Iraq the EU’s new neighbours in a region marked by instability and violent conflict. This development has two consequences. Tobias Schumacher (14) argues that first, against the backdrop of the EU membership of two former EMP members, Malta and Cyprus, as of 1 May 2004, Turkey’s accession to the EU will result in a severe imbalance in the EMP’s geopolitical dimension and will leave Israel as the only non-Arab Mediterranean partner country with eight Arab partners. In light of the virtual demise of the Middle East P eace Process, this will further undermine Israel’s chances of becoming involved in the EMP’s multilateral track. Second, being exposed to a new neighbourhood in the Middle East will make it impossible for the EU to limit itself to a mere political dialogue and trade agreement with Iran, and to continue to treat war-torn Iraq simply as a recipient of reconstruction aid, thereby leaving the country in the power sphere of the occupying powers (Schumacher 2004: 99).

Turkey has a vital strategic importance as being in between Balkans, Caucasia, Central Asia, Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey has water resources and her neighbours are energy suppliers for Europe. Economically and demographically Turkey is an important actor, the 21st biggest economy in the world. Turkey as a democratic, secular country with Muslim population is an element for stability in the region. Her integration with Western world and her membership of many economic and regional institutions, she gives support for security of Europe and neighbour countries.

With the membership of Turkey in the EU, the borders of the Union will widen to Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Syria, Iran and Iraq. The Foreign Policy of Union will involve in the issues between Turkey and her neighbour countries. The problems of the region will be on the first places of the EU Foreign Policy agenda. Turkey supports EU to be active in the Mediterranean region. Turkey as having historical relations and economic interests with Arab world, tries to increase her role in Islam Conference Organization. At the same time, Turkey has close relations with Israel and other Mediterranean countries. Furthermore, its relations with Greece and its interests in Cyprus are significant. Turkey supports stable, secure and democratic Iraq. Her main concern is that one of the terrorist groups which is also in the terror list of EU has been in Northern Iraq. Turkey has been fighting against terrorism for years and had a constructive role in the region by starting diplomatic initiatives with neighbour countries of Iraq to stop ethnic conflicts.

Turkey had difficulties in her relations with Syria in the history. But in 1998, since Syria cut her support to terrorist group PKK and sent away the leader of the terrorist group out of the country, her relations with Turkey started to develop. While Iran is sceptic to Turkey’s membership of Nato and her relations with USA, Turkey has the same curiosity with the EU for nuclear program of Iran. Although Turkey and Iran are too different from eachother on religion and state affairs, they have common economic interests. Between Turkey and Iran there is a wide partnership on energy and natural gas, and EU has a potential to be a market for Iran’s natural gas. With the membership of Turkey in EU, relations between EU and Iran could develop due to having common border. Iran would be curious about how EU could make progress on integration with a country which has Muslim population (15).

14. Tobias Schumacher is a Research Fellow and Scientific Coordinator of the Mediterranean Programme at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute, Florence.
In the last years, Turkey has developed her relations with Israel by signing many strategic agreements together. Turkey has been keeping her ties both with Israel and Palestine and she states her support, critics and anxiety to the both sides. Turkey has been member of the United Nations, European Security and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Council of Europe, NATO, OECD, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Organization of the Islamic Conference. At the same time Turkey holds the status of observer in the Arab League.

Turkey is an important strategic element whose EU membership will affect the Mediterranean region where has potential of instability. If Turkey continues on her economic modernization, socio-economic development and its integration with the region, it will be an element of stability in the region. As an EU membership it will be important in international issues such as energy, water sources, borders’ administration, struggle against terrorism. With its big amount of military spendings and human power, Turkey has significant capacity for European Security and Defence Policy. Its integration with the EU is a proof to Muslim world that its religious believes are harmonious with the EU values. In addition, the future of Turkey’s foreign policy will be affected by the situation of army, religion and civil society in Turkey. Potentially, an EU member Turkey will be effective in foreign policy, meanwhile it will be dependent on restrictions of European institutions’ common decisions’ process.

7. The Mediterranean Union

The Mediterranean Project of Nicholas Sarkozy, new president of France has been discussed in Europe and in the Mediterranean. Indifferent from Barcelona Process, The Mediterranean Union will be a real organization. The cornerstones of the Union which the details has not been decided will be put in 2008, the year of French Presidency in European Union. Countries which Sarkozy wants to join in the Mediterranean Union are France, Turkey, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Malta, Cyprus (Greek part), Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Israel, Lebanon, Libya and Egypt.

It has being planned that the union will work with a periodical presidency, a council and regular meetings. The possible areas for cooperation are thought to be economy, war against terrorism, security, energy and agreed immigration. It is planned to establish a Mediterranean Investment Bank like European Investment Bank to give support for developing areas. For the first step, it is aimed to construct a common market as similar to European Single Market. Although the Mediterranean Union is announced as an independent organization, it is expected to have close ties to EU, even to construct common institutions with the EU (16).

It is important to understand with which kind of ideas Sarkozy has planned the Mediterranean Union. Because it is obvious that the first reason is to deviate the route of Turkey from EU membership to become a part of Mediterranean Union in a strategic and central position. One of the other reasons is constructing peace in Middle East by involving Israel and Arabic countries in the same union. While the EU successes its aims like integration step by step and economic integration deepens, it will not be useful for any state to damage peace. At the same time, Union in Mediterranean can be effective to stop radical terrorism and illegal immigration based from North Africa to provide economic development to stop immigration in the basis. Furthermore it is another important point that African countries in Mediterranean region have natural gas resources. In the time of energy needs and tense relations between Russia and EU, it can be said that one of the reasons of this kind of regional cooperation project can be energy.

Germany looks cold to the project which most of the Mediterranean countries have doubt for. Spain having belief of fighting against terrorism and illegal immigration and Israel with the belief to construct dialogue with some countries with which she never had, support the project. Italy supports the Mediterranean Union as being against that union is seen as alternative for Turkey’s EU membership. Turkey has the strongest reaction. Turkey would like to be a part in the Mediterranean Union by underlining that the union can’t be an alternative of European Union.

Some hypothesis have been formulated in order to explain why the Mediterranean Union will be unsuccessful. The first one is the impossibility of coming together for the countries having contentions among them. The other reason is that some countries expected to be in the Mediterranean Union are far away from European values such as democracy, human rights and secularism. If some criterias such as criterias for democracy put in front of the states as a condition to be a part of the Mediterranean Union, it will be impossible for many countries to be in the Union. On the other hand, in the EU example it has been seen that the countries which had wars, had not put democratic and human right concepts yet in the time started with close economic ties and bring EU to today as a peace project. The difference of the Mediterranean Union from the EU is the absence of vital reason to be inside of it. However it is possible to provide this reason by economic promises to the mostly poor countries.

Most of the concerns are that the main aim of Sarkozy with the Mediterranean Union is to exclude Turkey from the EU process. France has lost its power in international area and in the EU. It is believed that as a result of realizing the Mediterranean Union, for instance excluding Turkey from the EU, avoiding migration, securing energy flow, establishing close relations with North Africa and Middle East, would provide its old power to France.

8. The Eu with Turkey or not

For EU, democratic, secular, moderately Islamic country, Turkey is not only favorable and peaceful, but also profitable. That would offer a beacon to the rest of the Muslim world and show that the EU is not a cosy [sic], exclusive club, but a body committed to diversity and change (Macintyre 2005). As Macintyre has noted, Europe doesn’t have any alternative to Turkish accession because a rejection of 44 years will be viewed by Turks as cultural and religious discrimination and may encourage Islamic fundamentalism.

A European Union which included Turkey would look too different from that of today. According to Fleming, Greece and Turkey may become the leaders of the Union as they have more in common with each other than the rest of Europe (Fleming 2005). Following Greece’s accession to the EEC in 1981 and although part of the accession agreement was that Greece would not export its bilateral problems with Turkey to Brussels, a process of Europeanization of Greek-Turkish relations started and was made a condition for the improvement of EU-Turkey relations (Kavakas 2000). It is true that good co-operation and close relations between Turkey and Greece can be a leading role also in the region and in the Euro-Mediterranean relations. Imagining the Cyprus problem is solved, it would be a good scenario to see co-operation also between Turkey and Southern Cyprus.

It can be said that the only certainty is uncertainty for the future of the EU. The EU has risks of conflict and violence in the states whose accession prospects have been removed. Therefore, the EU should continue with the accession of Turkey based on values and criteria of Copenhagen Summit. Only through continuing of the enlargement process, the EU can be able to maintain its influence in the region and this journey can be easier by fostering a strong European identity.

Today, in the Mediterranean region, Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Greece, Malta and Cyprus
are member states of the EU. Although Croatia will be member soon, integration will not be completed without membership of Turkey. For the stability and security of EU, the Mediterranean has vital significance. When EU finished integration in Balkans, she should use effort for the integration of the Mediterranean region. Now, one of the biggest problems in the EU is related with East Mediterranean. The EU developed active policies for the region. European integration process strengthened democracy in the region. In Greece, Spain and Portugal, European integration provided the transition from military regimes to democracy. In France within EU integration, the role of military diminished. In Turkey, due to the relations with the EU and negotiations for full membership, democracy has strengthened. The influence of integration would be seen more in Turkey in the future.

Turkey’s integration into the EU would diminish ethnic conflicts in the region. Since Copenhagen Criteria guarantees minority rights, oppression between ethnic groups disappeared. In Spain, France and Italy most of the ethnic problems were solved without the use of violence. Within the process, problems in Turkey has been solved; due to the progress ethnic tensions have been decreasing.

Integration process would solve economic problems. For instance in Spain, Greece and Portugal, due to the process, more foreign capital and investment entered into the countries and it helped to solve the development problems. Economically, the EU will benefit from Turkey’s membership in long term. Turkey is a plus value for the EU due to its high growing potential, its initiatives in internal and external market and its capacity as a big market. Related with integration process, Turkey would be more secure and stable for foreign investments.

The critics of Turkey’s membership state that there would be mass migration from Turkey to the EU countries. However, this has not be registered in other Mediterranean countries that became members of the EU. Although before membership of Greece or Spain, it was stipulated that there would be migration from those countries to the EU, it did not happen. Citizens of those countries stayed in their countries due to the vision of being EU citizens. The reason for migration is hopeless. If Turkey becomes a member of the EU, Turks will stay in Turkey.

Integration process will be of help on peace and stability in the Mediterranean. European integration resulted peace in the Europe, now it is impossible to think EU member states will have war between each other. If European integration did not happen, it would not be possible to think about the reconciliation between Germany-Poland or Germany-France. As a matter of fact, Turkey-Greece relations has become closer. Due to the membership of Turkey, tensions between Greece and Turkey will end, relations between two countries will develop and stability in the Aegean region will be provided. Bigger stability in the region will cause potential for the projects of co-operation, trade, energy, transportation and environment.

Turkey has the biggest army in Europe and the second in Nato, it has good relations with Israel; as a trustful Nato allied, membership of Turkey will strengthen Common Foreign and Security Policy in the region. The EU with Turkey would be more active to fight against handling the threats coming from non-democratic regimes, terrorism, armament, religious radicalism, mass migrations, contrabands of arms, drug and human trafficking; it would be more productive to cope with political problems and crisis.

9. Identity

Due to the enlargement process and the studies on the constitution, it could be said that a new Europe has being constructed. This situation brings some fears and discussions. One of the main discussions is bound to identity. What does “European” mean? What are the main characteristics
of European culture? Where is the place of religion in the European identity?

Religious difference is one of the main arguments of critics for Turkey’s membership. Islam has been already a part of the EU for long time. There are more than 20 million Muslims living in the European countries. In Balkans, Islam has a thousand years old past and there are millions of Muslim people living there. Critics for Turkey’s membership state that a Muslim country can not integrate into the EU. This means the absence of secularism in Europe. However, Turkey is a secular state with a Muslim population. These critics could discriminate Muslim people who have been already living in Europe such as French, British or German Muslims. Therefore, European identity should construct on values such as democracy, human rights, supremacy of law, minority rights instead of religion. Europe would be a better place to live with all differences in harmony.

European integration should go in peace with Islam. Turkey’s membership as a Muslim country will be the evidence of pluralism in the EU and the end of prejudices coming from the past. Turkey has been between the conflict areas which is stated in Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations (17). The owners of this theory argue that the biggest wars of next fifty years will happen on the lands of Muslim countries.

Turkey’s membership will end the curiosities for Muslim-Christian clashes and the border between Islam and Cristianism will not be conflict border of the earth. Turkey can be a fatal impact to Huntington’s theory, after September 11th, the whole world needs it. Turkey’s membership will be a signal to the world that there is no rooted clashes between Western and Muslim states anymore. The Mediterranean region which combines three continents - Asia, Europe and Africa - is one of the most different regions of the world due to the cultural relations, economic ties and political clashes. Therefore, the region became the basis and meeting point of many civilizations and in the future the region will become the house of different civilizations, too.

In the Mediterranean, three religions are monotheistic. In principle, they teach the same faith in God, but they differ in conceptions and ways to implement its laws; one cannot ignore that, through the three religions have the same origin: monotheism is the basis of the three, but there are differences (Bin 1996: 95). To have co-operation, security and stability in the Mediterranean, we need a better understanding of our religions and be tolerant in our relations by accepting the differences. The participants in the Barcelona Process have fortunately not forgotten the cultural aspect of co-operation and security. May the future show that a turning point has been reached between North and South of our “Mare Nostrum” (Huntington 1996: 100).

Conclusion

This analysis of the role of Turkey in the Mediterranean and its membership in the EU has emphasized the elements from which main conclusion could be drawn. First Turkey has a big geography in the crossing point of three continents and in between different regions. Co-operation between Europe, the Mediterranean, Caucasia, Central Asia and Balkans can be constructed with Turkey. Turkey is not only profitable for EU, but also for the Mediterranean. It can connect Caspian Region and the Mediterranean with each other. The Mediterranean region has a big po-

17. The Clash of Civilization is a theory, proposed by political scientist Samuel Huntington. He argues that fundamental source of conflict in the new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future (Huntington 1996).
The role of Turkey in Euro-Mediterranean co-operation: potential for co-operation not just for stability and security, but also economic co-operation.

The Mediterranean region will face many difficulties in next years. Due to the global warming, it is predicted that the climate will change in the Mediterranean, rains and water sources will reduce, the strategic importance of the water will increase more in the next years. In this respect, precautions against pollution and drought should be taken with the support of the EU. With the accession of Turkey, the international administration of water sources and infrastructure projects (18) will become an important issue for the EU.

In the security content, Turkey’s accession to the EU will advance the co-operation to struggle against terrorism. After September 11th, Turkey has joined in many EU actions to struggle against terrorism and the groups which have been stated as terrorist by Turkey have put on the terror list of the EU. Having good neighbourhood relations in the region is important for economy, tourism, foreign trade and education. This is beneficial for the EU and all countries near to the region. Common future of Europe should be built on plurality, tolerance, democracy, supremacy of law, human rights and co-operation in economy and in all areas.

Due to her big population, economic size and instability, international tensions, internal conflicts, migration issues and her location in a geography where is full of conflicting economic and energy interests, a European integration which includes Turkey would be different from the others. It will bring advantages together with difficulties. It will reason stability to the Mediterranean and the Middle East, at the same time it will cause the EU to have difficult political and security problems. Turkey’s membership will increase effectiveness of the EU in the region and in the international area while bringing difficulties on decision making to the EU. Turkey as an important actor will be a factor for stability in the region while bringing difficulties to the foreign policy of EU. But with the whole integration all difficulties will cause advantages.

It is a right policy for the EU to have a special program for relations with the Mediterranean states which are not members of the EU. However it shouldn’t be thought that the Mediterranean Union can be an alternative for Turkey’s EU membership, Turkey will not accept it. If the enlargement Project of EU is based on common interests and common values, democracy and free economic structure, then the door shouldn’t be closed to a secular country which has fulfilled these criteria. The dual personality of Turkey would be an advantage for the EU. As a unique example of Muslim, democratic and modern country, it can be a factor to remove the borders and conflicts in “Mare Nostrum” with the support of European Union.

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Abstract: This work deals with the approach of the EU toward the Mediterranean as stated by the
Barcelona’s declaration and the Euro-Mediterranean partnership of 1995, the first attempt of the EU of
approaching to the Mediterranean region in an overall way. However, if the premises and the intentions
were ambitious and, for a larger part, appreciable, the policies, the rhetoric and the concrete choices of
the EU in the past twelve years seem to have failed their aims. The different chapters of the work deal
with an analysis of the political essence of the Mediterranean, rooted in the idea that it represents a
cleavage, the evolution of the geopolitical configuration of the basin, the powerful rise of Islamism in its
southern part and a critical analysis of the Euro-Med partnership.

Introduction

This brief work aims at analyzing and providing some analytic tracks to better understand
the reality of the contemporary Mediterranean, its challenges to the world, to the EU and to the
countries of the Middle East, pointing out the limits of the European approach towards the
problems of this region. During the past years, the problems and demands coming from the
Mediterranean set many, different and serious threats to the European stability. For example, the
tragic events of Madrid and London proved that Europe is vulnerable to the perils posed by ra-
dical Islamic extremism. Even though these events were the most evident representation of such
development, these dynamics are not the unique challenges coming from the Mediterranean the
EU must address.

The Mediterranean questions the EU in many political and intellectual ways. Aiming at
guaranteeing a peaceful and stable future for its citizens, the EU must find the suitable keys for
finding the most appropriate answers to the spread of these challenges.

Their heterogeneity represents the central part of this work. Dealing with these arguments is
never easy: each paragraph of this work could be the topic for a series of books, therefore “incom-
pleteness” and “openness” will be the common character of each part of this work. However, as
already stated, this paper will try to provide with some keys to better understand the nature of the
intellectual and political challenge that the Mediterranean represents.

The first section of this work deals with the geopolitical and geocultural configuration of the
Mediterranean, presenting the dichotomy of the “myth” of its unity and the awareness that the
Mediterranean represents a sea of clashes and cleavages rather than a space of peace and unifi-
cation yet. The second part is devoted to analyze the emergence of different types of threats to
the international stability developed after the end of the Cold War and paradigmatically repres-
mented in the Mediterranean region. The third section is focused on one of the most prominent element of international politics of these years, the rise of Islamism in the Middle East. Such an analysis is grounded not only on the spreading of the Islamic fundamentalism as a “terrorist menace” but, above all, as social, cultural, political, dominant narrative within the Middle East and the broader Islamic world during the past thirty years. The symbolic universe of the Political and Radical Islam is the modern social grammar of a larger part of the Middle East populations, thus we tried to collect some pieces of information aimed at better understanding the nature, the contradictions and the “cultural” power of such a social and political force. The last paragraph deals with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and tries to sketch the main characters of the effort of “regionalization” of the Mediterranean. This process must be read within the global process of the progressive regionalization of security, which has been one of the prominent characters of the post Cold War international system (Attinà 2002).

We tried also to point out several elements of weakness of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. As it is clearly visible, the results of Euro-Med Partnership during the past years have not been so bright: problems within the Mediterranean still exist and many other challenges seem to be ready to affect the stability of the area, as it is shown in the conclusion, where an overall assessment of the different points touched in the paper I formulated. The approach of such a work is multi-disciplinary. It mixes elements of International Relations and Geopolitical analysis with elements of Cultural Sociology and History. That’s because the challenges coming from the Mediterranean are “multiple” in their essences.

1. Mediterranean fragments

“The Mediterranean civilisation”. “The Mediterranean as a sea of unity and peace”. “Mediterranean peoples”. These are only some of the expressions often used in the current European political debate on the Mediterranean. If a European politician, talking about the Mediterranean basin does not use such words, he or she risks to be considered, in the best hypothesis, an “alien”. However, the above mentioned expressions hold a common characteristic: they are all oxymora. The Mediterranean is a space in which unity is, in a large part, an unknown concept and a rhetoric construction. Occasions in which a unity of the Mediterranean took place, it was not under the sign of peace and serene cohabitation (Coppola 2005). It is a space of contrasts and conflicts (Bethemont 2001: 279-294), manifesting in different degrees of intensity during the past centuries. The geography of the Mediterranean is “une géographie de la fracture” using the French expression of Bernard Kaiser (Kaiser 1996). It is a space in which diversity is the rule.

Unity is a category belonging to the Mediterranean myth, not rooted in the Mediterranean realities. As sharply stated by Jacques Levy «the four principles of apparent unity - Nature, the Roman Spirit, Tourism and Civilisation - reveal quickly their belonging to the order of myth» (Lévy 1999). The Mediterranean is rather a place of meeting and opposition between different regions than a unitarian one (Willa 1999). The deep difference in the level of economic developments and in the religious tradition of the two banks; the different role such elements hold in Mediterranean societies; the question of democracy and the problems related to civil and human rights; different spatial organization of the cities (Lévy 1999: 229) and the difference in the “weight” urban centres hold on the territory (1); the current dissimilar level of demographic development. These are some of the constitutive elements of this cleavage.

1. Europe is the place of cities and urban values. The European centre could be considered as an «immense city of two hundred millions of habitants» (Levy 1999: 218). In the southern bank of the Mediter-
The Mediterranean has been the place in which the three monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam grew and met. Moreover, it has been the birthplace of the most important and durable “universal ideologies” and it has been the field of the struggle between them: Christianity versus Islam after the seventh century P.C.; the “light of reason” against the “darkness of religion” after the eighteenth century: in this century the birth of Illuminism separated Europe and its civilisation from the others (Meddeb 2003). However, the capacity of this detachment has been stronger and more evident in the Mediterranean for the “geographical intimacy” between Europe and the Middle East. Middle East people, above all on the Mediterranean coast, tested more than any other population in the world the contact with Europe (Fuller, Lesser 1996: 133). The Mediterranean region is not characterized by a singular physic or human characteristic. It has many, different and complex aspects; it is not a sole ecosystem; it did not express a unique civilisation, as pointed out before. In the words of Pasquale Coppola the Mediterranean «looks more like a kaleidoscope immersed in history than a whole ... it is a basin of fragments, in which there are multiple lines of crack and some loose and precarious signs of sticking» (Coppola 2005: 47).

However, this does not mean that cooperation and security could not be guaranteed in the Mediterranean. Geographical proximity is also an opportunity and the Mediterranean could turn into a space of harmony, in the future. But, at the present moment, the role of politicians and scholars is confronted with the harsh reality, showing the Mediterranean as a zone of conflicts and tensions. We must be aware of this when approaching them. Harmony should and could be built, not only claimed.

2. The Mediterranean between hard and soft security

The “geopolitical cataclysm” produced by the end of the Cold War and the emerging of a new and, for a large part, still unknown international order changed the nature of the challenges faced by States. The superimposition of the global security structure on the regional subsystems was lost (Ragionieri 2002: 78), the important dimensions of the Cold War - the political-ideological confrontation among U.S. and USSR and the prominence of the military dimension of security - were replaced by different threats and more segmented and complex dynamics. A shift was produced from a West-East axis towards a North-South axis.

For Europe, such a transformation primarily meant a change in the hierarchy of the “geopolitical origin of the perils”, with the end of the pressure coming from the East and the amplification of the crisis factors based in its Southern periphery. If the East periphery of Europe was perceived by the EU - driven above all by the German interests - as a geopolitical space ready to be integrated, the Mediterranean periphery has been considered as an area to domesticate but impossible to integrate, because of the perception of his irreducible “cultural distance” from the northern bank, an area still perceived by many actors as “hostile” (2). Rejecting the idea of the existence of a cultural gap is incorrect, but this cannot bring the EU to look at this area with the sole goal of “limiting damages” and domesticating the region to European economic and trade needs. The end of the Cold War further complicated some regional questions whose potentiality was harnessed by the “Cold War Box” but whose deep geopolitical

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ranean, instead, such a presence is not as strong as in the northern bank, even though there has been a rapid process of urbanization during the past decades. In these countries still exists the presence of a territorial dichotomy between cities and countries, between urban and rural values, and this dichotomy has important effects on the social and cultural identity of these countries.

2. Negotiations about the Turkish entrance into the EU are clear examples of such attitude.
roots were tightly local. In the Middle East, the clearest examples of this have been the Arab-Israeli conflict or the historical rivalry between Arab countries and Iran (Stefanachi 2007: 21).

Social, economic, environmental and cultural problems added new and different aspects to the classic dimension of security, the so-called “Hard Security” (Lindley-French 2004), based on the complete prominence of military factors and concerns. As noted by Hüseyin Isiksal «Although the end of the Cold War did not completely terminate the military security concerns of the Euro-Mediterranean Countries, it is quite clear that there had been a shift» (Isiksal 2002). The rise of new categories of menaces changed the configuration of the concept of security, even though these problems have always existed, above all in the Mediterranean region [Politi 1999 (3)]. A change occurred in the new, different, relative weight such elements hold in the foreign and defence decision-making process of States after the end of the Cold War and the end of the domain of its rigid security structure. These elements are the multifarious faces of the so-called “Soft Security” and their surfacing changed the quality, the whole nature and the complexity of the problems faced by different governments. The most important of such elements are:

- the simultaneous processes, of globalization/integration and of fragmentation/diversification, posing a harder challenge to the authority of centralized States (4);
- the role of identity and religion in international relations (Hatzopoulos, Petito 2003) and the spread of religious extremism;
- the increasing role played by trans-national organizations in the international arena, such as criminal or terrorist groups;
- problems linked to under-development, poorness, unemployment and their social and strategic consequences;
- the increasing urbanization and the demographic challenges in the third world countries and problems connected to migrations;
- resources scarcity
- global warming and the environmental perils posed by development levels of western countries and by the increasing industrialization of the “late-comer” demographic giants, such as China and India (Mananima 2007).

A common, evident character of such developments is their “trans-nationality”. Even when these elements are clearly localized, such as under-development which is still a national problem, their effects spread over national boundaries, which are a sort of “unknown entities” for them, and they could represent a threat for stability at global, regional or domestic levels.

The Mediterranean area is a sort of “paradigm” of these developments: rather than speaking about “end of history” (Fukuyama 1992) we should talk - above all looking at the eastern and southern part of the Mediterranean basin - of a powerful “return of history”. At the Mediterranean scale, we can find the entire pattern of peculiarities of the contemporary world and approaching with menaces of the “Soft Security” is one of the most important tasks of the European Union, above all in its southward projection (Rincón, Ramos, Estèvez 2006: 276).

A process of integration between the States is in existence in the northern part of the Mediterranean and this area is fully immersed in the process of world globalization. Within this process the Mediterranean represents one of the three most relevant economic macro-areas (D’Agata 2006: 276). An alarm about the environmental conditions of the whole basin is very

3. The author argues that «it would be more appropriate and simple to state that we, in the Northern hemisphere, once dominated by the Cold War, are rediscovering traditional security, a security by nature multidimensional».

4. This dynamic has been a peculiar character of the whole twentieth century (Clarke 1997).
pressing and could have serious consequences for the geological tenure of the entire area (5) and such consequences will have important political and economic effects; the current impetuous demographic development in its southern bank sets an hard challenge to the whole economic, social and political stability of the basin together with the dramatic problem set by migratory fluxes, closely related to the demographic problem. Finally, the emergence of a problem connected to terrorism on the Mediterranean scale (Reinares 2005), above all in the Maghreb countries with the emergence of a “local branch” (Fabiani 2007) of the “Al-Qaeda brand” (Burke 2003).

However, the most evident of these peculiarities is the return of culture and religion as fundamental elements of international relations. The clearest evidence of this development is in the Mediterranean region. In this area, the re-emergence of identity and culture as powerful factors affecting international politics and the spread of religious fundamentalism and extremism, embodied by the threat of radical Islam - a menace for security both between States and within States - has been the most evident development of the last decades and it has compelled the States gravitating geopolitically toward the basin to face a hard and, for a larger part, more liquid type of threat. Moreover, the appearance of those problems related to the concept of “Soft Security” did not imply the end of those problems related to the Hard dimension of security which is, however, based more on a South-South dimension rather than a South-North (Talbot 2004). For instance, the strategic configuration of the Middle East changed, above all after the 9/11 terrorist attack against the U.S. and the successive wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. These events modified the regional strategic environment (Larrabee 2006), with the end of the “over the horizon” role that the U.S. played for many years in the area, and complicated the regional strategic equation. The stability of such equation was also affected by other developments, such as the progressive crisis of legitimacy of some Arab regimes (Sivan 2007), the renewed role of Russia and the “new geopolitical-comer” in the Middle East, China and the problems related to the risk of regional nuclear proliferation.

All of these elements complicated the interests net, creating a sort of fertile “geopolitical humus” for the amplification of the rivalry between different regional power, with a high risk of political misunderstanding and military escalation. In the so-called “Greater Middle East” (Blank 2004) still exists a dangerous degree of inter-states hostility and, even though Arab and Islamic states did not wage openly war between them during the past years, according to a spread opinion, the danger of a sort of “proxy war” in Lebanon, in Iraq and in the Palestinian territories between Iran and Syria on one side and Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan on the other. Middle East is also one of the main regional diplomatic theatres where concerns about a potential nuclear arms race are growing. These concerns come because a few of the regional great powers, for example Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Algeria are worried about Iran’s nuclear program and its rising as regional power (Rubin 2006) and the presence of a nuclear weapons power, even if unofficial, such as Israel.

Furthermore, the Palestinian question, which is in the forefront of Arab minds (Craig 2007) and is a potent tool of mobilititazion for the Arab masses, and the overall problem of a settlement between Israel and the Arab and Islamic world still remains, from our viewpoint, a geopo-

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5. Examples of these alarms are the desertification, the erosion of the coasts, the risk of an enhancing of the sea level which menaces placed on the coasts.
litical and strategic question between States, in spite of the role played in the past few years by non-state actors, such as Hamas or Hezbollah (6).

3. The challenge of the rise of Islamism

In the southern bank of the Mediterranean, the strong re-emergence of identity and cultural factors highlighted the return of Islam as the most important social, cultural and political narrative among the populations of this area. Such a process did not start since the end of the Cold War but it has been a slow and continues development began a few centuries ago. It is rooted in the late eighteenth century, in the period in which the so-called “tajdid” movements gained ground and of which Wahhabism is the most evident and durable political expression.

These movements and their ideological production have been alimented, during the colonial period, by the confrontation with Western modernity (7) and, after the end of the colonial presence (Nouschi 2000) by those ideologies coming from the West which played an important role in the Middle East and in the Arab world in the first half of twentieth century: first of all secular nationalism but also Liberalism and Marxism.

Even though the interpreters of these lines of thought were Arabs and these ideologies were, for a larger part, syncretic - many Arab and Islamic characters were tracked in such beliefs, reinterpreted in the Middle East countries - the rhetoric of the Radical Islamism saw them as an example of the persistent Western presence, as a menace to the pureness of Islamic and Arab culture and as the paradigm of how the Ummah lives in a state of crisis when it goes back from the correct religious guidelines. In this period, in the words of John Esposito, there has been the «tendency towards occidentalitation and secularisation created a larger social cleavage. There were a modern elitist minority and a more traditional majority oriented toward Islam. Such a division remained the most important reason of the identity crisis e the reawaken of religious feeling in several Muslim societies» (Esposito 2004: 25-28).

Such a development was clearer after the “regional turning point” played by the Six Days war of 1967, in which the Arab world was divided and defeated (Halliday 2005: 122). This event symbolized the death of Pan-Arab nationalism as the main political ideology within the Middle East. This ideology was replaced by the emergence of Islamism, which became that narrative able to fill the increasing ideological vacuum emerging in the Islamic and Arab world after the failure of the former ideology.

The retreat from secularisation was less immediately evident but was to have long term consequences (ibidem), the meaning of which emerged clearly only in the years after the end of the Cold War and could be considered one of those choked contradictions emerged by the end of the “discipline” imposed by the bipolar logic of blocks (Kerdoun 1997: 127), even though some expression of this renaissance were registered also during the Cold War, such as the Khomeinist revolution in Iran (1979).

6. For a view on the regional complexity that enclose the Israeli-Palestinian problem, its consequences on the whole Israeli-Arab question and the persistent prominence of State-actors in this conflict see Cristiani (2007).

7. As argued by Massimo Campanini (2006) «the Tajdid movements show the internal sparkle of Islam between XVIth and XVIIth centuries however before and apart from the contact with Europe. They have been also movements of anti-colonial reaction, but their first origin consists as internal movements of revision and re-articulation of doctrinal bases». We perceive as a logic consequence of these words the fact that colonialism and confrontation with West played a role in the development of Radical and Political Islam, but they cannot be considered as the unique causes of the spreading of such ideologies in the Middle East. Such elements have been just a part of this dynamics and not the main causes in which they are rooted.
During the late nineties, the emergence of this issue has been more evident. In our view, the main reasons behind the affirmation of Islamism and of the renewed political use of Islam are:

• its social grammar, which sounds familiar to the people in the Middle East;
• the perception that such an ideology is completely “internal” and “original” and not “imported” from abroad; the relative simplicity of the solutions and of the answers allowed by this ideology to the state of crisis of the entire Islamic area (i.e. the myth of the origins, the return to a pure Islam, the call for avoiding “unfaithful contaminations” coming from the West (8), the idea of a rigid division of the world between “us”, faithful and right, and “the rest”, materialistic and faithless);
• the fascination the use of tradition and religion exerts on societies largely plunged into tradition and relying on the past as bearer of meanings and advices for the present (Esposito 2004: 44).

Islamism held a great capacity of creating a sort of “security identity” and it is perceived as a psychological defence barrier against the invasion of the Western lifestyle in the lives of the Muslims (Craig 2007: 4). However, even though this narrative seems to dominate the scene, it is not the only one and even in the field of Islamism there are many different visions, perceptions, aims and cultural and political discourses. Rather than talking about the existence of a monolithic, homogeneous and united Islamic world, one should feel the need and the duty of speaking about composite, internally differentiated and widely fragmented “Islamic worlds” (Figure 1).

Figure 1- Muslim distribution in the world (Source: http://www.uwec.edu/)

8. Radical Islamism rejects, rhetorically and theoretically, the products of the western modernity. Anyway, both from an ideological point of view both from a materialistic and logistic point of view, the use of the instruments of such modernity by these groups is evident. The conceptual category of “Revolutionary Islam” and its philosophical implications is a paradigm of such a contradiction, as argued by Paolo Branca. See Branca (2004: 33-46).
The internal struggle within Islam between different ideological currents is a clear example of such an attitude and it shows the limits of the concept of “clash of civilisation” (9). We are not in a simple clash of civilisation. More realistically we are living in an “uncertainty of civilisation” - produced by the globalisation process, which transformed cultural (and state) boundaries, increasingly vague and porous (Jabbar 2005: 21) - in which clashes and situation of crisis are either within different civilisations and among parts of these civilisations and parts of the others.

Awlaama, the Arabic word for globalization, in the Middle East is more perceived as an external threat than as an opportunity (Henry 2005: 110; Re 2005). A large part of the Islamic people perceive Globalization as Westernization (Craig 2007: 5), as a further chapter of the Western attempt to rule over Islamic peoples and lands (10). Therefore, in a wide part of Radical Islamic thought, this uncertainty is perceived as a further menace for the identity and as an instrument of contamination of the purity of the Ummah: answers looking at the past, at the tradition and its “own history”, are perceived as the best tools to fight against these perils.

These internal struggles (11) within Arab and Islamic worlds are a considerable source of instability for the countries of the Southern bank of the Mediterranean and add further challenges to the stability of the whole basin. Such dynamics have inserted new elements of crisis in a latent instable quadrant, worsening the state of crisis within the Middle East.

In the countries of this area the greatest problem is related to identity. Since their foundation, resulting from the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East states have been unable to define, project, and maintain a national identity which is both inclusive and representative (Kumaraswamy 2006: 63). In these regions, as noted by Raymond Hinnebusch «the territorial state was historically weak and tended to focus instead on the sub-state unit - the city, the tribe, the religious sect - or on the larger Islamic community of Ummah» (Hinnebusch 2005: 153). There never was a complete shift from local and religious identity to a national one.

The main consequences of the creation of these states, with artificial boundaries, not reflecting the nature of the spatial cultural and historical relations of these lands, are visible in the loyalty system: loyalties often remained attached to pre-existing sub-states identities - spilled across the national state boundaries - and the enduring power of supra-state identities, such as Islam. This last element clarify the reason why Islam found a fertile ground as narrative identity (ibidem: 154), above all after the failure of secular nationalism.

Modern national boundaries in the Middle East have been perceived by radical Islamist groups as a product of Western colonialism and new national identities has been fought in the name of the supra-state Islamic identity. There is only a geographic boundary for them: the frontier dividing the Dar al-Islam, the domain of Islam, and the Dar al-Harb, the domain of war, which is the world populated by those people who are not Islamic. Historically, the Mediterranean has been the centre of gravity of such a division and it has represented the most important fault of clash between Islam and the West.

Sayyd Qutb replaced this geographic dichotomy with a political, sociological and religious one: the division between Islam and Jahiliya (Guolo 1994), which indicates the name of the pre-

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9. The concept formulated by Samuel Huntington at the beginning of the 90s’, in spite of its limits, its excessive simplification of the geopolitical global reality and its incapability of analyzing the internal clashes and cleavages within civilisations, had the merit of pointing out, in a powerful and resolute way, the importance of cultural and identity factors in the post Cold War international system and the increasing role such elements had in the current global political architecture (Huntington 1996).

10. It is a recurrent element in the rhetoric of a large part of the Islamist movements.

11. On the conflicts within the Islamic worlds see Kepel (2004). For a complete and accurate survey of the sectarian divisions within Islam with a specific focus on Shia history and specificities see the recent book of Nasr (2006).
Islamic era and was the definition that Qutb gave of the West and its modernity. This shift from a strictly geographic expression to a more political one is functional to the aim of fighting against the “internal West” (*ibidem*): those secular regimes, their impious governors and those parts of the Islamic societies that left themselves being, flattered by the Western modernity. This gave the possibility to Muslims of launching a *Jihad* against other Muslims, while traditional definition would have given them only the possibility of declaring war to external enemies (Tottoli 2005: 168). Thus, there is a double war track: an internal one against the impious internal enemy, within Islamic societies and an external one, against the Western world. As we can see, challenges for the stability of the Mediterranean region move on a double axis: along a South-South direction and along a South-North direction. The recent years history of terrorism acts clearly exemplify this. There were not only attacks on Western territories, such as Spain - the lost “Al-Andalucia” (12) - (with the attacks of Atocha station in Madrid in 2004) and the United Kingdom, (with the attacks of London in 2005), but there were also attacks within Islamic countries, such as Jordan, Egypt or Saudi Arabia, in which many Muslims were killed.

Figure 2 - *Migration fluxes Towards Europe* (Source: Le Monde Diplomatique)

Political Islam, in its radical expressions, represents a strong threat to the security of the countries of Europe and of the Southern bank of the Mediterranean. From a strictly political

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12. In the Radical Islamic rhetoric there is still place for the call for a reconquist of Spain, from which the Islamics have been expelled after the “Christian Reconquista” of Spain.
point of view this threat seems to be weaker. These groups, above all Sunnis, failed more than once in their attempt to gain power (13).

However, there is another aspect of great concern, a more “narrative and symbolic problem” rather than a strictly “political” one, clearly localized in the Northern part of the Mediterranean. Such a problem is connected to the migrations from Islamic countries towards Europe (figure 2): the discourse about the migration fluxes (Schmidt di Friedberg 2002: 183-218) in Europe deepened the division between European citizens and Islamic immigrants. This dimension must be related to the particular sensibility of Islamic immigrants about their identity, expressed by a large use of symbols and traditional practices. This is also a result of their de-territorialization and the use of these symbols and practices is a way to perceive the idea that they are still connected to their birth-lands and have the feeling of being part of a “community”. The risk involved in such a development is the creation of what we can call “mobile boundaries”. In this way, social and cultural boundaries could «walk with the legs of persons and live in their mind» creating boundaries in the normal daily-life between persons, adding a new and more complicated dimension to the lives of the societies in Europe. It could be a development full of risk for the internal stability and cohesion of the European countries because it could enhance the sense of alienation of the Muslim immigrants and, on the other side, it could strengthen the perceptions of “peril” related to idea of diversity in European citizens, creating a fertile ground for the emergence of racist and intolerant ideas and political groups.

4. The limits of Barcelona’s approach

In October 1994 the European Union announced a proposal to establish a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). The projected Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference between the European Union, its 15 States (14) and its 12 Mediterranean Partners (15) was held on 27 and 28 November 1995 in Spain, in the “fully” Mediterranean city of Barcelona. The “Barcelona Declaration” marked the starting point of a new “partnership phase”, including bilateral and multilateral agreement, representing the platform of the EU policy towards the Mediterranean during the following few years.

The preamble of the Declaration argues that the aim of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was «turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity, requiring a strengthening of democracy and respect for human rights, sustainable and balanced economic and social development, measures to combat poverty and promotion of greater understanding between cultures» (16).

This document focuses mainly on three objectives, the so-called “Baskets”. The first chapter of the declaration focuses on the political and security dimensions of the partnership. The main objective of this chapter was the creation of a common space of peace and stability within the Mediterranean. The second chapter focused on the economic aspects of the partnership: the aim in this sector was to make the Mediterranean an area of spread development, supporting the eco-

13. The Shi’a case in Iran has been different. Khomeini took power, already during the Cold War, becoming the first, visible expression, above all for the Western audience, of the rise of Islamism as powerful political force within the Middle East and the Islamic regions.

14. In 1995 the European Union was composed by 15 States.

15. The Mediterranean partners were: Algeria, Palestinian Authority, Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey. Two of these countries, Cyprus and Malta, have accessed to the European Union in 2004.

nomic development of its Southern bank by the means of liberalization of their economies. There was also the idea of creating a free trade area in the Mediterranean by 2010. The third and last chapter - focused on the social and cultural aspects of the Euro-Med Partnership - was at the same time the most vague and ambitious of the three chapters (Bicchi 2002: 128) and it is strictly related to the first one. The aims in this field were: developing the human resources of the basin, supporting the comprehension and the knowledge between different cultures and strengthening the exchanges between civil societies (17).

In spite of the ambitious aims of this declaration, the results and the assessment, twelve years after the launch of the EMP, have not been as positive as the intentions and the projects were. There are many reasons that could explain the substantial failure of the EMP as we know it.

- The existence of a “rhetoric Mediterranean”, united and peaceful, narrated as a space of harmony, completely different from the “real Mediterranean”. The existence of such “cognitive dissonance” between the ideal type and reality could mean that, for example in public opinion perception, the emerging of several situations of crisis in the Mediterranean basin could be considered as a complete failure of the EU policy towards this area, while instead they are just the normal results of the contradictions and of the cleavages of the geopolitical and geocultural configuration of the basin. Having a peaceful Mediterranean is an aim, and it will be eventually an effect of right policies in a long term, but it can not be considered as an existential condition of the region at the moment.

- The existence of a problem of perception of the European moves among the people of the Southern bank. The memory of colonial presence is still vivid in these populations and in their social narratives. This memory is too recent to be forgotten (18) and this memory must be taken into account by the EU in its decision making process when it approaches to the problems of the Southern bank of the Mediterranean region. Also when the existence of a “good willingness” from the EU is clear, it must face the suspects and the fears of these populations. This is a psychological factor that makes more difficult for the EU approaching the problems of the area in a correct way.

- The idea, supported by a strong amount of ideology, that economic development will bring political and democratic development and security stability (Kienle 2006: 25-38). It seems to be the overall philosophy of the EMP, a sort of “map” that, from economic liberalization brings to security, passing through economic development. This attitude shows an important, and for a large part worrying, character of the EU approach to security and identitarian problems: the idea that, by economic liberalization and development, different kinds of social, cultural, identitarian and security problems could be resolved. However, if this idea could have a certain relevance for the European reality and - even if with a lesser intensity - in the American reality (19), when applied in different realities it seems to be inefficacious. For

17. This is an important but extremely controversial point. If the presence of a civil society in the Northern part of the Mediterranean is evident, in its Southern banks the question is more complicated and vague. Above all in the urban cities of the Southern bank of the Mediterranean there are some fragments of civil society, but the impact of these actors in the society and in the politics of these countries is still unclear. For an interesting survey about the role of civil society in the Islamic societies see Yayla (2002). On the development of a network of civil society within the Mediterranean, see Feliu (2005).

18. Craig (2007: 5). However, as we have seen before, the role that past has in the Islamic societies support the idea that their perception of “time” is slower and viscous than our perception. Therefore, it is likely that several historical processes that we perceive farer and meaningless in our current perceptions, in their perceptions could have a different value, meaning and impact.

19. Also in the United States there has been, during the past few years, a revival of religion and spiritual values.
example, as argued by Graham Fuller and Ian Lesser «in the Muslim perceptions … there is the tendency (which is common to the wider part of the traditional societies) of shaping the organizing the government and the society of an ethic sense, keeping some religious and social goals in mind, involving the interest of all social classes». Therefore, it’s likely that also a powerful economic development will not eliminate the problem of the identity crisis that is shaping the Middle East, which fuels, as we have analyzed in the second paragraph of this work, the rise of Islamism as the main narrative in the area. Perhaps, such a development could just make less “explosive” this element but the roots of this crisis cannot be cut just with economic development. Therefore, there is the need of a different idea to engage with the problems of security coming from identity and cultural recriminations.

- The EU should not be afraid of acknowledging the existence of a strong and deep cultural difference with its Southern partners. This does not mean that EU must fall into a sort of “cultural determinism” that argue that the Islamic and Arab world is intrinsically against democracy, liberalism, freedom of speech or that these population are intolerant or something else. The EU should simply engage with these differences in order to avoid the accuse that it wants to impose its model of cultural, social, political development, without ignoring such differences. Sometimes, the risk exists that the European analysis of the problems of the Middle East could be affected by a sort of “political correctness” becoming an element of weakness for the EU.

- There is the lack of a wider geographical approach towards the Mediterranean region. As argued by Khaled Fouad Allam «the program of the Euro-Med Partnership were the political transcription of the question - the Euro-Arab dialogue - that has lacerated the relationship between Europe and the other bank of the Mediterranean since the process of decolonisation of the great part of the Arab countries. But in Barcelona a mistake has been made: the strictly geographic perspective of the regional criteria has concealed the real dimension of the Arab world, which is indeed not limited to the Mediterranean … the Arab world has not been considered as its global range […] the notion of the Mediterranean could have been extended, going beyond its value strictly geographic, in the function of its fluency» (Allam 2005). It is likely that a conceptual definition of a “wider Mediterranean” could have been more functional to the aim of the EMP related to the security sphere, which is the idea that the EMP is more a mechanism for the prevention of situations of crisis and conflicts rather than an instrument for their resolution (Talbot 2004: 108). From a strategic and geopolitical point of view, the Mediterranean goes beyond its simple geographic definition (ibidem: 104) and includes also the so-called arrière-regions, such as the Persian Gulf, the Black sea basin, the Caspian region and the horn of Africa. Using a more inclusive approach could give some better results in the future.

Conclusions

The Mediterranean challenges indeed in many different ways the European Union. These challenges are multifarious: the strong security concerns for the stability of the southern bank; the spread of religious extremism, coming above all from the Islamic lands and the possibility of a “spill-over” in the north flank, related especially to the terrorist issue; democracy, its compatibility with Islam, the political legitimacy of Arab regimes and the question of civil and human rights; the problem of the migrations and demography; the scarcity of resources, above all in the sector of water; the environmental question and the risk of a progressive worsening of the ecological and chemical condition of the whole basin.
This variety of problems and challenges makes the Mediterranean a sort of “sample” of the challenges that world is going to face in this new century. The Mediterranean is such a complex, fragmented space that its dynamics are composite and unpredictable. The Mediterranean is a space of contradictions, a space in which cleavages and breaking points are still its essence. The Mediterranean challenges, first of all, our skills of understanding and our strength of managing the concept of “diversity”, declined on multiple levels of human feeling and acting (Coppola 2005: 47).

The EU holds the geopolitical duty of detecting an efficacious and creative way to approaching the Mediterranean. The results of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership have been disappointing, above all if compared to the preambles of this project. During the past years, in spite of the official declarations, the EU has watched more eastward than southward. And when the EU watched at its southern borders, there have been an excess of rhetoric affecting the capabilities of the EU of facing the different threats that were coming from the Mediterranean. The Euro-Mediterranean partnership emphasizes many limits, a short list of which is provided hereafter:

- a new chapter of the Western and European pervasive attitude against the Islamic and Arab world has been perceived;
- the ideological philosophical attitude, according to which economic liberalization will bring stability and democracy in these areas thus reinforcing European security, revealed many limits and contradictions. Such a philosophy doesn’t work in a traditional context as the Arab and Islamic world;
- the fear of being “politically uncorrect” and “culturally deterministic” towards the people of these regions;
- the lack of vision about a geopolitical configuration of the Southern bank that goes beyond the simple geographic definition of “Southern Mediterranean”.

The EU must find different solutions for all of these problems if it wants to have a more successful policy towards its Southern partners and if it wants to seriously build a peaceful and stable Mediterranean. It must dialogue (Pace 2005: 291-312) but it must avoid to impose its solutions. It must try to support, in a tactful way, the development of a civil society in these countries. For example, the more dynamic sectors of the urban societies in the Middle East could be a good target for such a strategy. Moreover, such groups could have the skills of “translating” in a familiar way to these populations the need for dialogue, peace and stability, with a social and political grammar recognized by these populations. They could try to create a different narrative aimed to challenge the rise of radical Islam in this area. The EU could support such a solution, but it must avoid imposing its choices in an area in which the colonial memory is still present. It’s a hard challenge, but the future, for the EU, passes also through this difficult, complex but extremely charming sea.
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Abstract: The paper reveals the European Union (EU) strategies and policies as applied into the Western Balkans (WBs). I follow a chronological-related analysis of the past, present and future approach of EU towards the WB region. In the first part of the paper I give a description as well as a critical analysis of the past EU approaches. Then, in the second part I try to ‘frame’ what the future ‘model’ of EU enlargement approach will be, pointing at the ‘matters’ that mostly will influence this approach. This paper concludes by giving some remarks on how EU (enlargement) approach has to be conceived in the case of the WBs, arguing that enlargement in WBs is a question of when not if.

1. The background of the EU approach towards the Western Balkans

1.1. The terra incognita approach (1990-1995)

Right after the fall of communism, Eastern Europe seemed to experience a two “camp formation” which will be from then on the “informal partners” in EU relations. Though the EU (then EC) committed itself to enlarge eastward, the approach toward Central Eastern European countries (CEEs) and the Balkans was different. In the first half of the ‘90s the relations between the EU and the Balkans were minimal and very different from that with the CEEs (3). From the very beginning of the dissolution of Yugoslav Federation till the acute phase of the Bosnian crisis (1995), the EU precise desire was to keep problems at distance. Both the EU as an entity and its major member states deployed the strategy of keeping the ‘infection’ at arm’s length (Smith 2000: 817).

For a large part of the 90’s, the EU acted in the region only in the fields of crisis management and humanitarian aid. The EU’s strategy for the Balkans was overshadowed by its disastrous handling of the early stages of the Yugoslav crisis (Papadimitriou 2002a: 186) as well as
by its effort in helping Albania to overcome its extreme poverty.

EU diplomatic pressure and humanitarian relief were characterized by a ‘distancing’ effect, meaning that EU was willing to enter into post-crisis reconstruction but not to engage in the acute phase of crisis management (Smith 2000: 817-818). The biggest part of the assistance came through programs such as Phare and Obnova.

Although the Phare program was introduced even in the Central Eastern European countries it held a different aim with respect to that he had in the Western Balkans region. The Phare program in the CEEs countries «co-finances institution building together with associated investment in the infrastructure for the implementation of the **acquis**» while the Phare assistance for the Western Balkans «was more limited and primarily targeted at conflict management and humanitarian relief» (Dimitrova 2003: 9-12). The largest share of EC-EU resources took the form of humanitarian aid (almost 50% of total EU funds) helping Western Balkans countries merely to survive, indeed were employed especially for consumption and not for investment (Uvalic 2001: 16) or institution building as happened in the CEEs. The forward-thinking strategy was to give incentive to the countries that already had (or were considered to had) progressed sufficiently down the path of political and economic reforms by eventually allowing them to negotiate European Agreements with EU. In this respect Western Balkans countries fall behind since they were facing other priorities (ethnic conflicts and poverty issues).

1.2. The regional approach (1995-1999)

After the end of the Bosnian war in 1995, EU policies even though still concerned by the stabilization of the region marked a turning point on the way EU was approaching Balkans. EU started to see the Balkans more as part of Europe rather than a region far from its doors. The line, ‘this is Europe’ represented the European Union’s moral imperative when it came to overcome the legacies of war and destruction in the Balkans (International Commission on the Balkans 2005: 6).

At that phase, the EU immediate task and new challenge was focused more on how to «help transform the proverbially chaotic, bloody and unpredictable Balkans of the past into a stable, peaceful and dependable Southeastern Europe of the future» (ibidem: 3). As a consequence of regional political developments, EU was urged to adapt the so-called **Regional Approach** (4) aiming at political and economic cooperation among all the Balkan countries (Bulgaria and Rumania included). The initiatives inspired and launched by the EU (5) at that time were all aiming at a regional dimension.

Despite the step forward in EU-Western Balkans relations, the Regional Approach in its first phase (1995-1999) bear a number of shortcomings. Firstly, regardless of its name (regional approach), the approach of EU towards the area was more at the **bilateral** level rather than being a **regional** one (Panebianco and Rossi 2004: 5; Biermann 1999: 9). Secondly the EU strategies were to be more a continuation of the **Terra Incognita** approach where «the ‘distancing’ effect was more noticeable with the Albanian crisis of 1997» (Smith 2000: 817). And thirdly, all regional initiatives in the region «appeared rather late (after four years of military conflicts)» (Uvalic 2001: 13), being more post-conflict reactions (Anastasakis and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2002: 

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5. A clear example is the Royaumont Process for Stability and Good Governance initiated at a conference on 13 December 1995 organised by the European Union.
26) rather than preventive ones (6). The success of the Regional Approach also was fatally undermined by the lack of sufficient financial resources (Papadimitriou 2002a: 187) and usually most of the initiatives were not comprehensive enough, being limited to one or a few areas (Uvalic 2001: 12). The regional approach was judged “out of context” considering that the interested countries had «different degrees of integration with the EU» [Anastasakis and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2002: 26 (7)]. The “unifying tendencies” of the regional approach arouses fears among the more advanced South-Eastern European countries since they perceived their participation in regional cooperation initiatives as a delay in their process integration into the Eu (Dimitrova 2003: 5, 44). But the regional approach proved to be unacceptable even by the rest of the countries. The European Commission itself would acknowledge (1999) that the WB countries did not react positively to the incentives provided by the EU Regional Approach (8). This was mainly because the EU Regional Approach (of 1995-1999) lacked a long-term strategy and a perspective of membership for the Western Balkans countries, at a time when «most of them prioritized integration into the EU» (Mikovic 2005: 22). Thus, all the Balkan initiatives prior to the Stability Pact are today mostly perceived as ill-conceived and insufficient (Biermann 1999: 9).

1.3. The comprehensive approach (from 1999 onwards)

The deficiency and inadequacy of the already existing Eu policies in the Western Balkans region were obvious and almost acknowledged by all. EU could not rest only on the regional approach since promoting only regional co-operation and economic reconstruction proved to be not enough. Facing such a reality would lead Eu to search for other alternatives having a broader and more integrated approach. It was during the Vienna European Council (December 1998) that the EU decided to prepare a “common strategy” for the Western Balkans. The Kosovo crises and the NATO intervention in 1999 were another warning, urging the EU to pay more attention and possibly to introduce a more comprehensive approach into the entire region including the question of its enlargement into EU. As a response to such needs the EU foreign ministers met in a special meeting in Cologne in June 1999 and launched the “Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe”. This initiative was the first serious commitment and «the first example of the EU’s changing strategy, bringing together a very large number of countries and organizations» (Papadimitriou 2002a: 188), «to replace the previous crisis management strategy in the Balkans with a comprehensive conflict prevention and economic development policy» (Ilirjani 2005: 28). The new and most important element that the Stability Pact contained, beside the aim to promote and coordinate the joint efforts of all its members in conflict prevention and peace building, was the perspective of membership in Euro-Atlantic structures for the other countries of the region (Albania, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro).

The German Foreign Ministry - Germany was holding the EU Presidency at that period), clearly felt that the prospect of membership into EU and NATO was the most effective way to stabilize the region in the long term; if membership perspective was believed to be effective in fastening democracy and market reforms in Central and Eastern Europe it was possible to repeat the exercise for South-East Europe (Friis and Murphy 2000: 769). At the core of this strategy

6. Quoting the ex-German Foreign Minister, Joscka Fischer «the EU concentrated on the consequences instead of on the sources of conflict». Quote in Friis and Murphy (2000: 770).
7. Bulgaria and Romania were part of the EU’s enlargement process; Albania and Macedonia had trade and co-operation agreements; whereas relations with then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were frozen as it did not meet the relevant criteria (Friis and Murphy 2000: 770).
there was the project of Europeanization of the region which would «anchor the countries of the Western Balkans firmly in the values of and institutional structures of the Euro-Atlantic Community» (9).

Other important steps toward deepening the EU-WB relations were to follow. On June 2000, in the Feira European Council, the EU member countries confirmed that the prospect of the Balkan countries to be potential candidates for EU membership would be the main motivator for reform (10). Another important development was the Zagreb Summit of November 2000, the first summit of Balkan states and European Union.

EU and Western Balkans countries agreed to proceed with the “Stabilisation and Association Process” (SAp) as a mean to prepare the region for sustainable reform and possible candidate status. The prospect of potential candidacy was offered in return of the commitment by the Western Balkans countries to undertake a set of reforms (11).

The European Union General Affairs Council argued that, for the WB states, the process of formulating the SAp «approach has proved an effective means of focusing authorities’ minds on essential reforms and of engaging with them in a sustained way to secure implementation» (Council of the European Union 2001). The importance of the Zagreb Summit rest on the fact that «for the very first time the EU came up with a fairly clear idea of its vision for the states of the WBs (potentially candidate) and even more important was the mechanism of how this could be realized (the Stabilisation and Association Process)» (Vlahutin 2004: 26).

EU’s commitment to assist the Southeast European states in their preparation for membership was reaffirmed at the Thessalonica European Council held in June 2003, under the Greek presidency. The new Agenda for the Western Balkans’ enriching the SAp by including the establishment of new European Partnerships (EPs) which would build upon previously negotiated Stabilization and Accession Agreements (SAA) and would target assistance towards each country’s specific needs. Even though the EPs introduced by the Thessaloniki Summit were new instrument to translate the general SAp priorities into specific policy measures, there is still doubt whether this partnership was truly equal (Andreev and Bechev 2005: 15; Gligorov 2004a; Chandler 2003). Although the enriched SAp remained at the perspective of membership in the EU without giving a pre-accession status to the Western Balkans countries, it still «put some several elements of the enlargement process thus reducing the gap between SAP and pre-accession» (Lehne 2004: 114).

Such new elements were the opening of a twinning exchanges with administrative staff from the Member states; opening the EU research and education programs to the region; access to TAIEX (Technical Assistance Information Exchange Office); the region eligible for technical assistance for harmonizing national legislation with the acquis communautaire. Some of the shortcomings of the Thessaloniki Agenda can be considered; the absence of a concept for social


10. The EU «objective remains the fullest possible integration of the countries of the region into the political and economic mainstream of Europe through the Stabilization and Association process, political dialogue, liberalization of trade and cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs. All the countries concerned are potential candidates for EU membership» (Council of the European Union 2000: § 67).

11. Western Balkans countries committed to establish new relations between their countries, promoting regional co-operation, sustained structural reforms and respect for democratic standards and international obligations, while EU promised to offer all the countries of the region the European perspective of being potential candidates for membership through the Stabilization and Association process (SAp). For more See: Zagreb Summit Final Declaration, Zagreb, Croatia, 24 November 2000. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/how_does_a_country_join_the_eu/sap/zagreb_summit_en.htm.
and economic cohesion, aimed at the increasing disparities between the WBs and the accession states; the missed opportunity to transfer SAp to DG Enlargement; and the push for intra-regional co-operation rather than functional co-operation within a broader European framework (van Meurs 2003: 16).

2. Towards an enlargement approach

2.1. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)

The post-1999 generated the first critical self-assessment by the EU on the shortcomings of their previous policies (Anastasakis and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2002: 23), and also put EU at a leading role in formulating the international community’s policy in Western Balkans. Its major contribution is not only based on the region-wide program of reconstruction, development and stabilizilation but more emphasis is put on the Stabilization and Association process (SAp). SAp so far can be considered as the cornerstone of EU policy towards Western Balkans since it «anchors the region permanently to the development of the EU itself» (12). This new policy (SAp) lead (and will lead) the EU in signing with the countries of the Western Balkans the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAAs). Although the paradigm for the WBs has irrevocably changed from stabilization to enlargement (van Meurs 2003: 5) it still need to be mention that «SAA is a sort of hybrid between a post-conflict recovery program me and candidate country status» (Economist Intelligence Unit 2006). The SAAs, an up-dated version of the EU Agreements, resemble in term of structure and content the Europe Agreements signed in ‘90s between the EU and then-candidate countries of Central East Europe, with a significant improvement regarding the issue of regional cooperation. If the regional cooperation was encouraged among the Europe Agreement countries, it is required by the SAA countries, and is being translated into an explicit condition for the further development of bilateral relations with the EU (13).

The EU devised such Agreements «as a mean of regulating economic and political relations» with those countries as well as being «a tool for reducing uncertainty and enhancing the predictability» of the Western Balkans (Papadimitriou 2002a: 17). The SAA creates a framework for co-operation between EU and Balkans with the final goal to help the latter to enter in the European family. The attraction and the element added by this new approach is the explicit prospect for future membership into the EU since it introduces the status of a «potential candidate for EU membership» to the Western Balkans countries with a long-term prospect of accession (14).

Western Balkans countries from now on are handled directly by the Enlargement directorate of the EU and not by the External Relation directorate which used to cover them before, a symbolic move testifying the Union’s strong commitment to the countries under question (Bechev 2005). The SAAs are expected to guide each country toward meeting EU membership requirements by offering the necessary financial and political assistance to the respective Balkan countries so to speed up political and economic reform. This implies that the Western Balkans should focus more on adapting the core elements of the EU conditions. Such conditions, known as the Copenhagen Criteria, require that the candidate country must have achieved

«stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to adopt the common rules, standards and policies of the Union» (15). While for the EU, the SAA implies «firstly, the promise of aid as a return to the EU’s regulatory control over the reform process; and secondly, the promise of EU membership at some point in the future» (Chandler 2003: 7).

2.2. The EU enlargement model: Dimension, mechanism and the example

In the actual phase of the EU-Western Balkans relations, it is reasonable to focus on the enlargement ‘model’ that will most probably be applied to the (future) accession of the Western Balkan countries. Referring to the earlier accessions it can be said that although all previous enlargements have shown a particularity which separates them from the others, they all followed the same basic pattern. Such a «constant pattern both in the formal accession procedures adopted, and in the implicit assumptions and principles shaping the expectations of the participants and the progress of negotiations» (Preston 1997: 9) creates what Preston will call the ‘classical method of enlargement’; a model that according to him (at least until 1995) seemed to have maintained the basic principles. Starting on this very classical method - ‘as a basis’- will lead other scholars to search for new principles on the methodology of enlargement as applied into the Central Eastern European countries (see Maniokas 2000: 10).

Considering this basic classical method as well as the specificities of the last EU’s enlargement, it could be useful to suggest implications for the Western Balkans region. That is also because, if we consider the recent enlargement to the Central Eastern European countries we find that «the criteria and the process established (by the European Council in Feira and reconfirmed by the European Council in Thessaloniki for the Western Balkans) followed the strategy used in the recent enlargement to the Central and Eastern European countries» (Juncos 2005: 98). That is why we need to pay particular attention to the lessons learnt from Central Eastern European enlargement, especially if the enlargement to Central and Eastern European countries will be used as the model for approaching Western Balkans countries. Such assumptions put forward the need for investigating the Central Eastern European case with the very intention not only to compare it with the Western Balkan case but also to suggest if this ‘model’ (CEE accession) can be applied to the prospect accession of the Western Balkan states. In doing so, we need first of all to point out which were the features marking the CEEs accession process. An abundant literature exists on the last enlargement process towards the CEE countries, where detailed analysis have been carried out to investigate the main characteristics of the model as well as of the instrument employed in the preparation of CEEs for EU accession (16). Reviewing the CEE case we notice that the EU approach for accession negotiations is characterized by its asymmetric dimension and the mechanism of positive/negative conditionality.

2.3. Asymmetric dimension

It is not difficult to agree on the fact that throughout its whole history the EU enlargement process can be characterized as an asymmetrical one, with EU having the leading role and dictating the rules of the game. Indeed, «the EU has always been a regime-setter and that every en-

16. For more details on the main characteristics of the model as well as for having info on the the instrument used to transfer the EU rules to the CEE countries see Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004); Maniokas (2000).
largement of the Union starting from the first one has been asymmetrical» (17). Besides the very general statement that «enlargement is an asymmetrical process in which the incumbent members, in the driving seat, engage with the candidates, which are supplicants and dependants» (Wallace 2000: 151) we have to stress also that right after ‘90s «the asymmetry and rigidity of the EU is far greater» (Maniokas 2000: 23). This increase in the asymmetrical process is understandable, if one considers that the «EU has all the benefits to offer (principally accession, trade and aid)» (Grabbe 2002: 13), while by contrast, the Western Balkans countries have little to offer to EU. Furthermore, such an asymmetry become even sharper given that the willingness of the Western Balkans to join the EU is much greater than at least of some EU member-states (18). In such circumstances the Western Balkans had little to bargain with because, firstly «they have not questioned the legitimacy of Europe as a standard-setter» (Bechev 2006: 23), and secondly - drawing from the CEEs example - «the requirements for EU membership have been, on balance, positive» (Moravcsik and Vachudova 2002: 8). The asymmetry of power between Western Balkans and the European Union can be easily seen from their first relations, especially if we consider the EU measurements on managing the crisis in the region. While in the actual phase such an asymmetry come in the form of the membership conditions. For the Western Balkans countries beside strengthening their democracy and having a functional market economy, the EU has «imposed a double standard, primarily the protection of ethnic minority rights, where WBs are asked to meet standards that the EU-15 have never set for themselves» (ibidem: 7-8) and this is «due to the greater gap between the EU standards and the perceived level of compliance» (Bechev 2006: 21).

Following this logic, is not hard to believe that the «asymmetry of interdependence will allow the EU to set the rules of the game in the accession conditionality» (Grabbe 2002: 13). Western Balkans countries need to be aware of the fact that being «presently in a situation of asymmetric negotiations, they have to accommodate conditions set by the EU as well as its whole legislative corpus» (Pridham 2002: 28). Here the Western Balkans countries had to adopt the acquis in its entirety, knowing that «the requirements are massive, non-negotiable, uniformly applied, and closely enforced» (Moravcsik and Vachudova 2002: 7). But will they be capable of implementing the EU’s acquis knowing that until recently, the WBs had fail or at least find hard to cope with previous conditions? Considering the up-to-now asymmetrical relations between EU and the WBs it can be argued that some negative effects were witnessed in the region. Regarding the financial assistance it can be noticed that «the asymmetric relations, i.e. weak states in combination with strong European guidance and assistance, have tend to produce unintended consequences» (Kempe and van Meurs 2002: 15). The argument to be pointed here is that the density and the intensity as well as the scope of assistance given to the Balkans was dictated as of the EU’s agenda rather than by the local needs of the region, making so the entire external guidance and assistance not producing the expected results and efficiency, while often creating or exacerbating new problems (ibidem; emphasis added). The asymmetry in the relationship between EU and the WB countries, regarding the state functionality, «contributed to the delay in consolidating those democratic institutions and practices that EU policy is ostensibly trying to promote» (Bieber 2003: 1). So it may be said that «the qualitative asymmetries between regional realities and European strategies as a consequence might result in part in vicious rather than virtuous circles» (Balkan Forum 2004: 4).

Two seem to be the main issues that need to be considered given the asymmetrical bargaining power between the EU and the WBs as well as considering the CEEs experience.

18. Some EU members state speak of the “Capacity Dilemma”.
Firstly, the possibility of an accommodation of the WBs’ preferences will depend to a large extent on the advocacy of these preferences by policymakers inside the EU (Sedelmeier 2002: 630). Secondly, as the case of the CEE countries shows and adding also the growing view of not enlarging too far or too fast, it can be suggested that the Western Balkans countries may find themselves in very difficult position and almost not «capable of turning association into enlargement» (Schimmelfennig 2001: 56). The process may be longer if this power asymmetry is much more sharp, leading so the EU to simply postpone the negotiations depending on its inner situation.

2.4. On the “conditionality” (mechanism)

In the above paragraph I have discussed about the dimension - the power asymmetries between the EU and the Western Balkans relations - of the enlargement process, where the EU is the dominant actor of this bargains and as a consequence the one that will dictate the rules of the game. The set of rules and standards «are not the products of negotiation between the two parties, instead they are set by the EU unilaterally and then presented to the applicants as non-negotiatable» (*ibidem*). The applicant state has to fully fulfill these requirements and it is up to EU to «decide which of the applicants complied with these norms and consequently ‘deserved’ to be granted the opportunity to negotiate an association agreement with the EC» (Papadimitriou 2002a: 42). The ambiguity here is what constitutes meeting these criteria since «it is very difficult to pinpoint exactly when each of the accession conditions has been met» (Grabbe 2003: 4).

It is this - the conditionality principle - that makes the “cornerstones” of the EU’s accession strategy. Conditionality, in itself can be understood as «the use of incentives to alter a state’s behaviour or policies» (Checkel 2000: 1). It is the «linking, by a state or the international organisation, of perceived benefits to another state (such as aid or trade concession), to the fulfillment of economic/and political conditions» (19). In the context of EU Enlargement process, conditionality can be refer to (generally the Copenhagen Criteria) a set of measurement that need to be fulfilled by the aspiring countries before the membership status is granted. Conditionality is a basic strategy through which EU promotes compliance by applicant states (20). ‘Reward’ or ‘Punitive’ incentives are used by EU in order to make the applicant countries comply with the set of membership conditions. Such mechanisms, of positive or negative conditionality, are «Brussels’ most powerful tool» (Anastasakis and Bechev 2003: 2). Until now, EU has exercised both a positive and a negative conditionality to the WB countries. The previous EU approaches had been marked by a number of negative conditionality. Here the exception is the signing with Macedonia of the SAA, as a reward, to end the conflict. Anastasakis and Bechev on examining the conditionality of the EU’s approach to the WB countries will call for the need to move «towards a positive conditionality» (*ibidem*: 3-4). Such a positive conditionality «would require the EU to offer a clear perspective regarding membership to the region and offer a partnership with its countries» (Bieber 2003: 1). The Stabilization and Association Agreements are a step and reflect a move forward in the EU approach, but «at the same time the punitive aspects of conditionality continue to play an important role and are an integral part of each SAA» (Pippan 2004: 235). It may be suggested at this point that such a ‘carrot-and-stick’ approach, through both reward and punitive mechanism, will be the ‘inherent’ strategy for bringing the WBs if not in the EU (in the near future), at least next to it. The difficulties the WB countries had to face before

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20. «Conditionality is a basic strategy through which international institutions promote compliance by national governments» (Checkel 2000: 1).
joining EU «are getting higher as conditionality evolves» (Phinnemore 2006: 25). The CEEs themselves experienced a «reinforced conditionality as well as the question of verification of the implementation of the Community acquis» (Mayhew 2000: 9). Beside the argument on the hardness of the WB countries on compiling with EU conditionality, the next questions to be asked is whether norms and values can be enforced through such (negative) conditionality or generally if such a conditionality is effective at all.

Smith argues that democratic impetus has to come from within the country, while human rights and economic reform can be promoted through conditionality (21). In the same logic are readable also the findings of Schimmelfennig, Engert, Knobel (2003: 515), arguing that, «there is little the EU can do to strengthen democratic conditionality because membership is the highest reward it is able to offer». Previous studies on CEEs suggested that «there was an obvious need for greater flexibility given the differences between the EU and the candidate countries» (Maniokas 2000: 23), while on the contrary in the WB countries the «EU conditions have arguably seemed even more demanding due to the fragile state of Balkan economies, politics and societies and the legacy of conflict» (Anastasakis and Bechev 2003: 2). «Over the years ahead, the EU is likely to add further refinements to its accession conditions. It will undoubtedly add more requirements to the list in order to tackle particular problems posed by WB candidates and it will become even more exacting once the imperfections of the new members become apparent» (Grabbe 2003: 6).

Here the point is not much the conditionality itself but what type of incentives to use. Talking about EU conditionality Anastasakis and Bechev (2003: 3) will find it problematic as applied in the region. That’s why in the Western Balkans case the EU conditionality is argued to be effective only if the prospect of joining the EU is considered a realistic one (Rupnik 2000: 126), this will be the best incentive for the whole region.

2.5. The “example” is there - CEEs case

By arguing on the asymmetric dimension and the mechanism of conditionality, I exposed the two main elements of the enlargement “model”. The throughout historical period of EU enlargement, enriched with new elements from the latest CEEs enlargement, makes this ‘model’ of asymmetry and conditionality the most probable one to be used in the Western Balkans case. One might ask at this point also if and to what extend the CEEs enlargement has laid down the “example” for the Western Balkans countries.

The first point which needs to be taken into consideration is that «the EU accession process has been essentially based on the model for previous enlargements, rather than being designed specifically to assist and encourage transition economies» (Grabbe 2003: 10). Moreover, analyzing the previous EU approaches towards the WBs, one can conclude that they were, if not a “copy” of the EU policies previously applied to the CEEs countries, at least a similar version of them. EU did not develop specific policies that could fit the necessities of the WB countries; «it instead applied the policy originally designed for CEE countries» (Simic 2001: 29). The SAA, for example, has borrowed heavily from the European Agreements signed with the CEEs. Such a tendency of ‘policy-transfer’ also dictates what outcomes and results are to be expected; it creates expectations and settles the model to be compared with, in this case the CEEs. But, by applying to the Western Balkans the same policies as to CEEs and moreover expecting the same success to happen may not be the case. «What may have worked reasonably well in the CEE enlargement process requires additional endeavors in the case of WBs enlargement due to

the qualitatively and quantitatively different challenges posed by this region» (van Meurs 2003: 7). In such a context «the WBs constitutes a strategic challenge for European policy-makers that cannot be met by replicating Eastern enlargement» (Balkan Forum 2004: 4).

The enlargement process - its dimensions and mechanism - seem not to differ so much from what it was in the earlier waves. «The policy priorities of the EU tend to follow the model of Eastern enlargement and EU preferences rather than the requirements and concerns of the region» (Kempe and van Meurs 2002: 12). So the question is if the enlargement ‘model’ already used for CEEs will work or should it also be reviewed to fit the WBs. Researches have suggested that « a set of strategies and institutions both qualitatively and quantitatively different from the ones employed in the enlargement process in CEE are needed in the Balkans» (van Meurs 2003: 5). Even though the CEEs model proves to be successful, it «simply does not fit the conditions prevailing in the Balkans» (International Commission on the Balkans 2005: 9). That is because Western Balkans, as the prospect applicant countries, encompasses different characteristics and needs from their precedents. Moving from the “classical method of enlargement” (Preston 1997) to the “new methodology” (Maniokas 2000) applied in the CEEs, the next in row will be the Western Balkan model whose «success also requires a concomitant shift in policy thinking towards the region in Brussels» (International Commission on the Balkans 2005: 9). This model will need to combine both the experience of CEEs as well as adapt it to the WB case.

3. What matters in the future EU enlargement model?

In trying to understand the EU enlargement approach to the Western Balkans and at the same time “predicting” what will be the (future) “model” of such approach, a closer look and a more detailed analysis of the EU itself needs to be carried out. These paragraphs will expose the three main elements (EU itself, member state and EU citizens’ perceptions) that will matter in the enlargement approach towards Western Balkans.

3.1. EU (itself) matters

Although the prospect of a possible membership is given to all Western Balkans Countries, a “membership vision” is lacking on the EU policies since it offers no entry date. Even though the Balkan un-readiness remains an issue, it can be argue that it is not the only one that needs to be considered. Speaking about Enlargement, one has to consider also EU and its hardships. In this context, EU is facing two main dilemmas regarding budget and capacity issues.

The “Budget Dilemma”

Drawing on the experience of the previous accession process the Commission established, on July 2006, a regulation on the pre-accession assistance to be provided to candidate and potential members of the EU (22). The regulation creates a single framework and a unified instrument for pre-accession assistance. The previous pre-accession instruments - the Phare, Ispa, Sapard, Cards along with ‘structural funds’ and ‘rural development funds’ - will be replaced in the period 2007-2013, by the so-called Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). Under this regulation the aid would be divided depending on the country status (23). The argument so far

23. «All the Western Balkan countries can therefore be considered as potential candidate countries;
about the distinction between candidate countries and potential candidate countries has been that the latter lack the administrative capacity to put the available funding to good use; while here it may be questionable whether the current candidates are in a significantly better position to absorb EU funding (Economist Intelligence Unit 2006). The potentially candidate countries will be eligible for the first two IPA components (Transition Assistance and Institution Building) but not for the other three components (Regional Development; Human Resource Development; Rural Development).

The regulation raised critics concerning the financial insufficiencies provision by the IPA as to support the political decision of any further enlargement. If the political will and commitment to a further enlargement is argued to be decreasing, the established IPA not only «would leave the EU without the means to prepare another round of enlargement» furthermore it would «represent a silent reversal of EU strategy in the region» (Esi 2005a: 6, emphasis added).

If the initial Commission budget proposal for the pre-accession assistance (IPA) was originally €14.1 billion it was reduced finally to some €11 billion (24). This amounts to 13 euros annually if divided by years and per capita; that is twice less if compared to the per capita annual amount that the countries of CEEs received (Nikolovski 2006). Despite this general reduce in amount we have to keep in mind also that some of the WB countries will be getting less compared to the pre- and post-accession assistance for Bulgaria and Romania. Only Croatia and Macedonia will get reasonable sums since they fall under (Annex I) candidate country scheme; while the rest will receive little. Such disproportions will widen considerably the gap among the WB countries and in comparison to their neighbours over the seven-year period. It may also have further consequences on the stability and peace for the region. That is why it was argued that all potential candidates should have been given the chance to progress towards EU membership on an equal footing with previous candidates, i.e. the WBs should have been given at least the same kind of support and incentives in 2007 as it were given to Bulgaria and Romania in 1997 (Esi 2005b: i).

The “Capacity Dilemma”

Beside the financial constrains what is also missing at this stage is a detailed roadmap and a date of accession for all the countries of the Western Balkans. Many voices and suppositions have been going around but no official certainty of when the WBs will join EU. The most optimistic voices speak for an accession of the countries of the region as a whole most probably in 2014 (Biancheri 2006). Others emphasize that «there will not be another ‘big bang’ of EU enlargement» (25) and that some countries like Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo may receive EU membership (at best) in 2020 (Esi 2005b: 3). What’s more is that the doubts of further EU enlargement among the European Nation State leaders have been grown. Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany backed a partnership with Turkey rather than full membership while then the Interior Minister of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, said that further enlargement of the EU should be limited to Romania and Bulgaria (Kanter 2006). At this very stage of EU enlargement the formula proposed by Wallace (2002: 661) «that there is little or no alternative for candidates, while there is an option for the EU of refusing enlargement», seems to be meaningful and descriptive of the enlargement process to the WBs. In the statement of the

however a clear distinction should be made between candidate countries and potential candidate countries» (ibidem: 82).

24. «The financial reference amount for the implementation of this Regulation for the period from 2007 to 2013 shall be EUR 11 468 million» (ibidem: 91).

informal meeting in Salzburg we read: «The EU recalled that a debate on the enlargement strategy is due in 2006 as set out by the Council conclusions of 12 December 2005. The EU also notes that its absorption capacity has to be taken into account» (The Salzburg Declaration 11.03.2006).

By mentioning that the EU’s absorption capacity has to be taken into account, the Salzburg statement raised the question over the future of enlargement and much more place the concern of whether there will be a future enlargement at all. The Salzburg informal meeting proves not to have progress the question of EU enlargement towards the WBs. Indeed, it did nothing more apart from reaffirming what has previously been promised (26), taking so the WBs several steps back from the promised “European destination” (Economist Intelligence Unit 2006). Within the dynamics of the Western Balkans, where after the Montenegro independence the future status of Kosovo is expected this same year, the question of absorption becomes obvious and makes «EU to worry even more about the number of countries in the membership queue» (27).

Such different and unenthusiastic opinions across Europe, calling for a slow-down, freeze or even a permanent halt to enlargement» (Esi 2005a: II) suggest that «EU don’t quite know where it is going» (28) or the least to be said is that the European Union stands at a crossroad.

3.2. Member States matters

Much of the debate and focus in EU issues is concentrated on the relations between EU institutions and member nation-states, with the latest been argued to have an important role in the EU decision-making. Jachtenfuchs (2002: 656) findings suggest that «politymaking decisions in the EU are taken by state executives in large multilateral negotiations and during these negotiations the supranational EU institutions play only a minor role». Additionally, Thomson and Hosli (2006: 413) «findings support accounts of the EU decision-making in which Member States’ interests are seen as important in defining decision outcomes». This pattern is more obvious in «enlargement and the EU’s external relations since they are particularly delicate issue areas where the EU members would like to have the final word» (Müftüler-Bac and McLaren 2003: 19). If referring to the above assumption - that is, the importance of member nation-state in EU decision-making - then the member nation-states is a matter which must be considered when analyzing Enlargement process. Even though the enlargement issues are decided mostly in intergovernmental bargaining processes, it is the states’ preferences and relative power that become the determining factors (ibidem). In the enlargement context, the decisions rest on the perceptions and politics of the EU member nation-states as they are the main agent. As consequence it is expected that «each EU member state pursues its own strategy which reflects national traditions» (Panebianco and Rossi 2004: 14). Referring to the perceptions of some EU member state about the WBs it can be said that in general they have been in disfavor of the WB countries. A number of member states since the early ‘90s have been against or at best not so enthusiastic on a possible future enlargement to the Western Balkans (29). Even after the

26. «The participants reaffirmed their full support for the agenda set out at the Thessaloniki summit in 2003, as well as for the Stabilization and Association Process which will remain the framework for the European course of the Western Balkan countries» [Presidency of the European Union-Austria (2006)].


28. «I think there are difficult questions about what this means for the future if even today progress was so hard to achieve», one EU diplomat said. «That’s a bit strange, and suggests that we don’t quite know where we are going». Quote by Kanter (2006).

29. Just to mention an example. In 1993 Willy Claes, then Foreign Minister of Belgium and Chairman-in-Office of the Ministerial Council of the European Union said: «The countries of South-Eastern
promise for membership made to the Western Balkans at Thessaloniki in 2003 the modalities and the schedule to pursue such aim remain unclear. This uncertainty reflects more the different ideas of member states about including the Balkans into the EU rather than the EU institutions’ inconsistency (Panebianco and Rossi 2004: 14).

Such an un-favored position for the Western Balkans countries is still present and more problematic. Although the WBs now are on their way toward EU (at least in perspective) there are still some tendencies, expressed at the EU national level, for freezing and even prolonging enlargement to the WBs or in the more extreme cases stopping it. For example, «French policy is to put all future enlargements after Croatia to a referendum, followed by a veto in the European Council if the result is negative» (Sain-Lé Berry 2006). Such ‘individual’ member state policies are also reflected in the EU documents. As an example it may be the last declaration of Salzburg informal meeting between EU and the WB countries, where it was France that insisted on mentioning the EU ‘absorption capacity’ (30).

The importance of the member states in the enlargement process becomes even more obvious and influential once the member state has the presidency. The turning point for the WBs was in 1999 under the German presidency were for the first time WBs were to be perceived as part of Europe; the prospect of membership was given and a long-term strategy was to be developed. The heart of such strategy would be the Stability Pact, «the idea of which was not new - France had aired it with respect to CEE (Balladur Pact 1994-5) and later for Bosnia» (Vedrine 1998) (31) - but it was given direction only in early 1999 under the German presidency. This is not meaningless knowing that Germany was the promoter of the idea of Eastward enlargement.

The next important achievement for the WBs was under the Greek presidency in 2003. «Thanks to the Greek Presidency and the geographic proximity of Europe’s troubled south-east, the Presidency’s Conclusions provide some clues on European strategies beyond eastern enlargement in 2004» (van Meurs 2003: 9) making the Western Balkans a ‘key priority’ for its EU Presidency. It was during the Greek presidency where the EU-Western Balkans Summit was held, paving the way for deeper integration of the WBs into EU.

It is particularly important to see the reactions of the forthcoming EU presidencies where regarding the Slovenian EU presidency in 2008 (the first of the 10 new European Union members) not much can be expected knowing the country’s difficulties of running the presidency as well as considering its leaders declaration that before EU takes the step to enlarge South-East of Europe, it needs first to better swallow (accommodate) the last 2004 enlargement (32).

Europe belong in the cultural sense to the collapsed Byzantine empire. They do not have a democratic tradition nor a tradition of respect for minorities and, therefore, it would be proper that the enlargement of the Union be restricted to the ‘cultural circle’ of Western countries. The enlargement of the Union should be restricted to the Protestant and Catholic circle of European countries». *Kathimerini*, 16 October 1993, p. 9. Quoted by Simic (2001: 29), footnote 34.

30. «The document does mention that the “absorption capacity” of the European Union has to be considered. Diplomats involved in the negotiations told the EU Observer that France insisted on that language». Quoted in United Press International (2006).


32. «Janez Jansa: … As I’ve said there’s only one alternative and this is the European perspective, but we are aware that before the European Union is able to take this step to enlarge in the future, we have to swallow the last enlargement. I think we need five to 10 years to do that». Quoted in EuroNews (2006) *Slovenia’s Janez Jansa on the challenges of the EU presidency and adopting the euro*, Interview.
3.3. Perception of EU citizens matter

«Traditionally, public opinion has generally played only a marginal role in EU decisions to enlarge» (Phinnemore 2006: 20) and usually it has not been a matter of concern. But with time, as the EU policy was focused on bringing Europe closer to the citizens, the public opinion started to count into the EU decision-making. The perceptions of the EU citizens from now on had to be taken into close considerations. After the latest enlargement the «popular concerns about the process (previously either have not been articulated or have been ignored) are now being heard and member state governments are responding accordingly» (ibidem). Such concerns are spelled out and made even clearer by EU officials (33) as well as EU official documents. We find reference to the issue of present and future perception of enlargement by EU citizens reading the conclusions of the Council of the European Union under the Austrian Presidency.

«The Commission is invited to provide a special report on all relevant aspects pertaining to the Union's absorption capacity, at the same time as it presents its annual progress reports on enlargement and the pre-accession process. This specific analysis should also cover the issue of present and future perception of enlargement by citizens and should take into account the need to explain the enlargement process adequately to the public, within the Union» (Council of the European Union 2006: 18 - paragraph 53).

In this new context the Western Balkans countries have also to face the consent of the EU member states citizens where only «in few member states the public opinion is happy about Bosnia, Serbia, Albania or Macedonia joining EU» (Bildt 2005). If we refer to the Eurobarometer poll (July 2006) we see that support for the further enlargement of the European Union continues to be stronger in the ten new Member States (66%) with the highest percentages in Slovenia (73%) and Poland (72%) while contrasts sharply with reluctance, if not outright opposition, regarding further enlargement, in Germany, Luxembourg, France, Austria and Finland, where at least 6 out of 10 respondents are against it (European Commission - Eurobarometer 2006: 26).

Although public opinion about further enlargement continues to be volatile and vary significantly from country to country the general picture is that enlargement suffers from weaker support among public opinion. The last Eurobarometer poll shows that support of the public opinion to further enlargement is decreasing, creating so a rising opposition to the further EU enlargement.

In comparison to results obtained in the autumn 2005 survey, support for further enlargement of the European Union is now less widespread, where only 45% (-4% of the autumn 2005 survey) of EU citizens are in favour while opposition has increased to 42% (+3% more than in autumn 2005 results) (ibidem). Whereas the (political and business) elites keep talking of the successes and advantages of the EU’s expansion, public opposition on further enlargement of the EU continues to grow (EurActiv 2006). Such a negative/opposing trend by the citizens on EU enlargement puts EU officials on a strong and growing anti-enlargement feeling which may result in «weakening the political imperative to enlarge, allowing member states to become more critical of enlargement and question the speed and indeed the desirability of the process» (Phinnemore 2006: 20). Moreover, if the Eurobarometer survey is taken into consideration (where support for further enlargement was particularly low in EU’s older and richer countries) it is understandable how remote European perspective can be for Western Balkans and how much can be supported the strategic documents of enlargement compiled in Brussels (Milo 2006: 3).

33. For example, the Vice President of European Commission Margot Wallström said: «What we need is a new consensus, a shared perception of the purpose of Europe and where it is heading. The people of Europe and the organizations that represent them must have more to say and we, the decision-makers, must learn to listen to people’s hopes and expectations». Quoted in Milo (2006: 2-3).
Concluding remarks

The aim of this paper has been to look at the evolution of EU-Western Balkans relation with emphasis on the EU enlargement model towards the region. As documented in the paper, EU approaches in terms of intent and extent have been ‘many’, Enlargement being the latest. What the foregoing discussion suggests is that the EU-Western Balkans relations was and is a continuous process in which EU as the leading actor is «able to review its strategy in front of changing circumstances and embark upon radical changes» (Papadimitriou 2002a: 21). Although EU approach towards the Western Balkans underwent major changes and although progress have be noticed regarding the integration target, it needs to be stressed that a timeline of enlargement is far from being clear and fixed. The reasons are manifold but a simplification in a logical equation can at least explain how EU enlargement will work in the case of the WBs.

Enlargement - the timing, that is when EU will enlarge to the Western Balkans - depends on the EU condition (a variable parameter) given that Western Balkan states have accomplished all the membership criteria (a constant parameter).

The core assumption here is that «the exact timing of accession hangs not just on the preparations of would-be members; it also depends greatly on how the EU itself will develop» (Grabbe 2003: 11). In such a scenario the role of the WB states is, in general, not a variable parameter that can influence the result of the enlargement process. Instead it is a given constant, meaning that Western Balkans states had to fulfill the required economic and political conditions decided at the European Council in Copenhagen. The key element in deciding when to enlarge, is the EU and its inner conditions, meaning that «the EU would have the capacity to accept new members and secondly that enlargement would not come at the expense of further European integration» (34).

If conceived in this way, the actions of enlargement rest on the EU side rather that on the Western Balkans countries. The question to be posed here is what the EU strategy will be from now on given the EU latest development (the “absorption capacity” as a potential barrier to accession). Considering that enlargement towards WBs is an irreversible process, the EU approach of ‘blocking or delaying tactics’ (35) seems most probably the case. The experience of the previous enlargement as well as the postponement of negotiations with Bulgaria, Rumania or Turkey are the best arguments to speak of EU using «tactics in place of strategy»; that at least is the «image of today’s EU political course» (36).

Such logic suggests that the EU has moved towards an irreversible enlargement approach but its finalization (the WBs membership) will take longer than it may have been predicted. At the actual phase of EU-Western Balkans relations the question is not if but when to obtain the membership.

35. On the argument of blocking tactics and delaying tactics see Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005: 149).
36. «In short, to preserve peace in the short term, it has to support the very forces which are against the objective of peace and democracy in the region on the long term. Tactics in place of strategy: a very good image of today’s EU political course» (Biancheri 2006).
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Abstract: The paper presents factoring as a financing form, with its benefits, challenges and motivations. Factoring is one of the most important ways of sustaining the commercial development of the SMEs, as it has a very easy process of decision-making. As it will be shown with the help of a cash-flow analysis, a SME can have important financing problems, which could be overcome with the help of factoring. If the SME sector goes well, that means that the welfare of the nation is growing and thus its people also have a better life in that specific economy. The paper will further present a short view of the factoring market in Europe, with a description of the Romanian and the Italian factoring sector. Factoring concentrates on insuring the necessary sums of money for the clients, allowing them to concentrate on what is most important for their businesses: the economic growth. Factoring companies claim to be the ideal option for the SMEs.

Introduction

Factoring is one of the oldest and most used forms of receivable financing. This operation is a financial facility ensuring a better cash-flow for the clients’ businesses. It is not only a post-delivery financing form, but also a form of transforming the accounts receivables into liquidities.

Factoring is a short-term financing form, a financial process where a specialized firm - the factoring company (usually called “the factor”) - purchases from its clients the trade debts or receivables accounts arising from the sale of goods or the provision of services to trade customers (Soufani 2002). Therefore, in its essence, factoring is a “sale and purchase” operation between the seller and the factor. The later is a financial institution specialized in the accounts receivables management (Sopranzetti 1998), that assumes different services like design, marketing, sales, the credit risk and protection, sales ledger administration and collection for the accepted accounts, the debtor’s surveillance, etc. The seller gives up a part or the total amount of its invoices to the factor, based on a factoring contract, in exchange of a discount and receives cash immediately. So, the buyer becomes the debtor of the factor and has to pay directly to the factor. At the same time, the factor pays the seller between 70%-90% of the total amount. At the end of the commercial credit period, the factor takes the money from the customer and pays to its client the rest of the money, minus the fees (interest rate plus service fees).

Factoring is not a loan, but a discount sale of account receivables (Klapper 2006). These pass from the seller’s balance sheet, to the factor’s one, thus there are no liabilities implied. That is why factoring is extremely attractive in counties with a weak financial and legal system, and especially for the SMEs. The most important problem a SME may be faced with is related to finance and the way to obtain it. In most of the cases, the economic agent is not able to obtain the necessary funds through conventional methods. And that is mostly because of the lack of
assets which could be used as collaterals. That is why alternative means of financing the activity start to gain more and more on the market.

But factoring too can be affected by the lack of legal enforcements regarding the contracts, together with other barriers such as taxes. In the developing countries, one of the major barriers is caused by the existence of weak government structures.

1. The history of factoring

Factoring is one of the oldest forms of commercial financing appeared in the Ancient Era. The dating of this commercial habit is still under debate, opinions being split in two groups. The first one claims that origins of factoring has to be founded at the time of the Roman Empire (Rutberg 1994), while the second believes it appeared some 4000 years ago, in the time of Hammurabi (Papadimitrios, Phillips and Wray 1994). The term “factor” comes from the Latin “facio”, meaning “a person that does certain things”. As the Latin verb suggests, the history of factoring is the history of the agents that do certain things for others.

For example, factoring was a very well developed activity in the 14th century England, when it was closely related to the wool industry. The factors had the role of sales agents or discount sellers for the textile manufactures. The distance between producer and consumer made the exchange difficult, taking into account the primitive forms of transport and communication. On one hand, factors started to assume supplementary roles to overcome these problems. The centre of all these was the factor’s role as a selling force for the textiles. On the other, factors started to offer other services like marketing and distribution, including market studies about clients’ tastes and requirements, the level of the demand for certain products, etc.

Factors used to represent producers in some financial cases. They used to offer the later consultancy with regards to credit limits for different clients, they were guaranteeing the payments for the producers, taking full responsibility for the client’s solvability. To protect themselves, factors stored reserves allowing them to cover eventual losses caused by bad merchandise or other problems. But the most important characteristic from the point of view of this research is the fact that they used to finance the producers’ activities based on the value of the sold merchandise. It is in this way that factoring was performed some 600 years ago, when it was already a part of the economic system.

What is now different from 600 years ago is that the commercial component, the role of commercial agent, was removed from the factoring process. Another important step refers to the textile trade in the 17th century between England and the United States of America, more exactly between the European continent and the new colonists that needed credits for the goods they bought. The agent-type distribution system (or the factor one), was the main way of making this exchange. Starting with the Industrial Revolution, the role of the factor changed, remaining only at the level of the banking and credit services. The factors guaranteed for the payments of the accepted clients and bought their accounts receivables without recourse.

Nowadays, factoring is a real industry, with a high annual growing rate. The 2006 factoring value stands at € 1,134,288 million, with a 12% growth rate from 2005. The first place is taken by the United Kingdom, followed by Italy and France. There are more than 1,140 factoring companies throughout the world and the main operations regard domestic factoring.
2. The commercial credit and the motivations for factoring

The majority of commercial relations is based on commercial credit (sales of goods or provision of services). It is estimated that more than 80% of the daily transactions have something to do with crediting. Why? There are 2 major studies showing us the reasons.

The first one by Mian and Smith (1992), identified three main reasons:
1. cost advantages,
2. market positioning,
3. taxes.

These reasons imply that the economic agent that appeals to commercial credit acts in order to have cost advantages on the market, to attract clients. The longer the commercial credit period, the higher the number of customers. As a result, we have a better market position, a safer one. What now remain are taxes. Using the commercial credit, the company can somehow delay the payment of taxes after the maturity of the credit.

In an older study, Emery (1984) claims that this form of doing business has its origins in the will of minimizing the influence and the role of the financial market as much as possible. That is, to make companies more and more independent in relation with banks and other financing companies. That is to help each other to minimize the level of indebtedness. But, throughout the years, along with the development of the markets, new problems arose: competition and concurrence. Thus producers were forced to adopt the strategy of the commercial credit in order to maintain the clients (Soufani 2000). In the end, everything resumes to the problem of surviving on the market.

With regard to the SMEs, commercial credit is used in many of the cases as a substitute for the bank loan [as already mentioned above (1)]. A seller that is interested in a certain buyer will always extend the commercial credit in order to keep the latter. A research carried out with reference to the U.S.A.’s market (Long, Malitz and Ravid 1993), on a sample of producing companies, showed that there are differences in the characteristics of the commercial credit both within a sector and among sectors. Generally, companies with a variable demand usually extend commercial credit more than the ones with a stable demand. Companies in sectors requiring a longer period for producing the goods also give commercial credit for longer periods. Another group of this kind is made up by the ones that produce long-use or more complex goods that require a longer period to establish the level of quality.

But producers can raise the costs of the commercial credits by using different types of financing forms for their production. All these receivable accounts lead to a lack of liquidity for the economic agent and to the need “to unlock” these funds in order to reinvest them. Consequently, factoring has a big market at disposal, especially because the basic and usual financing forms (2) can be reached only up to a certain level. Furthermore, as discussed further on in the paper, many companies, especially SMEs, went bankrupt because managers did not know how to manage resources, even though there was great potential for them. As a consequence, the main motivation for using factoring as a financing form is the improvement of the financial status of the company. This is done by obtaining the needed liquidities that can be reinvested, instead of waiting for the maturity of the given commercial credits.

Further on in this paper I shall deal with an analysis that shows how much a SME can gain from using factoring (with all the costs implied), instead of waiting for the maturity. Another important motivation is that factoring companies have all sorts of services affiliated to the

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1. The statement refers to the ones that are on the buyer’s position.
2. Through banks, for example.
factoring operation. They provide for the client services like: the risk management, the accounts receivable management, the supervision of the debtors, etc. These are all operations for which the company would need supplementary work force, a new department which would imply higher costs without a real basis. This range of services provided represents another strong point for factoring.

Commercial credits are yet unfulfilled assets, with a high risk level comparing to the assets, in general. And that is because the later can be sold in case of bankruptcy and the money recovered. Factoring companies usually make more complex analyses of the accounts receivables, of the commercial debtor, to see whether they accept or reject the financing. These analyses are made both quantitative and qualitative. The financing of the client is related only to the debtor’s situation and to the receivables accounts. Its financial status and profitability are not of high significance for the acceptance or rejection of the financing, as in the case of the normal bank loan, for example. Factoring companies claim to be the ideal option for young, small businesses and for the companies registering rapid growth in a certain economic environment (Hawkins 1993).

3. Factoring versus other types of financing forms

In the table below, there is a simple comparison between factoring and other sources of financing. The analysis was made by comparing the first seven most used forms of financing:

- leasing,
- attracting investment funds through the stock market,
- financing capital obtained as a result of joint-venture actions,
- bank loans,
- private investors (for example, mergers and acquisitions),
- funds obtained through governmental programmes,
- factoring.

The analysis is based on ten criteria:

- whether the financing form has or not a simple application form;
- the number of days that pass from the moment the client begins the procedures, until the moment the client receives the money;
- the acceptance of crediting based on the analysis of the clients liquidity and on its credit history;
- financing process related to the company’s sales or other assets;
- the property transfer made by ceding of a part of the capital in the exchange of the received money;
- giving up the control of the company and transferring it to other parties;
- credit level limited at the value of the assets that can be taken as collaterals;
- the demand of profitability for the company that requests financing;
- whether there is or not a continuous monitoring process of the economic agent throughout the financing period;
- the reduction in the indebt level of the company - that is, whether a company can finance its activity without increasing the debt.
Factoring - A financing form for the SMEs

Tab. 1 - The comparison between different financing forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>leasing</th>
<th>stock market</th>
<th>venture capital</th>
<th>bank loan</th>
<th>private investor</th>
<th>government programmes</th>
<th>factoring</th>
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<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>depends</td>
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<td>90-180</td>
<td>60-180</td>
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<td>yes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>sales related financing</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>property transfer</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control transfer</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credit limited at the value of the fixed assets</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>maybe</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profitability</td>
<td>usually</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>usually</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>usually</td>
<td>usually</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuous monitoring</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indebt reduction</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above displays that factoring has the simplest application form. Then, if factoring requires up to 10 days for receiving the sums of money, leasing needs almost 30 days, while the process could last up to 9 months for the funds obtained through the stock market. With reference to the client analysis, it is obvious that the financer is interested in the credit history of the client. As such, each time, the financer will seek to see the liquidity and solvability of the client, whether he paid his credits in due time or honoured all its commitments. The only exception is factoring, where the factor is not interested in his client, but in the buyer (the commercial debtor) and in its capacity to honour its obligations at maturity. Therefore, factoring is the only financing form in which the client analysis is not at the basis of the decision.

Moreover, factoring is the only financing form closely related to the sales of the economic agent, and it is directly influenced by them. In the case of financing through the stock market, the creation of joint-ventures, or a private investor, there is the partial or, in some cases, almost total transfer of property. This happens because the financiers request a percentage of the assets in exchange for the sums invested. On the other side, there are leasing, bank loans, governmental programmes and, of course, factoring, none of which imply such an exchange. Another
advantage of factoring is that there is no control transfer from the company’s management to the financing company. Leasing and bank loans are in the same group. A total transfer of control can be found in the case of capital received through joint-venture, while in the other cases, this process may sometimes appear, while in other situations it is not present.

This analysis continues with another criterion: credit level limited at the value of fixed assets that can be used as collaterals in case of non-payment. That means that, in case of financing forms requiring collaterals (guarantees, mortgage) the maximum amount of money that can be received equals collaterals’ value. This is mainly for leasing, bank loans, governmental programmes and, sometimes, for private investors. It is not valid for the capital market, joint-ventures or factoring. Why? Because, in the case of factoring, the only element having something to do with the assets of the client is the invoice(s) confirming the accounts receivables. As already mentioned, factoring is a form directly related only to sales.

There is no continuous monitoring process of the client at leasing or factoring during the financing period. That is because, in factoring, the one that has to pay is the commercial debtor and not the client. And in leasing, if the client does not pay, the leasing company takes back the merchandise. Some could say that a certain degree of monitoring exists even in factoring. That is true, but the monitoring process is activated only if the client asks for it and it belongs to the range of additional services that factors offer (3). With reference to all the other forms considered, there is a continuous process of monitoring during the financing period.

For the last criterion used, the only positive answer is for factoring. Factoring is the only financing form that does not increase the level of the external indebtedness of the company. Because there is not a borrowing-crediting process, but a purchase and sale process for the invoices involved.

4. The cash-flow analysis for a SME

The term “cash-flow” defines the money movements (incomes and outcomes) for a company. Economists claim it is the life source of the economic agent. In general, the term refers to liquidity.

This part of the paper presents a cash-flow model analysis for a SME. A very important thing is that cash-flow and profit are not the same thing. A good cash-flow is vital for the development of each economic agent. This analysis takes into account the factors that influence the cash-flow of a company. Among them, the company’s sales, different asset elements as well as a rapid growth can diminish the level of the liquidities available (by absorbing the available cash-flow).

It is interesting to notice the fact that after the analysis, many of the businesses that went bankrupt proved to be, in fact, profitable. The major problem was that the management of those companies was not able to apply the best suitable financing form (for each situation).

The analysis is based on the following indicators (4).

- An initial sum of money has to be at the disposal of the company. This may be the initial one, when the business is started, or the one resulted in the previous period.
- Then come the sales made in the analysis period.
- Also in absolute figures are used the inventory and the raw materials that will be used for producing the goods. In fact, we have the costs related to them.
- Of course, if the analysis is made from the beginning of activity, the accounts receivables

---

3. Services the client can or not request.
4. Analysis model used by J&D Financial, S.U.A
will be equal to 0. The money will enter into the company’s account only at the end of the commercial period.

- **Accounts payable (debts)** represent, of course, the debt for the different providers.
- **The production costs of the sold goods** are given directly by the costs related to the provision with raw materials. This indicator is not strictly used for the production sector, but can also be used for the tertiary one. In this case, it will include the costs of the labour force and of fuels. This indicator is used as a percentage from the value of the sales.
- As it is very well known, the **monthly/annually sales growth rate** has a reverse influence upon the cash-flow. When the sales growth rate increases, the cash-flow decreases, and vice-versa.
- Next is the **rate** that shows the **percentage of the total accounts receivables in total sales (sales on credit)**. The commercial credit period ranges from 30 to 120 days. This indicator has a very important influence upon the cash-flow.
- **Days until maturity**: refers to an average value of the periods that pass from the day in which the invoice is issued, till the day it is paid (5).
- The **profit rate** is calculated as a percentage from sales. In this model of analysis, it is used to calculate the total expenses of the company.
- The last two indicators regard **the months in which the raw materials remain not used (immobilization of raw materials)** and **the period in which the company pays its debts**. The first one has a reverse effect upon the cash-flow. The longer the period, the lower the cash-flow. The second one measures the time that passes from the moment of receiving an invoice, to the payment moment. The longer the period, the higher the cash-flow.

We consider an economic agent, whose situation is characterized by the following numeric data:

- initial sum of money: 10,000€;
- the value of the sales in the analyzed period: 15,000€;
- initial inventory and raw materials: 5,000€;
- accounts receivables: 0€;
- debts: 3,000€;
- the production cost of the sold goods: 30%;
- the monthly sales growth rate: 0.5%;
- sales on credit: 75%;
- days until maturity: 45 (6);
- profit rate (the profitability of sales): 15%;
- immobilization of raw materials: 3 (the same as above);
- the period in which the company pays its debts: 30 days.

What was important in the analysis’ final use, were the results related to money, cash-flow and profit. As one can see, money has a big growing tendency, while the growing rates for profit and cash-flow are more constant. Thus, if we start from the initial sum of 10,000€, in 12 months we arrive to a more than double sum of money: 22,877€ (a rise of about 130%). The growth of the profit will be somewhere around 5%. As we started from 0, the growth rate for cash-flow will be of 100%. But both for money and for cash-flow there are negative periods, during which the SME could collapse and go bankrupt if it would not be supported by the factoring companies.

The results of the analysis are presented in the table below.

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5. The period of the commercial credit is mentioned above: 30-120 days.
6. This period was chosen in order to have months both positive and negative cash-flow.
Tab. 2 - The cash-flow analysis for a SME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>month</th>
<th>money (€)</th>
<th>profit (€)</th>
<th>cash-flow (€)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10,047</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1,006</td>
<td>2,261</td>
<td>-11,052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,329</td>
<td>2,273</td>
<td>2,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3,676</td>
<td>2,284</td>
<td>2,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6,034</td>
<td>2,295</td>
<td>2,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8,405</td>
<td>2,307</td>
<td>2,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10,787</td>
<td>2,318</td>
<td>2,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>13,181</td>
<td>2,330</td>
<td>2,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>15,586</td>
<td>2,342</td>
<td>2,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>18,004</td>
<td>2,353</td>
<td>2,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>20,434</td>
<td>2,365</td>
<td>2,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>22,877</td>
<td>2,377</td>
<td>2,442</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 1 - The cash-flow analysis for a SME
The financial model for the analysis has the following scheme:

- **Sales**: 185,033€
- **Costs**: 101,768€
- **Expenses**: 121,372€
- **Net cash-flow**: 154,754€
- **Total revenues**: 167,630€
- **From sales**: 46,258€
- **From accounts received**: 121,372€
- **Money**: 22.877€ = net cash-flow + initial sum
- **Debts**: 12.935€
- **Receivables**: 17.403€
- **Operating assets**: 14.261€

This analysis model is being used by more factoring companies throughout the world. With its help, they can easily discover problems inside a company leading it towards a successful path.

### 5. The costs of factoring

The costs of factoring depend mainly on the total amount of money that makes the object of the operation (7).

Due to the lack of information on the financial and commercial markets, in most of the cases, the economic agents calculate in a wrong way the costs implied by factoring. Most of them tend to analyse the costs on an annual basis, forgetting that factoring is a short term financing form and not a long term one (8). Its duration is given by the duration of the commercial operations that constitute its objects. Because of this error, both in calculation and in analysis, the economic agents reach enormous interest rate levels for the sums that are subjected to factoring. And this leads them not to take into consideration factoring as a financing form.

Here is an example of wrong calculations. It is very well known that economic agents tend to

---

7. Usually, on a monthly basis.
8. Like in the case of mortgages and different other types of loans.
give commercial credit for a period of 30 days. Considering a factoring fee of 4%, an uninform-
ed economic agent will think as follows: they will multiply 4% with 12 (the number of months in one year) and the result will be an interest rate of 48% (!). From the point of view of an un-
knowner, the figure is very pertinent.

But it is just like saying that the economic agent that makes a discount of 2% to a client that
pays within 10 days instead of 30 days, supports a cost of 72%. To show to people that they are
wrong we apply the same methods. That is the annual method: for a discount of 2% when pay-
ing in 10 days, because during a year we have 36 periods of 10 days each, reasoning as the
agent did, means that he would have an extra expense of 72% (2% * 36). According to my re-
search experience, this is not true, just like the premise from which he arrived to an interest rate
of 48% for the factoring company.

This is mainly the reason for which this part of the paper concentrates on the level of costs in
factoring and the methods of calculating them. Factoring is a short-term financing form. That is
why it is a great mistake to analyse its costs just like in the cases of the long-term forms.

In the end, the final decision of whether using factoring or not comes up to comparing the
costs of factoring with those where factoring was not used. In most of the cases, on one side is
factoring and on the other are problems related to cash-flow.

A major problem is given by the losses occurring by loosing different business opportunities,
due to the lack of liquidity. The decision of using or not factoring has to be based on the profit
increases resulting from rapidly obtained additional liquidity (improved cash-flow). Going back
to the example, if the money obtained through factoring costs to the economic agents 4% of the
factored value, can they gain more than 4% by using them? The main motivation for factoring is
to obtain money in the shortest time possible and to reinvest it.

Assuming that an economic agent holds incomes of 1,000,000€ in a month, out of which the
production costs are 65% of the sales’ value, he will have a gross profit of 350,000€. Consider-
ing a rate of the rest of the expenses of 32% (which means 320,000€ in absolute figures), the
agent will remain with a net profit of 30,000€.

What will be the result if it used factoring for those invoices? By factoring the accounts re-
ceivables of 1,000,000€, one can speak about 2,000,000€ at the company’s disposal. At the
same production cost of 65% (9), the gross profit is 700,000€. Taking into account that when
production increases, its indirect costs increase too, but not with the same percentage, we con-
sider their rate of 44% (440,000€). But 1,000,000€ was obtained through factoring, where we
have a cost rate of 4%. So, the factoring cost will be of 40,000€. The net profit of the economic
agent will be:

\[
700,000€ - 440,000€ - 40,000€ = 220,000€
\]

This means a supplementary profit of:

\[
220,000€ - 30,000€ = 190,000€
\]

compared to the situation of not using factoring, just waiting for the payment at the maturity of
the invoices. The additional profit obtained allows the company to receive more discounts when
paying raw materials, to increase sales, to increase production capacities by buying new technolo-
gies or by employing new work force, to invest in marketing and promotion, etc.

In the example above, if the company had not used the services of a factoring company, it
would have lost the 190,000€ for a month by losing the opportunities that could arise in that
period, because of the lack of liquidity. But the gains from factoring have to be measured by

---

9. Although this usually diminishes due to the fact that the providers are paid before the maturity, so
our economic agent receives discounts.
Factoring - A financing form for the SMEs

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taking into consideration also the wide range of services affiliated to factoring. Here is the generalised analysis model for the above example.

### Results (without factoring)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incomes:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Production costs:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross profit:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other expenses:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variable:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net profit:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Results (with factoring)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incomes:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Production costs:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross profit:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other expenses:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variable:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fees and costs of factoring:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net profit:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Final analysis

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net profit with factoring:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net profit without factoring:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional profit:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profit growth rate:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the international market, fees are between 0.5%-6%, depending on the type of factoring, the period of the commercial credit and the additional services requested by the client. As shown in previous paragraphs, the decision of accepting invoices is made in maximum a week and the money is received in maximum 24 hours from the notification.

As far as factoring fees are concerned, there are factoring companies establishing them in relation to the period of the commercial credit (10). In this way, we can find financing rates that go from 1 day to 90 days. From these, the most rentable is the daily rate, which ranges from 0.085% to 0.095% per day, so less than 0.1% for each day in which the invoices stay at the factor and wait to be paid. The table below shows some examples of fees used by different factoring companies.

10. Most of the American factoring companies.
Tab. 3 – Factoring fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The financing period</th>
<th>The fee rate applied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily rate (per diem rate)</td>
<td>0.095%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial credit of 15 days</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial credit of 30 days</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial credit of 45 days</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial credit of 60 days</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial credit of 75 days</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial credit of 90 days</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One can see how the fees tend to grow for longer periods. Some factoring companies use the standard fee for 30 days. The disadvantage of this type of fees consists in its lack of flexibility. No matter whether the debtor pays before or after the 30 days–period, it is all calculated in such periods. So, for example, if the debtor pays in the 31st day, the factor will use a fee for a period of $2 \times 30 \text{ days} = 60 \text{ days}$, even if the standard period had expired only by 1 day. And if, for example, the debtor pays after 15 days, the client will still pay the fee for 30 days. Using the daily fee, the whole cost will be calculated based on its exact length.

If we have for example a company A holding a commercial credit for a client B for a delivery just made - 100,000€. B is a very important client of A, but who pays only after 45 days. Instead of waiting for the maturity of the invoices, A decides to use the services of a factoring company. The later verifies the invoices and give to A 80% of the total amount within 24 hours (80,000€). Considering the fees from above, for a 45 days period the fee is 4.2% (4,200€). At maturity, A will receive the rest of 20,000€ minus the fee of 4,200€, so 15,800€. In the end, A will receive 95,800€ for the invoices factored, but it will not have to wait 45 days until payment is done. During the credit period, A could use the 80,000€ received to finance other operations and increase profitability.

When analysing the operation, the reader has to take into consideration the time-value of the money and the growth of the business by the improvements of cash-flow. The biggest advantage is to have the money from an invoice in 24 hours from the delivery and to be able to use it to pay providers and obtain high discounts for raw materials. Financing by factoring insures the funds necessary to sustain new demands and to pay the debts without supplementary credit lines. All in all, factoring increases the welfare of the SME, with direct consequences upon the welfare of the employees and then upon the society.

There are two main methods for calculating the fees and costs of factoring. The first one is called the “Prime Plus” Method and the second is called the “Discount Method”. The first one is usually used by the big factoring companies (11), while the second is more used by the smaller ones. As it will be shown further, the costs are lower in the case of the “Plus Prime” Method. That is why the management of a SME should always inform about the method used before starting the financing process. Another important aspect is whether there are additional fees if the receivables grow “old”. The “Prime Plus” Method is characterized by two types of fees. The first one is the factoring fee that is applied only once upon the whole sum factored. The second fee is the one given by the interest taken by the factor for the sum of money advanced through factoring and which depends on the level of the interest rate on the market. The interest is taken from the moment the factor gives the 80% of the total sum in advance. The interest is established by contract before it is signed. So this interest is constant.

In the case of the “Discount” Method, there is a fee for the first 30 days of the contract and an additional fee for each 10 days in addition. But there is no interest rate for the sum advanced through factoring, for the period until maturity when payment is received by the factor.

But here are two examples, for the two methods of calculating the factoring costs. For my analysis I considered a commercial credit period of 45 days.

**“Plus Prime” method**

Invoice value: 1.000€.
Advanced sum (the percentage): 80%.
Factoring fee (as rate): 3%.
Annual interest rate: 10%.

- Factoring fee: 3% * 1.000€ = 30€.
- The sum advanced to the client: 80% * 1.000€ = 800€.
- The interest for the advanced sum, for a period of 45 days, at an annual interest rate of 10%: 10% * 800€ * 45 days = 10€.
- Total costs: 30€ + 10€ = 40€.
- Total cost / total factored sum: (40€ / 1.000€) * 100 = 4%.

**“Discount” method**

Invoice value: 1000€.
Advanced sum (the percentage): 80%.
Factoring fee (as rate): 3% for the first 30 days; 1% for each additional 10 – days period.
Annual interest rate: no interest rate.

- Factoring fee: 3% * 1.000€ = 30€ - for the first 30 days of the credit period;
- 1% * 1.000€ = 10€ - for the next 10 days;
- 1% * 1.000€ = 10€ - for the last 5 days of the credit period.
- The sum advanced to the client: 80% * 1.000€ = 800€.
- Interest: 0.
- Total costs: 30€ + 10€ + 10€ = 50€.
- Total cost / total factored sum: (50€ / 1.000€) * 100 = 5%.

The results show that, as mentioned before, the first method is cheaper than the second for the factoring client. The “Prime Plus” Method has a total cost of 4.2% from the total invoice value, while the “Discount” Method has a cost of 5%, so a net profit of 0.8% for the first method. This is highly important, taking into account that the value of the sums which are factored is usually high.

6. SMEs and factoring

As factoring does not depend on the client’s situation and on its assets, it can be extremely suitable for the SMEs. In fact, some claim that factoring is especially made for the SME sector. My objective here is to show whether the statement is true or false.

One of the main factors of influence for a SME’s activity is the business environment of a country. A weak business environment, with many barriers, is an impediment not only for development, but even for the entrance of new companies on the market (Beck and Demirguc-Kunt 2006). But why are the SMEs important? Because they are the main clients of the factoring companies. One of the most important surveys related to the business environment is The World
Business Environment Survey (1999-2000). The survey was made upon 10,000 companies from 80 countries. These were divided as follows:

- 40% were small companies, with maximum 50 employees;
- 40% were medium - size companies, having between 50 and 500 employees;
- 20% were big companies.

Most of the subjects reported the problem of financing as a main obstacle for their development: 39% of the small companies, 36% of the medium - size companies and 32% of the big ones. Another very important aspect is that small companies complained about the high costs of financing forms in relation to the financed value (12). That is why they usually form a kind of business networks to help each other (mainly in financing) in order to survive on the market.

The same survey, together with other researches in the field shown that the SMEs find more barriers on the developing countries markets, than on the developed ones (Beck and Demirguc-Kunt 2006). In developing markets in fact, the main financing source is represented by family and friends. The commercial credit, which is the basis of factoring, is more used in these countries, as they have more barriers in what regards the process of obtaining funds (Klapper 2006).

One of the most important studies that show the relationship between factoring and SMEs, was made by the European Union and the World Bank (European Union, GLE Questionnaire, 2002; World Bank; Bakker et al. 2004). The study covers the EU 15 factoring market. Studying the accessibility of the SMEs to factoring, the research shows that factoring is one of the best financing forms for the SMEs. The study covers aspects like:

- the impact of factoring upon SMEs;
- the way of accessing factoring and the facility to do it;
- the economic sectors suitable for factoring;
- the type of business, including the legal form;
- the costs of factoring and the costs of the additional services it offers;
- the image of the product.

The first issue to be studied was the profit of the factors’ clients, to see exactly for what client size it is suitable. The results showed that 50% of the factors’ clients had a gross annually profit of maximum 2,000,000€, while about 81% had an annual profit not bigger than 5,000,000€. So, factoring addresses especially to the SMEs with an annual profit smaller than 5,000,000€. When talking about absolute figures, the studies show that there is a small numbers of SMEs that use factoring (for example, only 2% of the British SMEs). Another survey (E.U. Access to Finance 2001) shows that 50% of the same British SMEs used credit lines or loans as a main financing form. The main conclusion is that factoring has an important piece of market to extend. And, very important, that it also has the market means required for doing it.

A second issue concerns the general opinion of the SMEs about factoring. The majority say that it is a useful and accessible financing form. More than half of the questioned SMEs believe that factoring has the same costs as other financing forms, or is even cheaper. But, they do not use it. A question mark arises from these results. If the SMEs are aware of the advantages of factoring and have such a good opinion about it, why do they not use it? Especially because both the offer and the demand speak about its accessibility and relevance.

The sector most suitable for factoring is the productive one. That is because factors prefer the simple purchase - and - sale operations. They tend to exclude from factoring the invoices which belong to sectors that offer long-term guarantees, or which are paid in time. That is because in these cases it is harder to supervise the debtor and its activity. The main clients of factoring function in fields like: textiles, production, electronics, temporary employee recruit-

12. The discussion was mainly about bank loans.
ment field, logistics, transport, delivery, machinery construction, design and printing, publicity etc. So, we have production on the 1st place, followed by transport and distribution and, on 3rd place, services. In most of the cases, businesses such as work-force recruitment agencies, cleaning agencies do not need important fixed assets to do their jobs. As a result, they will not have access to elementary banking facilities. But factors will factor their invoices from the clients. These companies find factoring extremely suitable, giving them the so much needed funds for development.

At the beginning of the modern factoring, sectors like building-construction, telecommunication and informatics were not accepted to factoring. Nowadays, the factoring companies open more and more towards these sectors, as they are in a continuous development. So, basically, none of the economic sectors are left aside from factoring, as newer and newer solutions are being implemented. But the major change in the factoring industry occurred some years ago, when the first factoring companies started to accept invoices from the medical care sector. That is strange because factoring is a product that suits only the business sector, without involving households. Anyway, factoring remains a business - to business based operation, as the invoices that imply consumers have to be of important values in order to be accepted. And until now, this was applied only to the health sector.

Some other aspects that have to be considered in the analysis concerns the number of the employees, the annual profit required by the factor, the legal form and the history of the client. The first one has no relevance for the factor. In what regards the annual profit, the limits differ across the world, from Italy which has no minimum limit, to Germany which requires 2,500,000€ annual profit. But, as the industry develops further, the limits decrease more and more. Than, most of the factors prefer the limited companies. The history of the client, meaning its age on the market, is not so important if the factor considers that it has a high potential.

The same research mentioned at the beginning of the chapter (World Bank; Bakker et al. 2004) shows that factoring has very good costs, compared to other financing forms. This is stated by considering all the advantages it provides to the client. The costs depend on the type of factoring used, the market interest rate and the costs of the additional services. In this respect, most of the SMEs interviewed declared that factoring was more competitive or as competitive as other financing forms.

The biggest barriers for factoring regard the lack of information about the product on the market. There are 3 main issues. Some of the SMEs view factoring as an inferior product. Secondly, factoring is often seen as a last resort option, to which companies apply only when banks do not sustain them anymore - which means they are in danger of bankruptcy. But the most important one is the lack of knowledge. In 2004, only 25% of the SMEs from the 15 European markets analyzed knew factoring very well. So, if the companies do not have the know-how for factoring, they cannot use it properly.

7. Factoring in Italy

FACTORING

“Lo strumento completo per la gestione dei crediti”
ASSIFACT (Associazione italiana per il factoring)

Italy is one of the countries in which factoring has an important history. It is the second highest country in the world according to the value of the factoring operations. With a total factoring volume in 2006 of € 120,435 mil., out of which € 113,035 mil. for the domestic factoring. Thus, Italy is a country in which the big slice is owned by the domestic factoring, with very few operations at the international level. There are 40 factors activating on the Italian market.
The table below shows the evolution of the factoring annual volume in Italy, throughout the years. As we can see, Italy faced an important increase, reached its peak in 2002, and then had a decrease for three years in a row, starting to recover in 2006.

Tab. 4 - Annual factoring volume in Italy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual factoring volume (mil. euro)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>75,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>88,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>124,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>134,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>132,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>121,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>111,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>120,435</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 2 - Annual factoring volume in Italy

Graph 3 - 2006 turnover for factoring types
The domestic type of factoring represents 94% of the Italian market. Also the number of factors decreased very much. If, for example, in 1994, there were 80 factors on the market, in 1999 were 65 and in 2004 - 45. This is the result of the mergers and acquisitions that took place. There are 2 factors that stand for half of the operations on the market and 45% of the factors are independent from the banking sector, showing the special characteristics of the market, based on big, specialized companies.

But what do Italian SMEs think about factoring? According to ASSIFACT, factoring is seen as a secondary financing form which can complete the bank loan. Another opinion is that factoring is a way to manage credits in a professional way, especially suitable for credits with problems. About 64% of the SMEs interviewed use factoring. But this is something new, as more than 60% of the companies started to use factoring no sooner than 5 years ago. Only 9% of them had used factoring before. 80% of the companies studied state that they consider profitable to use factoring in the future, with all its advantages, although they see factoring as an expensive product.

8. Factoring in Romania

As in all ex-communist countries, factoring in Romania appears in the mid 1990s. So, in this case, we can not speak about a history of this phenomenon, like in the cases of U.K. or Italy. The Romanian economy is a developing one, having made a lot of progress lately (13). In 2006, Romania gained 22 places in the “Doing Business” top, being on the 49th position. The existence of the Credit Bureau that provides the necessary information to the creditors is a very important factor.

Factoring has started to actually develop in Romania only a few years ago. From 1994 to 1997, the total factoring volume was of € 79 mil. Beginning with 1998, factoring started to be more and more used. The model of development for the factoring industry being the exponential one. In the table below the annual factoring volume and the percentage of factoring in the GDP are shown.

Tab. 5 - The annual factoring volume in Romania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual factoring volume (mil. €)</th>
<th>GDP (mil. €)</th>
<th>Factoring as a percentage in GDP (%)</th>
<th>Annual growth rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37436.44</td>
<td>0.053424</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33387.79</td>
<td>0.110819</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40346.42</td>
<td>0.148712</td>
<td>62.16216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>44904.17</td>
<td>0.218243</td>
<td>63.33333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>48441.56</td>
<td>0.291072</td>
<td>43.87755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>52613.02</td>
<td>0.427651</td>
<td>59.57447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>60841.97</td>
<td>0.690313</td>
<td>86.66667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>79551.44</td>
<td>0.691377</td>
<td>30.95238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>97117.82</td>
<td>0.772258</td>
<td>36.36364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2006, factoring accounted for 0.77% of the GDP, while other developing countries like the Czech Republic or Hungary had rates above 2.5% of the GDP. Consequently, Romania has yet a long way to go.

13. See the reports of the World Bank.
The € 750 mil. in 2006, were divided as follows: € 500 mil. - domestic factoring, and € 250 mil. - international factoring. Taking into account that in 2003, 2004, the sums resulted from the two types of factoring were almost equal, means that domestic factoring is starting to grow in Romania. It is estimated that in 2007, the Romanian factoring market will exceed € 1,000 mil. Furthermore, in 2009 the predictions show a factoring volume of more than € 1,500 mil. For East and Central Europe it is predicted a value of € 18,000 mil.

On the Romanian market are 8 factoring companies. The leader of the market is BRD-Groupe Société Générale, which accounts for 42% of the factoring Romanian market in 2006 (€ 320 mil). The major problem on the Romanian factoring market is the lack of information about this financial product.

Conclusions

The factoring operation improves the welfare state of the companies. As long as the commercial credit exists, factoring exists as well. Because more and more economic agents start to realise the advantages of using the sums involved in commercial credit before the maturity of the credit. The factoring industry is in a continuous development worldwide.

Factoring is an important financing form for the SMEs. Because, as shown before, it can save companies with cash-flow problems from going bankrupt, by giving them the funds needed for their development. As compared to other financing forms, factoring is a very accessible one. It insures the necessary funds in the shortest time possible, together with a range of additional services that save money for the client. Its importance for the SMEs is given by the low costs it implies, by having fixed and not variable fees, etc. Because of factoring, the economic agent can receive important discounts from its providers. So, when calculating the factoring costs, the client should consider not only the costs, but also the additional profits that can be obtained by reinvesting the money instead of waiting for them.

The factoring companies sustain they are the ideal option for young, small businesses and for those that have a rapid economic growth. But this is not entirely true. Because there are some
Factoring - A financing form for the SMEs

limits in what is concerned profit or the value of the invoices, which differ from country to
country and which make it harder for the micro-enterprises to access factoring. All in all, factoring
is very favourable to the SMEs. As to the smallest companies, these will never have access
to factoring because they will never have enough invoices to factor. And factoring is not suit-
able at all for the big companies. Because they have important assets to put as collaterals and
important positions on the market that allow them to negotiate interests.

Due to all of its characteristics, factoring concentrates on insuring the necessary funds to
clients, allowing them to concentrate on what matters the most to them: economic growth. That
is why all the parties involved should promote this product more. Further actions for changing
the poor perceptions about factoring being a last resource financing form should be taken.

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THE EUROPEAN ENLARGEMENT PRE-ACCESSION STRATEGY: IS FISCAL DECENTRALIZATION REFORM ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA?

Salvatore Pantaleo

Abstract: This paper proposes a plausible approach to grasp the effects of the institutional changes which come as a result of the Europeanization process in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Firstly, the paper illustrates the theoretical linkage between the concept of Europeanization and that of decentralization and it shows that the European Union supports decentralization in Macedonia because it will enhance its governance and above all its democracy. Secondly, after reviewing the literature in the field the paper will present the conflicting theories on the effects of decentralization. Consequently, it appears to be theoretically motivating though empirically difficult to investigate the impact of decentralization on the quality of local government and this is what this paper, on the basis of ongoing research, will mostly focus on. Finally, the paper will argue that the mixed method design is among the most suitable approaches to better grasp the changes in Macedonia.

Introduction

In the Western Balkan region the progress in the political, economic and institutional reforms varies significantly among countries as each one proceeds at its own pace towards the European integration. Yet Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are already recognized as candidate countries whereas the other countries in the region are still lagging far behind.

The European Union (EU) plays a significant role in their efforts to enhance political, economic and institutional reforms by providing specific targeted financial aid. In fact, between 2000 and 2006 the EU commitment in the region was streamlined essentially through a new financial programme known as the Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (CARDS). In six years of existence the Cards Programme delivered € 4.6 billion to the region to support reconstruction, underpin democracy and the rule of law, fostered a sustainable economic development, and promoted a closer cooperation between these countries. As far as democracy and rule of law are concerned, candidate countries have been pursuing them through far-reaching institutional reforms aiming at strengthening the “state machinery” both at central and local level. One of the main goals of this paper is to discuss a specific aspect of the institutional reform in Macedonia which is decentralization. According to the EU, decentralization will strengthen local government’s capacity and facilitate the overall Macedonian institutional transition to democracy. Today, however, much of the literature on decentralization makes ambiguous predictions on whether decentralization entails an improvement of the local government and above all more democracy. Consequently, it seems theoretically and em-
prically challenging to investigate the impact of the EU financed reform of decentralization on the quality of local government in Macedonia.

The EU commitment in addressing Macedonia’s transition towards decentralization will be thoroughly illustrated in this paper; however, it will not be further investigated. The paper will instead focus on the theoretical debate about decentralization, which is said to facilitate Macedonia’s transition towards the European system of governance, and on how to better grasp empirically its effects on the quality of local government.

Hereinafter, the paper defines the quality of local government in terms of level of corruption and benefits for public goods and services provided. This means that a high quality local government implies a lower level of corruption and improved benefits for public goods and services provided. In other words, an increased quality of local government goes hand in hand with the concept of convergence towards the European system of governance as the following paragraphs will illustrate.

The paper will firstly present a plausible theoretical linkage between the Europeanization process and the decentralization reform in Macedonia. Secondly, it will illustrate conflicting theories on decentralization and outline the research design for the ongoing research, proposing a suitable methodological approach to better grasp the effects on the quality of local government. Thirdly, the paper will show some data, although partial, about two plausible factors that according to the relevant literature may also matter for the assumed increased quality of local government in Macedonia. Fourthly, a few important remarks will be made at the end.

1. Europeanization process and decentralization reform in Macedonia

1.1. Europeanization

Europeanization is a rather slippery concept and therefore it is difficult to find a suitable definition that would be unanimously accepted by scholars. Even if the meaning ascribed to Europeanization may differ from one scholar to another, this does not necessarily imply that the different meanings are conflicting or some of them may be erroneous. The different meanings of the concept may usually depend on the “conceptual stretching” or “degreeism” of the specific aspect investigated (Featherstone and Radaelli 2003: 28). In my opinion, it may also acquire a different connotation according to the time the concept was issued: the time framework should indeed be taken into account when defining the concept.

Consequently, given the difficulty to define the concept of Europeanization, it might be more useful to start by saying what Europeanization is not considered to be. According to the relevant literature, the concept of Europeanization should not be confused with “integration”, “harmonization” or “convergence” (ibidem: 33).

As for integration, it is a process that occurs before Europeanization and deals with understanding the process in which countries decide to give up part of their sovereignties for the creation of a new entity (i.e. EU). Europeanization instead refers to the process that comes after integration and investigates what happens once the supranational entity (i.e. the EU) is formed and produces its effects within the member states. Regarding convergence, Europeanization differs from the concept of convergence because not all EU member states have experienced convergence but some have actually diverged. Europeanization is considered to be a process whereas convergence and divergence are the possible outcome of this process. Then, there is a difference between this process and its consequences. Linked to this, “harmonization” is also a process that leads all member states towards the same type of change. Consequently, according to Feather-
stone and Radaelli, Europeanization does not match with the concept of harmonization since the EU member states have experienced different types of changes.

Following this, Europeanization can be conceptualised as follows: «a process of change at the domestic level in which the member states adapt their processes, policies, and institutions to new practices, norms, rules, and procedures that emanate from the emerging European system of governance» [Olsen (1) 1996, 1997]. The relevant literature in the field classifies the domestic changes as a result of the Europeanization process in three main categories, i.e. absorption, accommodation, and transformation (Featherstone and Radaelli 2003: 69-70).

Absorption happens when member states incorporate European policies or ideas into their programs and domestic structures, but without substantially modifying the existing processes, policies, and institutions. In this case the change is small. Accommodation is when member states accommodate Europeanization pressures by adapting existing processes, policies, and institutions without changing their essential features. One way of doing this is by “patching up” new policies and institutions onto existing ones without changing the latter. This time the change is modest. The third one, transformation, happens when member states replace the existing policies, processes, and institutions by new, substantially different ones, or alter the existing ones to the extent that their essential features and/or the underlying collective understandings are fundamentally changed. The change is significant.

According to the above mentioned definition of Europeanization, the changes can be investigated focusing on the domestic policy or institution, among others, in the concerned country. However, a number of questions will reasonably rise when trying to operationalize either the policy or the institutional change.

For instance, regarding the institutional reform, which is the institutional level between state, region if any, and municipal level that we should focus on in order to grasp the changes? According to the EU, decentralization is meant to improve the local government’s capacity and the local democracy, but also to enhance the quality of its governance and its democracy at national level. How can the change of local government be best grasped at local level then? Moreover, should the effectiveness of the local government for the services provided be assessed? Or the ultimate effects delivered to the local community should be assessed instead? Last, but not least, which is the span of time taken into consideration that best grasps this change?

In order to answer all the questions above, researchers have some discretion in choosing the most suitable research design and indicators. Different research designs and indicators chosen for the investigation of the same phenomena are most likely to lead to different findings which sometimes may also conflict. This is to underline that research design and methodology used for the investigation of a phenomenon matter as much as the theoretical framework of the research. Scholars’ conflicting views are also evident with regard to the way states are structured.

The way states are structured and the role of institutions in facilitating the progress of a transitional country has been a hotly debated issue among scholars. There are scholars who argue that the key formula for the progress of developing or transitional countries is to transfer or transplant a western institutional model in the country concerned (see Olson 1996; North 1998; Watson 2000). However, it seems that there has been no empirical evidence for this assertion so far, and it has been recognised that what determines the outcome of a specific state structure (i.e. decentralization) is a more complicated issue. This is especially true with regard to developing or transitional countries.

Nevertheless, the EU is shaping with an ad hoc approach the institutional structure of each candidate and the potential candidate countries for their eventual accession. However, much is

still to be said on the effects of the EU recommended institutional reforms in countries with weak or feeble democracy. And among the institutional reforms, the decentralization appears to be one of the most interesting aspects meant to lead Macedonia towards the European system of governance.

1.1.1. Europeanization through decentralization

The process of decentralization in Macedonia started in the late 1990s with Macedonia’s ratification of the European Charter of Local Government driven by the desire for integration into the European structures. Then, in 2001, the process received a further momentum when decentralization became a cornerstone of the Ohrid peace deal between ethnic Macedonians and Albanians (Gadjanova 2006: 104-105). The objects and aims pursued by the Ohrid agreement were subsequently included into the European Partnership. The European Partnership, adopted by the Council on 30 January 2006, indicates all the conditions which Macedonian domestic policies, processes, and institutions should comply before Macedonia joins the EU. Moreover, the EU plays also an active role in promoting the socio-political, economic and institutional progress of Macedonia through financial programmes. In particular, Macedonia was granted financial aid from the Cards programme between 2001 and 2006, which contributed significantly to the accomplishment of the decentralization reform. During this period, two important laws - one on Territorial Organisation of Local-Government and, the second, on Financing of Local Self-Government - were adopted in 2004. These two laws assigned significant political, administrative as well as financial responsibilities to municipalities, aiming at strengthening their capacity to provide services to citizens and above all improve democracy. This is also what EU claims concerning the effect of decentralization in Macedonia: «decentralization is a key challenge the country must tackle to enhance the quality of its governance and its democracy. The decentralization process has two key objectives: to bring government closer to the people and to improve the delivery of public services» (European Commission 2004: 6-7).

According to the European Agency for Reconstruction (2) (EAR), decentralization in Macedonia has already brought some positive effects to the local governments in terms of stronger capacity in providing public services (EAR fact sheet 2006), though the process is not fully accomplished yet. It follows that the EU has played, and still plays, a significant role in the decentralization of Macedonia both through conditionality (i.e. European Partnership) and financial aid (i.e. Cards programme) because it is believed to be a panacea (3) for the convergence towards the European system of governance. Today, however, scholars have different arguments on the effects of decentralization as the following paragraph will illustrate.

1.2. Decentralization: Theoretical framework

Generally speaking, as stated in the introduction, there is a great variation among countries in the Balkan region in terms of political, economic and institutional achievement and progress towards the European integration. Scholars have been increasingly interested in pinning down what factors matter for such differences. This paper focuses on one aspect of state structure
which is fiscal decentralization and a part of it deals with the way the states are structured.

Today, however, much of the literature on decentralization makes ambiguous predictions on its effects and so far no broad consensus seems to have been reached among scholars.

On the one hand, there are those arguing that decentralization may improve the quality of local government in terms of a higher participation and representation of the local community into the decision-making process, more accountability of local government officials, reduced level of corruption and improved public services delivery.

As for participation, bringing institutions closer to citizens through decentralization will co-opt more people into the local politics. Local government involves new elements such as women and minorities into local politics, and consequently a wider representation of the local community into the local decision-making process which, beyond any doubt, helps to improve the local government’s performance (Blair 2000). A wider participation and therefore representation of all local instances into the local decision making process would engender, according to World Bank’s researchers, greater accountability and would also reduce corruption (Gurgur and Shah 2005). This is because, according to the WB researchers, fiscal decentralization transfers to local government officials the responsibility to manage the local resources in an efficient way since the local taxpayers can easily observe the way their money is used. Hence, an efficient allocation of local resources is reasonably linked to the improvement of public services delivery. Moreover, the public service delivery can be improved also because local officials living in the same community are in a better position to understand and therefore respond promptly to the specific needs coming from the citizens (Huther and Shah 1998). A better representation and participation of the local community may also imply a better control of the local government officials’ activities. Some scholars found empirical evidence (4) that a lower level of corruption, measured by the number of public officials convicted, is consistently associated with fiscal decentralization measured as sub-national share of government spending (Fisman 1999: 3).

On the other hand, another observer on decentralization reached the opposite conclusion (Treisman 2000). On the basis of a wide sample of developing and developed countries, Treisman argues that states with more tiers tend to have higher perceived corruption and provide service delivery and infrastructure less effectively. He measures the level of corruption by using Transparency International and World Bank Governance indicators of perceived corruption, and secondly he measures the effectiveness of public service delivery by looking at quantitative indicators. According to Treisman, local officials are more susceptible to be corrupted since the interaction with the local people is more frequent (see also Tanzi 2001; Prud’homme 1995).

The local press and local bureaucrats may be less professional and more easily bribed than at national level. The presence of powerful and cohesive groups based on mere economic interest, religion or ethnicity may take greater advantage in a decentralized system, by seizing local government, than in a centralized system. Multi-tier governments are likely, as Treisman claims, to duplicate each other and waste resources. An institutional environment characterized by high level of perceived corruption, economic difficulties and bureaucratic inefficiency is also strongly correlated with widespread mistrust towards institutions (La Porta et al. 1997: 336). Therefore, decentralizing more responsibilities and powers towards local government in a hostile and harsh institutional environment may deteriorate even further the already feeble democracy with downward effects.

4. To be noted here is that Fisman and Gatti’s conclusion is drawn on a sample of industrialized countries from the United States.
1.2.1. Some critical notes on the theoretical framework of decentralization

I would like to draw the attention here on a few notes of the previously discussed theoretical framework. Firstly, the conflicting arguments as illustrated above may also depend on the specific aspects of the same phenomena investigated (i.e. decentralization can be political, administrative or fiscal) or on the different methodological approaches adopted.

It should also be noted that the empirical researches on the possible effect of decentralization in transitional countries are lacking to a greater extent. In fact, much of the literature on decentralization, both normative and empirical, is based on data from industrial countries (Litvack et al. 1998). For instance, Fisman and Gatti’s argument is based on a research conducted using a sample of countries from the United States. Therefore, in my opinion, its explanatory value when applied to transitional countries might not be suitable.

Thirdly, concerning corruption, Fisman and Gatti use the number of public officials convicted as indicator, whereas Treisman uses the well-known indexes from TI and WB, which are subjective measurements of the phenomenon.

The TI index on perception of corruption is a subjective measurement (appendix A) which is far away from an objective measurement of the phenomenon. However, it is also very difficult to move from a subjective measurement of corruption to a more objective measurement of the phenomenon; the latter measurement would imply an empirical research in the field through interviews and/or observation techniques.

More interesting is the fact that both authors seem to agree on the fact that corruption, whatever indicator they use to measure it, is negatively linked to decentralization. To put it simply, according to them a successful decentralization must decrease the number of convicted people for such a crime or reduce the perception of corruption. Why a successful decentralization must necessarily entail the decline of the level of corruption? Or better, can decentralization still be considered successful even if there is an increased level of corruption at least in the first stage of reform?

In my opinion, the answer to the latter question is affirmative. My argument is that, at least in the first stage of reform or transition, the relation between decentralization and the level of corruption may go both ways. Fisman and Gatti argue that decentralization increases the local government accountability because local officials are more likely to be under scrutiny of local citizens, citizens’ participation in local decision making-process may increase, and reasonably the local community awareness will increase too. As a result, in this new context it is feasible to expect that the local community will be less tolerant towards the illegal behaviours of their fellow citizens and presumably fewer people will succeed in bribing or carrying on their illegal activities without being caught. In other words, decentralization may increase the number of cases of corruption, at least in the first stage of reform, as a consequence of the strengthening of rule of law, accountability and responsiveness of the local government officials and the increased awareness among citizens in the local community. This argument, although not grounded in empirical data or supported by previous researches, may reveal some new and interesting aspects of the relationship between decentralization and the level of corruption in transitional countries, deserving more attention in the future researches and an additional methodological complexity to grasp it, at this moment the author does not possess.

1.2.2. Conceptual clarifications

At this point, it may be opportune to further clarify some concepts and terms used throughout the paper. The term decentralization is intended here as fiscal decentralization or devolution
of power and responsibility over budget and financial decisions from national to local level. The definition of corruption used is the most common World Bank definition as «the misuse of public office for private benefit» (The World Bank 2000: xviii). The performance of the local government public services will be measured in terms of the amount of resources allocated for basic education in primary and lower secondary schools, the ratio teacher-pupils, number of schools and number of pupils enrolled at the beginning of the school year from 2002 until 2006.

2. Conflicting theories on decentralization and research design

2.1. Outline of the research design and methodology

Once presented a plausible theoretical linkage between the Europeanization process and the decentralization reform in Macedonia and the conflicting theories on the possible effects of decentralization particularly contested with regards to the effects on developing and transitional countries as it is in the case of Macedonia (IDEA 2001: 3), the paper will outline here the design for the ongoing research which proposes, in my view, a suitable methodological approach to grasp the effects on the quality of local government.

The research project aims at understanding how and to what extent decentralization has enhanced the quality of local government in Macedonia. The research design chosen for answering the research question is the mixed method design and more specifically a sequential explanatory design (Creswell et al. 2003). The reason of this choice is that combining quantitative and qualitative data, in my opinion, may help us to better grasp empirically the effects of this institutional change and might provide a more comprehensive assessment of the quality of local government as a result of the EU financed reform of decentralization in Macedonia.

The dependent variable to be assessed here is “the quality of local government”, which will be split into two aspects, namely the level of corruption and the effects of local government’s services provided in the education sector. Although these two aspects, corruption and public services provision, are linked (Tanzi and Hamid 1997) in my opinion this may strengthen the possible finding rather than weaken it. A high quality of the local government implies that a local government should record a lower level of corruption and enhance the beneficial effects for the community. Some scholars measure the quality of local government by looking only at the institutional side, which means the local government’s performance in providing public services (output) without the investigation of the effects on the local community (outcome). This is because the latter, as they claim, may be influenced by the environment in which these services are offered (Treisman 2000). However, the EU so called ad hoc strategy is seemingly formulated in accordance with the environment of each candidate or potential country. Therefore, in my view, it is reasonably enough to monitor the effects of the supposed increased quality of local government directly from the grassroots of the local community where it is actually supposed to deliver the benefits. In other words, if decentralization is the right institutional reform in the case of Macedonia as well, it should reproduce its positive effects or, at least, hint to some beneficial tendency on local community. In order to investigate this, it is necessary, as this paper claims, to combine the quantitative and the qualitative methods that may well show the effects of the improved quality of local government on the local community (outcome). The complementary use of quantitative and qualitative methods is necessary because, especially in a highly corrupted and weak institutional environment, by using either quantitative or qualitative approach may give us only a partial picture of the change and lead us towards wrong conclusions. The study will carry out a diachronic analysis stretching from 2002 to 2006.
The first part of the ongoing research will pursue a descriptive aim by using only secondary quantitative data of the impact of decentralization on the quality of local governments in Macedonia (Andonovski 2004). The quantitative data will be collected for all NUTS4 municipalities (*ibidem*) for the two aspects of local government namely level of corruption and education. However, this data will be merely informative and illustrative of a tendency without any ambition to establish a relation between the investigated variables.

Afterwards, the research will focus on a few municipalities and pursue an explanatory aim. Four municipalities among the NUTS4 level will be selected. Two municipalities that, according to the EU, have proved an increased capacity in providing public services at local level will be selected, for instance, out of Veles, Kavadarci and Centar (5). The other two municipalities will be selected according to the criteria of the most similar to the previous two in terms of level of GDP, numbers of NGOs, ethnicity, level of infrastructure, religion, etc., but which have failed in improving the public services. Two other municipalities, the most different compared to the two selected may be chosen, although they show some improvement in the public services delivery. Once selected four municipalities, I will take into consideration the basic social services in education6 in primary and lower secondary schools, because it seems reasonable to believe that a local “good” government will aim at ensuring at least the basic social services at a relatively low cost and being highly effective.

At this level of analysis, I will use the qualitative and quantitative methods or mixed methods design with an explanatory aim. The research will adopt the mixed methods design only for the education aspect and will not be extended to the corruption aspect due to the complexity of the phenomena to be investigated. The qualitative data will be collected through exploring interviews and semi-structured interviews addressed to the primary school officials. The interviews will also be used to formulate a proper questionnaire to be subsequently submitted randomly to different primary school and hospital officials from the same municipalities and, if possible, to pupils attending primary and lower secondary schools. Additionally, other factors which may have contributed to the success or failure of decentralization will be taken into account and controlled as described below in paragraph three.

The rival hypotheses formulated here claim that the decentralization has improved quality of local governments in Macedonia and has therefore reduced the level of corruption and improved the benefits for the local community or that it has hampered the Macedonian progress towards the European system of governance.

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5. According to the EAR, the municipalities of Veles, Kavadarci and Centar have been awarded the “Municipal awards 2006” because of the continuing improvement of public services delivery to citizens. The prize rewards best practices leading to sustainable improvements in the community. It is funded by the European Union and managed by the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR fact sheet, 2006).

6. According to the article 22 of the Law on Territorial Organization of the Local Self-Government in the Republic of Macedonia adopted in 2004, education sector in primary and lower secondary schools is an exclusive competence of the local government. However, the central government administration still plays a certain role in determining the procedure or has a discretionary intervention in this field, and this influence will be taken into consideration in the due time of data analysis.
However, a number of other hypotheses which are also likely to explain the different qualities of local government such as the level of economic development, or a strong and vibrant civil society, or culture, etc. will also be tested when assessing the sampled municipalities.

2.2. Different diagnosis of Macedonian problems

Why is Macedonia a significant case to be investigated? A focus group survey carried out by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) in 2001 underlined that the most important problems perceived by the population in Macedonia are widespread corruption, education, health, economic problems, lack of democratic institutions and so forth (IDEA 2001: 3). Regarding corruption, many other studies agree that the level of perceived corruption in Western Balkans, especially in Macedonia, is among the highest in Europe (Transparency International 2006). It is also widely recognised that pervasive corruption, at any level, is a severe threat to the rule of law and democracy. It also leads to lower investment thereby lowering economic growth (Mauro 1995) and indeed reduces the public spending on capital maintenance and other public services delivery.

Against this background, the EU claims that decentralization will facilitate Macedonia’s transition towards better democracy (European Commission 2004: 6-7) and it has already brought some positive effects to the local governments in terms of stronger capacity to provide public services (EAR fact sheet, 2006).

Consequently, in the research we will especially study how and to what extent decentralization has successfully managed the most important problems such as corruption and public services delivery in Macedonia.

2.3. Rationality of the case study and time framework

The EU has given considerable support (through conditionality and financial aid) for the accomplishment of decentralization in Macedonia. However, the leading literature disagrees on the expected effects of decentralization, especially when this institutional reform is recommended in countries perceived as highly corrupted and with weak democratic institutions such as in the case of Macedonia.

For this very reason, Macedonia is perhaps a relatively successful case that deserves our attention because it may indicate us what is needed to make local democratic units efficient and more self-sustainable, and it may also tell us other things about the type of policy recommendations that may be suitable in specific contexts.

The timeframe taken into consideration will stretch from 2002, when Macedonia became eligible for funding under the Cards programme and was still a highly centralized country, until 2006 when the Cards programme was completed.

2.4. Sources, data and indicators

In the present ongoing research, both secondary and primary data will be used. As for the secondary data, the document reviews such as the EU Regular Reports, Reports and data from Macedonia will be taken into account, as well as the relevant literature in the field. The main sources for the secondary data are the EU and the Macedonian State Statistical Office, but also other international organizations such as the World Bank and Transparency International may eventually supply interesting data. Regarding primary data, they consist of interviews, exploring and semi-structured, and questionnaires collected mostly during field research campaigns.
The secondary data, on the level of corruption and education, will constitute the dataset used for describing quantitatively the general trend in all municipalities of Macedonia. Regarding the measurement of the level of corruption, I will mostly rely on the number of reported, convicted and accused public officials for such a crime throughout the Macedonian State Statistical Office. There are other indicators of the perception of corruption available through international organizations but only at aggregate level (or at state level) such as the Transparency International index and the Worldwide Governance Indicators from the World Bank. However, these indexes will be eventually used only to show the trend of the perception of this phenomenon and kept in a separate dataset as illustrative aggregate indicators. These indexes are only subjective measurements of corruption and, although widely used by scholars, they are far away from a more accurate objective measurement of the phenomenon which in turn may require field visits and in-depth interviews for its measurement.

As for the basic service provided at local level, the research will focus only on the education sector. The data will be collected for all municipalities NUTS4. The indicators are the number of students enrolled in primary and lower secondary schools at the beginning of the school year, the ratio teacher-pupils, the number of schools and amount of resources allocated. The data on education presented in this paper (appendix B) stretch from 2002-2003 to 2006-2007 academic year and though it is at aggregate level, it will only be used here as an instructive example of the possible shortcomings when using the quantitative data. In fact, one possible argument when comparing this raw data might be that more local resources have been allocated for primary education in terms of increased number of the ratio teacher-pupils. It follows that the performance of the local government in providing public service has also increased. However, given that, high staffing may also reflect some kind of patronage behaviour and therefore misuse of public resources for the sake of local elites (7). This is likely to occur especially in countries considered highly corrupt and having weak democratic institutional environment. Consequently, it is possible but probably erroneous to claim that there has been an improvement of the quality of local government only on the basis of quantitative data unless, in my opinion, integrated with qualitative indicators.

Afterwards, the research will focus on a few municipalities and pursue an explanatory aim. Here the research will use primary data in which qualitative and quantitative data will be produced according to the mixed method design. Regarding the effects of local public services provided for the community in the education sector, the qualitative data will be collected through exploring interviews and semi-structured interviews addressed to the primary and lower secondary school officials. The interviews will consequently be used also to create a proper questionnaire to be submitted randomly to different primary and lower secondary school officials working within the municipalities selected and, if possible, the questionnaire will also be submitted to a few classes of pupils attending primary and lower secondary schools. Through the questionnaires the so called quantitative data from the four municipalities selected will be produced. However, flexibility will also be included to allow the researcher to capture the local detail and the specific information.

7. Another example might be when a municipality increases the number of loans available for local entrepreneurs to promote the local economic development, which is actually a real case of the municipality of Kavadarci. These increased financial resources available through loans to local entrepreneurs may be interpreted on the basis of quantitative data (or output) and may show that the local government has improved its capacity because more public loans are available for the local entrepreneurs. Although this is one reasonable interpretation of the municipality increased number of loans available for the local economic development, this may not be always true because these loans might be seized by the local elite or clan misusing the local resources with downward effects.
2.5. Data analysis

Conceptual ambiguities are not the only reason for the conflicting arguments that one finds in the decentralization debate. Because decentralization has several dimensions, its appropriate extent and form varies across countries and its implementation takes considerable time, it is a difficult phenomenon both to design and to study.

Thus, in this research, raw data will be coded and will be assigned frequency values. The data gathered through quantitative approach will then be subject to statistical analysis. The data from interviews and discussions will be analysed through the qualitative process. As an overall point, the data will be presented separately according to various employed instruments.

3. A preliminary evaluation of two intervening variables

Here the paper will show some data, though partial, of two other plausible factors (named intervening variables) that are said according to the relevant literature to influence the quality of local government. Therefore they should also be taken into consideration for the investigation of the impact of decentralization on the quality of local government. These two factors or intervening variables are the level of economic development and the strength of the civil society (8).

The indicator for measuring the level of economic development is the GDP per capita, and the strength of civil society will be measured on the base of the number of NGOs (appendixes B and C). According to the modernisation theory (9), the transition of a country from an authoritarian to a democratic regime is explained, although in a very simplistic way, by the increased level of economic development. In the case of Macedonia, there are huge disparities among municipalities in terms of GDP per capita (10) (see appendixes B and C) and this may, in turn, be considered a significant factor when explaining the better performance and higher quality of the wealthier local governments. The same claim goes for the civil society (11), the presence of a strong and vibrant civil society (see Blair 2000) where citizens engage in various voluntary associations being seen as the most fertile ground for the accumulation of social capital which is believed to produce more democratic and efficient governmental institutions. For instance, the presence of active and vibrant voluntary associations in a local community may well help to make local government officials more accountable and responsive towards the local citizens’ needs. However, it should also be said that there are many types of NGOs or voluntary associa-

8. There are also other factors that, on the basis of the relevant literature, deserve to be briefly mentioned and that will be taken into consideration during the research. For instance, the cultural aspects (Tanzi 2001; Dahrendorf 2001) or a fragmented ethnic society may also influence the quality of local government, or the presence of other international organizations with similar and highly financed activities in the field, for example OSCE, USAID programmes. These intervening variables can be controlled by taking into consideration “standardized values” (Morlino 2005) intended here as the same level of GDP, NGOs, ethnically homogeneous municipality and so forth. Another method would be to carry on a comparative study of the municipalities selected with other municipalities in a foreign country in which decentralization has already been implemented.

9. However, Przeworski et al. (1996) argue that it is not development under dictatorship that breeds democracies, but once a country is sufficiently wealthy, with per-capita income of more than $ 6000 a year democracy is certain to survive (see also Lipset 1960).

10. GDP per capita in terms of PPP in USS, which means Purchasing Power Parity in USS.

11. Civil society is defined here as organizational activity between the individual (in the family) and the state. Its democratic role is to advocate for constituents, to act as watchdog over the state (Blair 2000).
tions that are of a religious, political, ethnic, or nationalist nature and base their existence in part on a logic of “distinction”, that is on the idea of establishing exclusion, hostility and distrust towards the members of the competing organizations/networks. These types of NGOs should not be considered as generators of social capital and as they do not contribute to more democracy and efficient institutions (Kumlin and Rothstein 2005). Unfortunately, I do not have here enough information which would allow me to discern among different types of NGOs.

For the purpose of this part of the paper, three municipalities, namely Kavadartsi, Veles and Centar (which will be substituted by the Skopje Region), that, according to the EU, have proved increased capacity in providing public services, will be compared with other two groups of municipalities on the basis of the most similar and the most different criteria of GDP per capita and number of NGOs. The first group of municipalities namely Radovish, Delchevo and Gevgelija seems the most similar in terms of level of GDP per capita and number of NGOs; however, as it is shown in appendix B and C, they recorded an increased number of people reported/convicted for crimes against official duty and a reduced public service capacity in terms of fewer underage recipients of social welfare (12) since 2003. On the other hand, although the second group of municipalities are the most different in terms of level of GDP per capita and number of NGOs per population, they seem to show some improvement in the quality of local government. In other words, these municipalities seem to perform better in terms of reduced number of people reported/convicted for crimes against official duty and managed to increase the public service capacity with more under-aged recipients of social welfare. On the whole, it seems that these two factors or intervening variables do not show a clear pattern or relation with the level of crimes against official duty and increase the public service capacity.

To be noted here is that the raw data presented are only partial and partially informative also because they have not been analyzed statistically. However, they are presented here in order to discuss the strength and weakness of used indicators and, above all, to stir up the general discussion on the research design and techniques proposed to better answer the research question on how and to what extent decentralization in Macedonia has enhanced the quality of local government.

4. Final remarks

This paper has proposed a plausible approach to grasp the effects of the institutional changes which come as a result of the Europeanization process in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Firstly, the paper has attempted to illustrate how decentralization, an aspect of the institutional reform in Macedonia, can be reasonably considered a result of the Europeanization process. The paper shows that the EU is addressing Macedonia towards decentralization both through conditionality (i.e. European Partnership) and financial aid (i.e. Cards programme) and this can be plausibly seen as a domestic institutional adaptation to the new norms and rules arising from the emerging European system of governance.

12. For the purpose of this paragraph, I illustrate the data on the social welfare recipients instead of focusing on the education sector. Underage recipient of social welfare include service for lacking parental care-exhibiting antisocial behavior, mentally handicapped, physically handicapped and others. These services are competencies of the municipalities according to the Law on Territorial Organization of the Local Self-Government in the Republic of Macedonia - Official Gazette n. 55/16.08.2004, article 22. However, this part is merely illustrative of the theoretical complexity and of the procedure that will follow for controlling the so called intervening variables.
Subsequently, the paper has focused on the theoretical debate of decentralization and on how to better grasp empirically its impact on the quality of local government. The EU’s position apparently in favour of decentralization in Macedonia today finds no consensus among scholars who make ambiguous predictions on the possible effects of decentralization. For this reason, the paper argues that the effects of decentralization on the quality of local government may be better grasped empirically by using the mixed method design. Although the mixed method design proposed in this paper seems suitable for pinning down the phenomena under investigation, there are other methodological difficulties envisaged throughout the paper to be overcome, and which may constitute a starting point to stir up the general discussion on the research design and techniques proposed to better understand the effects of the institutional changes in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

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MISCELLANEOUS


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ABSTRACTS

IRIS B. BÁLSAMO

*Migrations and cultural contacts: opportunities for socio-cultural evolution*

The paper proposes the conceptual system by the theory of autopoiesis to observe and to explain the complex phenomena associated to the contact between different and divergent social groups and cultures, and the solutions derived from it to design interventions in the communicative and interactional dynamics of the social environments.

The examples given in the areas of Public Health and Socioeconomic Development concern with the research works carried out by the author in Latin-America, monitored by the Pan-American Health Organization and under the auspices of the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, respectively (Bálsamo, 2000a).

The objective is to make explicit the conditions of observation on the religious, secular, jurisdictional, political, geographical, ethological, ethnic, as well as the conditions of interactions and interventions for social scientists and policymakers. Thus, evolutionary mechanisms of cultural selection, variation and retention are proposed to explain the dynamics of social phenomena as well as the consequences of different policies.

The aim is to discuss how a model of Evolutionary Complex Systems (Bálsamo, 2002) could become useful to deal the European problems in the Mediterranean waterfront.

CHIARA BARISON

*Senegalese Transnationalism within Europe. The case of Italy*

Today the world has a new type of migrant, the “transmigrant” and the Senegalese provide an excellent illustration of this migratory mode.

Senegalese migrants are a sort of mobile community of individuals that stay abroad without a prescribed time, crossing different territories, creating circuits in which information, ideas, capitals, images and persons are passing through.

The aim of this article is to study and analyse Senegalese migration from a transnational point of view, describing the processes created through migrants social networks.

It also gives evidence on how this migratory mode can be an excellent way to transmit knowledge and development.

With the transmigration the Senegalese migrants became actors and promoters of social, cultural and political transformations (both in Italy and in Senegal), by the creation of projects of knowledge exchanges and cooperation for the social development of villages and homelands.

For a possible development of Senegal it could be necessary to activate projects of support in voluntary returns and in the creation of economic circuits between sending and receiving contexts.
ANNALISA LENDARO
Recomposing the puzzle. Europeanization and the Integration of Immigrants. First considerations on the Local Policies of Marseille

The paper will discuss the primary data of a research into public policies aimed at the integration of immigrants, in particular focusing on the insertion into the labour market through vocational training. The central issue is related to the extent of responsibility that different status actors have at a local level and the manner in which active networks of partners function in the territory we have studied: Marseille (France).

The aim is to understand how actors coordinate at a local level with other institutional and informal actors that claim different levels of competence. In a multilevel perspective we integrate the European dimension with our object of analysis, in order to have a supplementary analysis tool to interpret the normative and structural characteristics of the analysed territory and the policy formulation and discourses of actors.

EUGENE MRAD
Lebanon Identity, Conviviality, Dilemmas & Prospects

The paper is divided into seven parts. The first part provides a brief historical background about Lebanon (periods of clashes, periods of peaceful coexistence, the situation before and after the pullout of the Syrian troops from the country, the fragility and deadlock of the current situation and the failure of what is termed “consociational democracy”. Furthermore, part I exposes a brief description of the delicate political makeup of the country.

Some questions are arising nowadays: Will the Lebanese communities achieve friendly relations and peaceful coexistence based on fruitful dialogue and understanding? How to achieve a viable democratic stability in the present fragile Lebanon?

The second part exposes well-established facts about the Lebanese identity. It includes historical and documented facts about the Lebanese Christians identity and their Canaanite - Aramaic origin. This part also addresses the Lebanese Identity at the constitutional level and suggests recommendations to redefine Lebanon identity (Aramaic and Arabic, not only Arabic) according to the well-established historical facts and commensurate with the real identities of its inhabitants.

The third part entitled “the consociational democracy at risk: critical reflections and challenges” explores issues related to the democratic deficit in Lebanon, flaws in the electoral system and unfair elections, issue of corruption, lack of confidence in the State, wrong policies adopted by the Government, irresponsibility and delay in action, problems of the public administration, lack of tolerance, fundamentalism and polarization of the different communities, and challenges of accommodating Hezbollah. A sub-section exposes some remarkable deficiencies in the performance of some international actors vis-à-vis Lebanon, mainly: inaction, political expediency, and oversimplification.

Part four tackles prospects for the future and some possible scenarios: Partitioning, Domination of one community over the other communities, Keeping the status quo, and Federalism.

The fifth part is devoted to federalism and related issues: Can federalism be the solution?, Minimum essential requirements of Federalism, Some Barriers (the issue of power and the issue of community leadership, territorial difficulty to apply
federalism, number of parts of the federal regime, duplication of the infrastructure, the Palestinian problem).
Part VI provides some interesting recommendations related to: Lebanon identity, working on changing the blind ideologies, working on promoting a culture of tolerance, dialogue and understanding, reform of the educational system (including human rights education), state laicism and abolition of political confessionalism, fighting corruption, reforms and priorities, recommendations concerning the civil society, and the necessity to adopt a self-help mentality. The last part exposes some concluding remarks.

ELENA STROKOVA
Social segregation of the urban space and urban policies influence on social segregation in Mediterranean cities

The urban space has been a reflection of social differences since long ago. It comes as no surprise that separation of some social groups exists in the urban space as the city always used to be a place of coexistence of different socio-economic groups and cultures. It is stated in the paper that the study of urban segregation provides instruments for further investigation and solving a set of social problems that have become significant for the modern phase of urban development.

The paper attempts to conceptualize the notion of socio-spatial segregation, develop methodological base for measuring segregation and analyze urban policies influence on it. To develop a concept and an operational definition the overview of researches held on the topic of segregation was made. To analyze the influence of urban policies on the level of socio-spatial segregation several cases of local policies in the Mediterranean cities were analyzed.
GÜLŞAH BİRADERLER
*The role of Turkey in Euro-Mediterranean co-operation: should Turkey stay in the Mediterranean zone or be a member of the EU?*

Today the Mediterranean region has vital importance for global security. This paper analyses the role of Turkey in the Mediterranean region, European policy initiatives toward the Mediterranean and Turkey’s possible effect as being EU member state in the Mediterranean. It argues that Turkey as democratic, secular and modern country with Muslim population is peaceful and profitable for the EU and it could be an important actor in the region for stability, security and development as an EU member state. The paper analyses history of Turkey’s accession in the EU, policies and her effect in the Mediterranean region, the Barcelona Process and moreover.

DARIO CRISTIANI
*Soft Security And Mediterranean Cleavages The Challenges For Eu And The Limits Of Barcelona’s Approach*

This work deals with the approach of the EU toward the Mediterranean as stated by the Barcelona’s declaration and the Euro-Mediterranean partnership of 1995, the first attempt of the EU of approaching to the Mediterranean region in an overall way. However, if the premises and the intentions were ambitious and, for a larger part, appreciable, the policies, the rhetoric and the concrete choices of the EU in the past twelve years seem to have failed their aims. The different chapters of the work deal with an analysis of the political essence of the Mediterranean, rooted in the idea that it represents a cleavage, the evolution of the geopolitical configuration of the basin, the powerful rise of Islamism in its southern part and a critical analysis of the Euro-Med partnership.

DORIAN JANO
*Eu-western Balkans relations: the many Eu approaches*

The paper reveals the European Union (EU) strategies and policies as applied into the Western Balkans (WBs). I follow a chronological-related analysis of the past, present and future approach of EU towards the WB region. In the first part of the paper I give a description as well as a critical analysis of the past EU approaches. Then, in the second part I try to ‘frame’ what the future ‘model’ of EU enlargement approach will be, pointing at the ‘matters’ that mostly will influence this approach. This paper concludes by giving some remarks on how EU (enlargement) approach has to be conceived in the case of the WBs, arguing that enlargement in WBs is a question of when not if.
CODRUȚA MARE
Factoring - A Financing Form For The Smes

The paper presents factoring as a financing form, with its benefits, challenges and motivations. Factoring is one of the most important ways of sustaining the commercial development of the SMEs, as it has a very easy process of decision – making. As it will be shown with the help of a cash-flow analysis, a SME can have important financing problems, which could be overcome with the help of factoring. If the SME sector goes well, that means that the welfare of the nation is growing and thus its people also have a better life in that specific economy. The paper will further present a short view of the factoring market in Europe, with a description of the Romanian and the Italian factoring sector. Factoring concentrates on insuring the necessary sums of money for the clients, allowing them to concentrate on what is most important for their businesses: the economic growth. Factoring companies claim to be the ideal option for the SMEs.

SALVATORE PANTALEO
The European Enlargement Pre-Accession Strategy. Is Fiscal Decentralization reform enhancing the Quality of Local Government in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia?

This paper proposes a plausible approach to grasp the effects of the institutional changes which come as a result of the Europeanization process in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Firstly, the paper illustrates the theoretical linkage between the concept of Europeanization and that of decentralization and it shows that the European Union supports decentralization in Macedonia because it will enhance its governance and above all its democracy. Secondly, after reviewing the literature in the field the paper will present the conflicting theories on the effects of decentralization. Consequently, it appears to be theoretically motivating though empirically difficult to investigate the impact of decentralization on the quality of local government and this is what this paper, on the basis of ongoing research, will mostly focus on. Finally, the paper will argue that the mixed method design is among the most suitable approaches to better grasp the changes in Macedonia.