

University of Twente  
School of Management & Governance

# Global (In) Security

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The European Neighbourhood Policy

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The European Union as Conflict Manager



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## **Abstract**

This Bachelor Thesis deals with the research area of global (in)security, and within this area with the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as an instrument of EU Foreign Policy to manage conflicts in its neighbourhood. It is assumed that for strengthening global security, individual conflict laden countries need to be stabilized. The EU tries to achieve this with the help of its ENP. However, it is found out that in some ENP countries EU influence is stronger than in others. Hence, the research question addressed in this thesis is: Why is the European Union influence stronger in the conflict management of some members of the European Neighbourhood Policy than in the conflict management of others? Conflict management as a superordinate concept for conflict prevention and resolution, requiring to stabilize the country economically, socially and politically. With the help of the external incentive model established by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier in 2004 and the complex interdependence theory of Keohane and Nye from 1977, it is hypothesized that in ENP countries where the cooperation with the EU implies high benefits, EU influence tends to be strong whereas in ENP countries where cooperation with the EU implies low benefits, EU influence tends to be weak. A comparative analysis of the cases Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus confirms the hypothesis tentatively. Important factors determining whether the countries attach high value to the benefits of EU cooperation and hence determining the strength of EU influence in the respective country, are the economic power vis-à-vis the EU, i.e. the economic dependency on the EU, dissatisfaction among the citizens, and the presence of democratic values. Moreover, Russian influence crystallized itself as possible determinant factor.

Keywords: ENP, EU influence, Russian influence, security, conflict management

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## Part One: Introduction

### 1.1 The Research Area: Global (In) Security

Security: “1 the activities involved in protecting a country, building or person against attack, danger, etc. [...] 3 protection against something bad that might happen in the future [...] 4 the state of feeling happy and safe from danger or worry”

Global: “1 covering or affecting the whole world [...] 2 considering or including all parts of something”

(Hornby, 2000)

2008: an armed conflict is going on between Georgia and Russia, an armed conflict between Israel and Palestine, bombs, missiles, rockets – a lot of people are dying next to people suffering extreme losses and from extreme humanitarian crises caused by the situation. These are just two examples of conflicts going on in the world as it is today. Global security is threatened everywhere; international terrorism and armed conflicts within and between states are cruel realities. International humanitarian law helps to bring at least some sort of rules into these armed conflicts and to reduce the casualties to a minimum. However, not only armed conflicts constitute threats to global security, also hunger and poverty can be subsumed as global security threat, next to diseases and climate change and much more. Often these threats are intertwined so that one causes the other and vice versa. The concept ‘global’ was becoming ever more prominent during the last decades, since threats like those mentioned above no longer stop at borders. The rise of international terrorism, not least the attacks on the world trade centre in 2001, shows how vulnerable every country is to become the object of attack. However, also civil war within one country can have consequences for other countries. The world’s economy today is much interwoven and interdependence between the countries is reality. A good example is the interdependencies or better to say the dependency on oil and gas coming from countries like Russia or the Middle-East. In 2008, Ukraine experienced a gas crisis due to the conflict with Russia which disrupted the transport of gas and oil to Western Europe. Severe consequences for many countries could have come up due to conflict between two countries. The opening of borders, the improved contacts between the nations and the consequential increased solidarity and connections between the nations make it necessary to become involved and to solve conflicts in other countries, especially those in the near neighbourhood since the chances for negative spillovers are even higher.

To put it in a nutshell, global security or global insecurity respectively, is a very important topic today which needs closer attention to prevent crises from coming up and to uphold and create a peaceful environment. As mentioned before, international humanitarian law was created to bring at least some sort of rules in armed conflicts and to reduce casualties. It sees war as given social reality. However, first of all, not only armed conflicts or wars are necessary to deal with and to resolve. Conflicts of very different nature are likewise at stake in the world today, including opposing ideas and disagreements, conflicts of interests etc. Human rights breaches can be seen as in conflict to international standards and with, for example, EU ideals. Ensuring security refers to the overall situation in the countries meaning that for guaranteeing a secure EU area or global security respectively, the stability of a

country in all policy areas is essential next to good relations with the neighbours; it is part of preventing violent conflicts to arise.

Since global security is ever more threatened more research must be done in this area. It is a very broad area, including many topics. Many actors are involved, many policies, many kinds of conflicts. One actor thereof is the European Union, following a foreign policy towards its neighbours called ‘the European Neighbourhood Policy’.

### 1.2 The Research Topic: The ENP - the EU as Conflict Manager

Conflict: “1 a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument [...] 2 a violent situation or period of fighting between two countries [...] 3 a situation in which there are opposing ideas, opinions, feelings or wishes; a situation in which it is difficult to choose”

Management: “1 the act of running and controlling a business or similar organization [...] 2 the people who run and control a business or similar organization [...] 3 the act or skill of dealing with people or situations in a successful way”

(Hornby, 2000)

As said before, conflicts or crises in neighbour countries are even more vulnerable to create spillovers to ‘innocent’ countries. The European Security Strategy points out, “[n]o single country is able to tackle today’s complex problems on its own“; during the last decades the EU’s role on the international stage and its role as a conflict manager respectively, is becoming ever more prominent, its foreign policy more extensive and substantial. With the Lisbon Treaty, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU was strengthened in that the EU can now represent itself with one voice via the post of the High representative – the EU now has a single legal personality: Henry Kissinger’s question on what phone number the EU has is now resolved. The post of the High Representative of the CFSP was created by the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, but its role was rather limited and its responsibilities shared with a Commissioner for external affairs. Now, after Lisbon, the old High Representative post merged with the post of the Commissioner for external affairs and is backed by a European external action service. Thus, the external representation via the reformed post of the High Representative of the CFSP, currently held by Catherine Ashton, is strengthened; third states now know whom to address. One part of this foreign policy constitutes the European Neighbourhood Policy, established in 2004. The ENP is an important foreign policy tool of the EU because it tries to hold close and peaceful contacts to its neighbours by offering those countries a deeper relationship with the EU in terms of political and economic aspects. Security is an important point in these relationships. The enlargements during the last decade changed the borders of the EU – its neighbours changed and conflict-laden regions came closer. Recent conflicts like the conflict of 2008 in Georgia or the last Gaza conflict in Israel, the oil and gas conflicts between Ukraine and Russia, human rights conflicts, conflicts of interests etc. mentioned above showed that the EU is vulnerable of spillovers from these conflicts. Not only is it important for EU authorities to ensure security in its neighbourhood in order to ensure a secure EU-area but also to demonstrate the world its power or at least its existence as a player on the world stage and not least to contribute to global security. The

USA – a well-known and self-named, respectively, conflict manager – is very strong on the world stage. Russia, as further powerful actor on the European continent is especially relevant in this context since many ENP countries are highly involved with this state.

However, the EU's role is limited in that its success depends on various factors like the context the countries find themselves in and the state's willingness to cooperate with external actors like the EU. The ENP provides important incentives for its participants to cooperate and to adopt EU values and bring about change. It develops with each country individually Action Plans and monitors the progress each country makes. Hence, the ENP is implemented on a bilateral basis between the EU and the respective country, enabling the country to negotiate benefits. On the one hand, it should draw the neighbour country closer to the EU, to EU values, to EU standards etc. So, some kind of regional integration is involved without the prospect of full integration into the EU which means EU membership is not an option for ENP participants. Obvious differences in EU's influence like for example demonstrated by the fact that while the ENP with Belarus is on hold due to amongst other things severe human rights breaches – not even an Action Plan could be negotiated with Belarus – compared to a good progress of an actual Action Plan in Ukraine (EU, 2003).

### 1.3 The Research Question

The Bachelor Thesis deals with these differentiations within the research area of 'Global (In) security'. More specifically, the thesis deals with the ENP and the EU's competence as a conflict manager within it. As stated before, the EU's influence is not the same in every situation it is involved as a conflict manager within the framework of the ENP. It needs to be found out what factors determine the success of the policy to be able to further improve this relatively new instrument. Hence, this study focuses on the following general research question:

*Why is the European Union influence stronger in the conflict management of some members of the European Neighbourhood Policy than in the conflict management of others?*

The purpose of this study is to find out what the reasons are for the difference in EU influence in ENP countries in order to make recommendation on what factors might improve the effectiveness of the ENP. It is to say that conflict management has many dimensions, including conflict prevention and conflict resolution. Hence, for the purpose of this study it is assumed that the whole policy range of the ENP constitutes a part of conflict management because it aims at stabilizing the country overall which reduces the threats to security in the long run. In addition to this, the concept of 'conflict' also implies many dimensions as laid down above. Not only fighting, but also disagreement and opposing opinions are part of the concept. So how does the EU deal with these kinds of conflicts? How can it be successful in bringing conflict laden ENP participants to adopt EU rules, reform its country and integrate to the EU? Why are there different degrees of EU influence among those countries?

On the basis of the complex interdependence theory by Keohane and Nye and the external incentive model by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004), it is proposed that the higher the benefits, the more likely the EU influence is strong. With the help of a comparative case study of Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine, this relationship is analysed. This is done by finding indicators in these countries which signal that cooperating with the EU would imply high benefits for the respective country. The findings are then compared to the degree of EU influence in the country.

The analysis concludes by confirming the hypothesis with economic power and dissatisfaction among the citizens as the most important determinants of the value the respective countries attach to EU cooperation or to the incentives the EU provides respectively.

### **1.4 Structure of the Study**

In order to find an answer to the research question, the next part of the thesis starts with the development of the hypothesis with the help of existing theories from academic literature. It includes a literature review and the description of the theoretical framework. The main theories applied are the complex interdependence theory by Keohane and Nye (1977) and the external incentive model by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004). At the end a hypothesis is formulated. In part three, the analytical framework is laid down, including the methodology with the description of the research design – which is a comparative case study – the selection of the cases and the operationalisation of the variables. Then, in part four, the analysis starts by dealing with each case individually and juxtaposing the empirical findings to the hypothesis. At the end of this part, a sub-conclusion provides the rejection or confirmation of the hypothesis on the basis of the case study and compares the findings. Part five provides the conclusion of the study, including a clear answer to the research question, further remarks and some recommendations on how the ENP can be made more effective in the future.

## **Part Two: Theoretical Framework**

This part reviews the academic literature on the topic and on the research question, laying down what is already known about it or how other authors approached it in order to be able to find an answer. At the end the hypothesis to be studied comes up.

### **2.1 Literature Review**

The ENP is a relatively new foreign policy instrument of the EU, being established in 2004. Hence, the literature is mainly very recent and often dealing with the effectiveness of the ENP. Some literature about the security aspect of the ENP, about EU conditionality and conflict management are also included to provide a full picture of what is already known about the research area. “Security concerns” (Sasse, 2008: 295) are important reasons for the establishment of the ENP. As outlined by Sasse (2008), the member states and the EU feared political instability on the borders of the EU due to the enlargement. Hence, since further enlargement is not an option, there needed to be an alternative to deal with neighbouring countries. Like Lynch (2005) outlined, “the EU cannot afford to ignore its neighbours” (p.34). He points to five security challenges the EU is faced with within the framework of the ENP: Interdependence, complexity, openness/closure, recalcitrant neighbours and lastly, action and will (Lynch, 2005: 34f). Interdependence refers to the security interdependence between the EU and its neighbours, which implies that the EU cannot secure the EU area by ignoring the conflict laden neighbours. Complexity refers to the fact that security challenges are wide-ranging, including organized crime, international terrorism but also corruption and sustainable development. According to Lynch (2005) this requires the EU to help stabilizing the neighbour country. Moreover, openness/closure refers to balancing of the engagement with the neighbours and a closure of EU borders. The challenge of recalcitrant neighbours implies the situation in which not every neighbour country wants the ties with the EU next to the situation in which other powerful countries like Russia have diverging interests in the respective country. Lastly, the challenge named ‘action and will’ refers to a “policy limbo between action and non-action” (Lynch, 2005: 35) whereby EU member states do not want to take concerted action although EU declarations about the situation in the respective country

are published; thereby, EU credibility is undermined. The enlargement process did not possess such uncertainties since clear incentives were presented to the candidate countries with the incentive of EU membership as the most effective incentive for complying with EU conditions (Helly 2007, Smith 2005, Sasse 2008 etc.). Sasse (2008) calls the ENP an “alternative to EU membership” (p.296) and the ENP processes as “a form of ‘conditionality-lite’ for non-candidate countries” (ibid). Therefore, the scope of effectiveness is limited.

Furthermore, Helly (2007) claims that the ENP is a “demand-driven process” (p. 104), including different kinds of policies which shall address heterogeneous contexts. He outlines the problematic aspect that within the framework of the ENP, the EU deals with “unsolved conflicts that may resurge at any time” (Helly, 2007: 106). Another aspect which reduces the success of the ENP to resolve conflict is that it depends on the commitment of the partner governments which might be very low due to lack of incentives and “political back-up” (Helly, 2007: 108). In addition, the presence of external players having more power in the respective country hampers the EU influence. This power asymmetry can be seen as one factor which might explain the different degrees of influence the EU has in the countries. Likewise, Smith (2005) argues that there are problems with the ENP implementation since incentives are too low or too vague respectively.

Furthermore, the ENP processes inhibit ambiguities to its participants as regards the possibilities of EU membership. According to Smith, some ENP countries get the (wrong) feeling that EU membership is a possible option in the future. In this respect, the creation of ‘outsiders’ implies problems since some might feel excluded from the rest which might worsen EU relations to these countries. Sasse (2008) goes further by writing about the “procedural entrapment” (p.296) paved by the ENP process whereby no substantive reasons can constitute arguments for denying EU membership once the criteria are met by ENP participants with “membership aspirations” (ibid). Ukraine is an example which continuously states its intention to join the EU. As already mentioned above, the prospect of EU membership is the most effective incentive for ENP success according to Smith (2005) and Helly (2007) and thereby for EU influence in the country. In addition, Smith (2005) criticizes the role of other organizations like the Council of Europe or OSCE or NATO of which members of the ENP might be simultaneously member but she claims that the ENP resolved the failure of multilateralism by focusing on bilateral relations (Smith, 2005, p. 762). However, she also states that the individual problems within the ENP members limit the success of the policy, implicating differentiations between the member countries according to their respective contexts they find themselves in.

Furthermore, relations to countries outside the EU are often reduced to economic relations and what Helly (2007) criticises in this respect is the use of the “old economic instruments of cooperation and technical assistance” (p. 106) to address conflicts. The ENP, according to Tocci (2007) aims at strengthening EU’s ability to contribute to the solution of regional conflicts. Instruments for the prevention and solution of conflicts constitute values like human rights, the rule of law and democracy (Tocci, 2007: 7). Conflict management and the value system are not mutually exclusive and hence it is important to promote such values in neighbour countries and ensure the countries’ political stability in order to prevent and solve conflicts. Moreover, likewise important for the prevention and solution of conflicts are “a vibrant civil society, strong institutions and sound socio-economic management” (ibid). It is an overall change in the value system of the respective country and a change of paradigm and viewpoints by the ENP participant which induce political change and solve conflicts or prevent conflicts from occurring in the first place. The EU can support local groups with similar interests and enable them to bring change in their countries. “Altering the domestic opportunity structure within and between conflict parties” (Tocci, 2007: 14) implies legitimizing certain positions held by some groups with local support of EU positions being a



determinant of strong EU influence in this country. Conditionality, hence, can focus on strengthening supporting groups and thereby increasing the costs of the respective government to reject change.

In addition, social learning processes are involved in conflict management or ENP processes respectively. Tocci (2007) claims that it is possible to achieve a “transformation of perceived interests” on the side of the government as a result of which, the government adapts to EU norms and standards. Furthermore, Tocci (2007) identifies the “degree of popular dissatisfaction with the status quo” (p. 16) as a determinant for social learning whereby domestic change being more likely with high dissatisfaction. Another point is that the conditionality and the social learning are not mutually exclusive in strengthening EU influence. By contrast, social learning might alter the cost-benefit analysis of the government involved in conditionality and vice versa; social, economic and political contacts involved in the conditionality approach might, in the long run, trigger the “more deep-rooted change” involved in social learning. In line with this, Farrell (2009) argues that a condition that it is likely to promote learning constitutes the presence of “co-ordinated interactions over time” (p. 1168) and moreover, the sharing of “normative and causal beliefs”. A logical corollary is that EU influence in conflict management is strongest were the government has already adopted EU norms like for example democratic and religious values.

Concluding the literature review the more general theory of the complex interdependency theory of Nye and Keohane (1977) states that nations cooperate because they depend on each other. In addition, Schimmelfennig’s and Sedelmeier’s (2004) external incentives model provides a useful way of looking on why states cooperate. He states that countries cooperate when they receive something in exchange, an incentive. So variations in EU influence depend on the kind of incentive, on the benefit the ENP participant receives. These two theories provide the basis for formulating a hypothesis to the research question. Hence, in order to provide a more detailed picture of them, the next section outlines the two theories in more detail.

### **2.2 The Theories: The External Incentive Model and the Complex Interdependence Theory**

The theory of the ‘external incentive model’ developed by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004) in order to explain the EU conditionality applied to the enlargement process is applied to the research question. The theory designed to describe the enlargement process or the integration of the candidate countries respectively is applied because the ENP very much resembles the enlargement process, with the exception that the prospect of EU membership cannot constitute an incentive for cooperation like it is with the enlargement process. Moreover, the ENP proceeds on a bilateral basis between the EU and the respective participant country. Next to this, a theory of international relations, that is the complex interdependence theory developed by Keohane and Nye in 1977, is applied on obvious grounds: international relation between the EU and an external country.

The next sub-sections outline the most important points – being relevant for the purposes of this study – of the theories which are then applied to the research question.

#### **2.2.1 Complex Interdependence: the Theory of International Relations**

Complex interdependence or interdependency theory respectively, as developed by Keohane and Nye in 1977 is a theory of international relation. The most important points can be laid down shortly. It claims that states cooperate because they depend on each other. The international system is becoming “increasingly multi-layered and interconnected” (Nugent,

2006. 568) and, therefore, states can fulfil certain tasks not on their own and need to cooperate with other states. As Nugent (2006) also points out, transnational forces inexorably force nation states to work together, especially economic interdependence can be seen as driving force for cooperation. Some tasks can simply not be fulfilled by a single nation and the asymmetric distribution of knowledge, resources etc. increases this trend. Applying this to the ENP means that ENP participant countries cooperate with the EU and vice versa because they have no other choice. To some extent, they are interconnected and transnational forces require them to cooperate. However, ENP countries are mainly conflict laden, poor countries. So to what extent is there interdependence between these countries and the EU? This brings us back to the concept of global security. As mentioned in the introduction, processes in one country, like conflicts, have consequences for other countries too. So it is assumed, in accordance with the complex interdependence theory that the EU aims at security which is without the cooperation of its neighbours impossible to achieve. The ENP countries, on the other hand, have more obvious reasons for being dependent upon the EU; the economic aspect probably in the forefront. But what does this theory tell us about the differences in EU influence across ENP countries? It is assumed that some countries are more dependent upon EU cooperation than others, which increases the EU influence in this respective country compared to weaker EU influence in countries not feeling the dependency upon the EU.

### **2.2.2 External Incentive Model: the Theory of the Enlargement Process**

The external incentive model was developed by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier, 2004) to explain the rule transfer to candidate countries during the enlargement processes of the EU. The model follows a simple logic: rewards on the condition that the country applies EU rules. Hence, the EU provides incentives to the candidate countries to restructure its country so as to bring the laws and policies in conformity to EU standards. Good progress is being felt by the respective country by the granting of the promised rewards. Another point is that the government ultimately takes the decision if it wants to cooperate or not. Therefore, the EU and the respective government are involved in a “bargaining process” (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier, 2004: 671) with the relative bargaining power as determinant of the outcome; both are “strategic utility-maximizers” (ibid). In addition, through these processes and with individual incentives, the EU empowers domestic actors to apply EU rules and thereby putting more pressure on the government. Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004) found out that rule transfer is most effective when the conditions are credible and when domestic costs are lower than the costs for adopting the rule. As already laid down, the ENP follows a similar logic and therefore one can assume that if the incentives, or the benefits respectively, are high enough, compared to the costs of adoption, ENP participants will adopt EU rules. Following this logic, the inherent differences in EU influence among the ENP countries come about because benefits are lower for one country than for another.

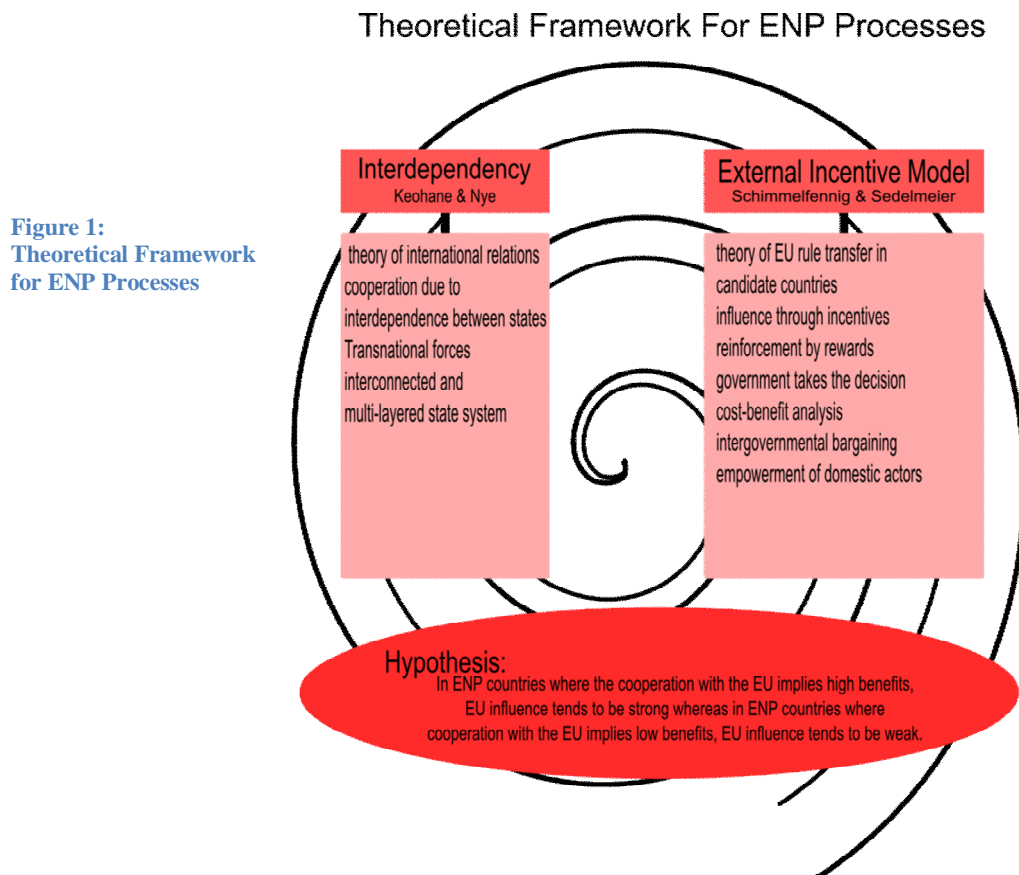
### **2.3 Bringing the Theories Together: the Hypothesis**

After having laid down the two basic theories individually, this section brings them together to develop a hypothesis with regard to the research question. Applying the complex interdependence theory, EU influence is weaker in some countries because the dependency on the EU is less prominent there which reduces the necessity to grant the EU influence in its internal affairs. In addition and connected to the last point is the cost-benefit analysis applied by the external incentive model. If benefits are higher for the state than the costs of implementing EU rules, EU influence is strong.

To put it in a nutshell, the cost-benefit analysis, including the interdependency factor determines the degree of EU influence in the country.

This juxtaposition of the theories leads to a basic hypothesis for an answer to the research question which is:

**In ENP countries where the cooperation with the EU implies high benefits, EU influence tends to be strong whereas in ENP countries where cooperation with the EU implies low benefits, EU influence tends to be weak.**



### Part three: Analytical Framework

This part deals with the framework in which the study is conducted. It describes how the hypothesis is empirically tested. Firstly, the research design is described and justified, followed by the sampling procedure of the cases and the operationalisation of the relevant variables.

#### 3.1 Methodology

##### 3.1.1 Research Design

The hypothesis includes the independent variables 'size of benefits' and 'existence of integration' and the dependent variable 'EU influence'. Since it is a complex phenomenon to be studied it is tested by a comparative case study. The units of analysis in this study are ENP

participants; more specifically the governments of the three case countries selected are observed in addition to its citizens. The main sources of information are the ENP Action Plans and Progress Reports, available on the website of the European Commission in addition to newspaper articles, government websites and statistical websites. Hence, data was produced by analysing documents and filtering necessary information.

The data is mainly of qualitative nature which enables an analysis in detail and in context, necessitating a lot of desk research, next to some quantitative economic data about the countries, to underpin statements. Moreover, it is historic data because the Action Plans and Progress Reports give information about the whole time span since the inception of the ENP. This study investigates differences which can be best done by a comparative study of a small number of cases. This is because studying cases connects the theoretical framework to real life contexts while the comparative method educates the differences between the cases, “highlighting how different they are” (Collier, 1993, p. 108). Moreover, since within the ENP there are comparable and at the same time relevant cases available, one cannot just focus on one case, this would neglect important information, decreasing the reliability and validity of the results (Gerring, 2001). To further increase the reliability of the findings the case selection follows a purposive sampling method explained in the following sub-section, so that results can be traced back easily and reproduced if the study is conducted again. Purposive sampling enables a case selection which fits best into the purpose of the study and can control for external factors possible to be reason for the differences in EU influence in the countries.

### 3.1.2 Case Selection

For the case selection it is to say that there are a rather limited amount of case countries and conflicts to choose from because the ENP is a relatively new policy instrument and this thesis deals exclusively with the conflict management within the framework of the ENP; the Action Plans thereof respectively. Moreover, the amount of cases chosen shall also contribute to a high reliability and validity of the results and exclude chance. As already mentioned, the case selection follows a purposive sampling method and uses control variables to choose the countries. These control variables are provided by previous studies outlined in the literature review section of this thesis. The aim is to make the cases as similar as possible and to make sure that cases vary in the characteristic to be explained: the degree of EU influence. In this way, the countries can be compared on its independent variable – the size of benefits – to find factors which explain the differences in EU influence.

As laid down in the literature review, bilateral negotiations between the EU as a whole and the respective country are more likely to give the EU a strong influence than multilateral negotiations. Because the ENP made the cooperation between the respective countries and the EU more bilateral by setting up bilateral ENP Action Plans, the case selection also account for this by taking bilateral negotiations for granted which excludes this factor from being reason for differences in EU influence. Hence, conflict management processes in ENP member countries is the population I want to draw conclusions about. Another control variable is the existence of powerful third actors, claimed by Helly (2007) as reason why EU influence is weak in a country. This narrows the choice to ENP countries in which powerful third actors are involved. Another interesting thought in this respect is: Does the EU have a chance to assert itself and influence the outcome in such countries with powerful third actors being involved? With the follow-up question of why EU influence varies in these countries with my basic hypothesis conveying ‘the size of the benefits’ as explanation for EU influence.

Another point for approaching the appropriate cases to be studied is to make the third actor the same for each case. That is because variations in the third actors involved might also change EU influence in the country. Hence, the case selection is narrowed down to countries in which

Russia is involved as the powerful third actor. Russia because in Europe or among the ENP participants are a lot of countries in which Russia is involved and the aim of this thesis is to produce relevant results in order to be able to make recommendations to improve ENP processes and thereby increase EU influence. Last point in the case selection is the variation: the degree of EU influence.

To sum up, case countries must be ENP participants in which the powerful third actor is Russia and which vary in their degree of EU influence. On the basis of this, Georgia, Belarus and Ukraine constitute the case countries. As found out, EU influence in Georgia is medium, in Ukraine EU influence is relatively high and in Belarus not even an Action Plan could have been set-up. These differences are outlined in more detail in Part four below. Another point common to these three countries and supporting the selection of them is the fact that they are part of the Eastern Partnership, excluding a further factor as reason for differences in EU influence.

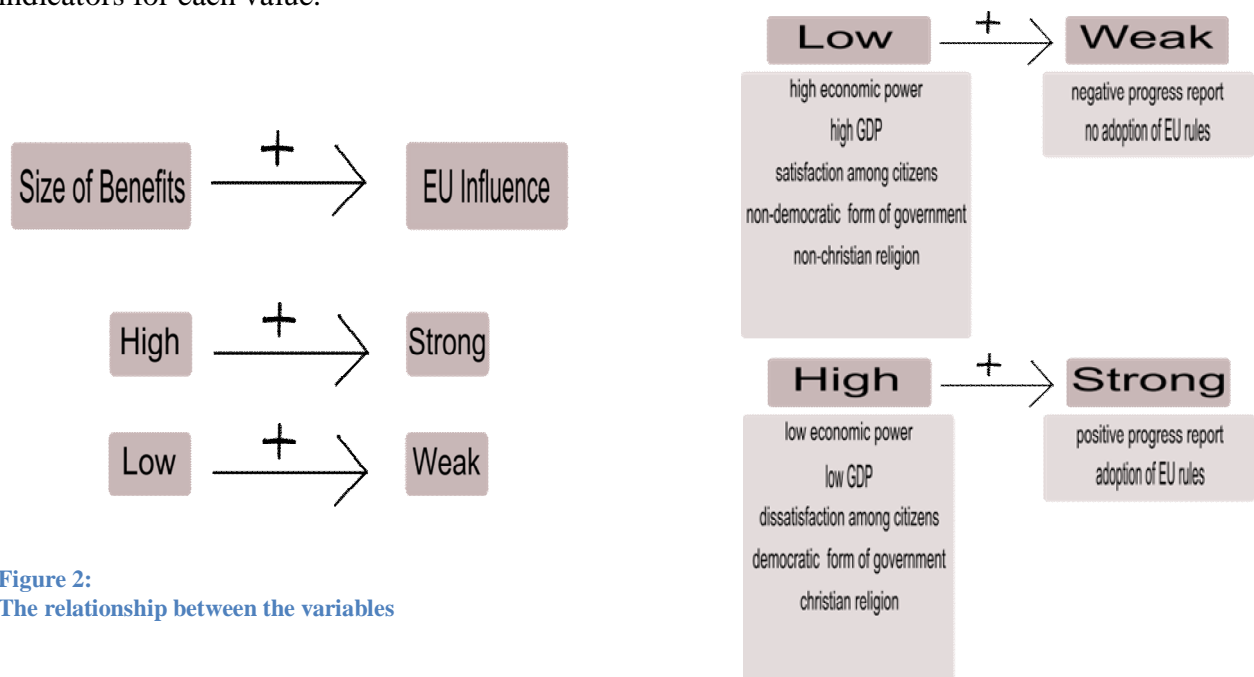
### 3.1.3 Operationalisation

Before ending up with the actual analysis, this part of the thesis provides the operationalisation of the variables involved in the hypothesis in order to tell the reader what is studied exactly and especially how it is studied and analyzed. This is done by first providing a definition of each variable as it is used in this context and by outlining indicators, hinting at the existence of the values of the variables. To recall the hypothesis reads as follows:

**In ENP countries where the cooperation with the EU implies high benefits, EU influence tends to be strong whereas in ENP countries where cooperation with the EU implies low benefits, EU influence tends to be weak.**

As already mentioned above, the independent variable, the variable which constitutes the explanation for the phenomenon, is the ‘size of benefits’ with the values ‘high’ and ‘low’. The dependent variable, the one which is explained by the independent variable, is ‘EU influence’ with the values ‘strong’ and ‘weak’. Another independent variable added to this construct is the ‘existence of integration’ with the values ‘much’ and ‘little’.

The graph (Figure 2) below shows the relationships between the variables and lists the indicators for each value.



**Figure 2:**  
The relationship between the variables

The size of the benefits means – in the context of and as it is used in this study – the value the respective country attaches to the things it receives in exchange for implementing the action plan. The incentives can be of different nature like social, economic, political or the like and it is different for each country whether it attaches high value or low value to it compared to the loss it will suffer from implementing the Action Plan. Since it is of a subjective nature, each country is studied individually in order to find out what the country realizes as high benefit for it and what as low benefit. On the basis of the literature review in section 2.1 and research into the topic, some indicators are identified for hinting at the attachment of high or low value to the individual incentives provided by the EU. Indicators hinting at the fact that cooperating with the EU would bring about high benefits are: low economic power, low GDP, dissatisfaction among citizens, Christian religion, and democratic form of government. Economic and political data were collected from government and statistic websites. Newspaper articles, public opinion polls etc. provided information about the satisfaction among citizens. Data about the religion of the respective country was found on government websites and other books and information pools. Low benefits are indicated by the contrary: high economic power, high GDP, satisfaction among citizens, non-Christian religion and non-democratic form of government.

It is assumed here that the more of the above indicators were found, the higher the benefits for the respective country to cooperate and the stronger is the EU influence accordingly. Hence, finding these indicators in one country while at the same time the EU influence is low would have rejected the hypothesis.

EU influence means the extent to which the EU is effective in the conflict management in the respective countries; the extent to which the EU can control and guide the country, respectively, and achieve political change in the country. First and foremost have the individual country Progress Reports delivered the necessary information for that, which are available at the Commission website. Hence, an analysis of the progress reports was the method how to measure EU influence. A positive Progress Report, meaning having achieved change in the ENP country and the adoption of EU rules, means high EU influence, whereas a negative Progress Report means low EU influence.

### **Part Four: Analysis**

This part of the thesis describes the analysis of the relationship between the variables and the examination of the hypothesis respectively by a comparative case study. The cases studied and compared are Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus as outlined in the last part. For Georgia and Ukraine, the most important points of the Action Plan are outlined followed by the outlining and evaluation of the Progress Report with regard to EU influence. Then, data collected about the independent variable – the size of the benefits – is laid down. To recall, the indicators found which make it more likely that the country sees high benefits in the cooperation with the EU are low economic power, low GDP, dissatisfaction among citizens, Christian religion and democratic form of government. In line with the findings of part two the presence of an indicator increases the likelihood that the respective government sees the incentives provided by the EU in exchange for cooperation as highly beneficial. As a result, the government is more likely to grant EU influence and to reform its country in accordance with the Action Plan of the ENP.

For Belarus, there is neither an Action Plan available, nor a Progress Report, so only some general statements about the EU influence in this country and the analysis of the size of benefits is outlined. At the end of each country-section the data is juxtaposed to the hypothesis. Part four ends with a sub-conclusion.

### 4.1 Georgia

#### 4.1.1 The Action Plan

In 2006, the EU and Georgia developed, in bilateral meetings, an Action Plan on how to proceed. Seven priority areas are identified of which the first priority area includes “[to strengthen] rule of law [, strengthen] democratic institutions and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” (Action Plan, p.4). The second priority area implies to “improve the business and investment climate [...] and continue the fight against corruption” (ibid, p. 5). Priority area three includes the furthering of economic development, improving the efforts to reduce poverty and enhancing social cohesion. Moreover, economic legislation and administrative practices shall converge. Priority area four refers to the enhancement of the cooperation in the field of justice, freedom and security. This area includes border management and migration management. Priority area five includes the strengthening of regional cooperation. Priority area six implies the promotion of a peaceful resolution of internal conflicts. Lastly, priority area seven refers to the cooperation on Foreign and Security Policy.

#### 4.1.2 The Progress Report 2009: EU Influence in Georgia

The Commission states that “Georgia made progress in the implementation of the ENP Action Plan priorities throughout 2009” (p.2).

Some positive developments outlined in the progress report 2009 are:

- Georgia reformed its election code after the elections in 2008 was found to have irregularities.
- Georgia started to draft a new Constitution which is probably due to autumn 2010. The new constitution also establishes the lifetime appointment of judges which should ensure independence of the judiciary
- Progress in reforming the criminal justice system by adopting the new Criminal Procedure Code which introduces for example jury trials
- Judges at district and appeal courts are more and more appointed under a new procedure which require them to fulfil an 18month training
- The new Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance ensures access to justice by providing legal aid and by the establishment of a bilingual website on which citizen can make online consultations
- Significant progress in the fight against corruption
- Georgia is party to the main international and regional human rights instruments, as well as to most of the optional protocols
- Progress in enhancing women’s rights
- Juvenile justice was reformed by giving juveniles in detention centres more possibilities to be educated and rehabilitated
- Alignment to most of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy declarations
- Informing internally displaced persons about their possibilities
- Progress made in fighting against trafficking in human beings
- The higher education centre was further reformed so as to bring it closer to European standards
- Georgia confirms that it helps to secure energy efficiency in Europe by recognizing its role as a transit country

- Trade facilitation
- Active participation in the Eastern Partnership

Hence, positive progress is indeed present in Georgia which means that the EU can exert some influence in this country. However, EU influence is not that strong when considering the negative points in important policy areas listed in the Progress Report. The main areas of concern are:

- Migration policy
- Fiscal decentralization not fulfilled
- Detention conditions
- Media pluralism/media freedom not reached, it is biased and polarized
- Integration of minorities and their rights
- Sanitary and phytosanitary issues, e.g. Food safety
- Polarization of political life
- Democracy development

As concerns food safety, the Commission states that Georgia needs to “progress considerably in the sector” (p. 12) for being able to prepare a deep and comprehensive free trade area. Moreover, poverty reduction is also identified as area of concern with about 27% (p. 10) of the population being affected. Likewise, employment and social policies need to be addressed. Positive to judge is Georgia’s determination to conform to EU recommendations in order to start DCFTA negotiations.

The conclusion to be drawn about the Progress Report is that EU influence in the country is present but limited as can be seen by the fact that considerable steps still need to be taken by Georgia.

### 4.1.3 The Size of Benefits

Georgia’s economy is very disrupted from the Russia-Georgia war and also affected by the world economic crisis. The EU is the most important trading partner of Georgia with 20, 9 % of exports going into the EU and 29, 9 % of imports coming from the EU (2009). In 2009 Georgia’s GDP was 10, 75 Billion US\$ with an annual change in economic growth of -3, 9%. The GDP per capita amounts to 2.451,2 US\$ in 2009 which is quite low; for example Germany has 40.874,635 US\$ (IMF, 2009)

	2007	2008	2009
GDP (Mrd. US\$)	10,18	12,80	10,75
GDP per capita (US\$)	2.316,3	2.921,0	2.451,2
Economic Growth (%)	12,3	2,3	-3,9
Unemployment rate	13,3	16,5	
Long-term unemployment rate	8,6	10,8	
Inflation rate	11,0	5,5	3,0
<b>Trade (Mio. US\$)</b>			
Exports	1.232,4	1.496,1	1.135,0
Imports	5.214,9	6.304,6	4.378,3
Balance	-3.982,5	-4.808,5	-3.243,3

Figure 3: Economic data Georgia

(Source: gtai May 2010, Eurostat 2010)



The overall trading balance in Georgia is loss-making which is due to Georgia's lack of valuable resources to be exported. Hence, Georgia is very dependent on imports from other countries, especially from the EU since, as already stated, the EU is the most important trading partner of Georgia. So, although Georgia's economy stabilized during the last years, (gtai 2007) reflected by the fact that it was named the best reformer in 2007 by the world bank, the economic power of Georgia is still low as well as its GDP. Moreover, it must be recognised that much of the economic growth was due to EU's support. Only the sectors Agriculture and Industry lack behind due to the loss of Russia's market in 2006 (gtai 2007). Moreover, the traffic infrastructure in Georgia is shabby and needs reconstruction. Cooperation with the EU would imply benefits for Georgia since a lot of assistance is provided by the EU.

In addition, Georgia has been Christian orthodox for many centuries (Auswärtiges Amt 2010) and hence affected by Christian values like the EU countries. This makes it more likely that the EU can exert influence in this country because shared values reduce the costs of implementation.

Furthermore, citizens of Georgia are more and more aware of the benefits of a democratic form of government and get more and more self-confident to demand the government to conform to human rights, to grant media freedom and true democracy to rule. This is exemplified by various demonstrations during the last years like that of April and May 2009 in which many thousands protested in the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi; the call for EU values to rule in Georgia is obvious. The protesters demanded the President, Mikheil Saakashvili, to leave his office on the basis that they feel he is too authoritarian, he censors the media and they accused him of being guilty for losing the war against Russia in 2008. However, many citizens do also think a more pragmatic approach to Russia is necessary because they feel they are economically dependent on it. (Welt Online & Wall Street Journal, 2009) This is contradicted by the fact that the EU is the most important trading partner. Another point is the high unemployment rate as can be seen in figure four, which make it very likely that the dissatisfaction among the citizens about the current situation is present. Included in the Action Plan with the EU is the facilitation to cross the border and the prospect to take part in the EU internal market is an attractive outlook as concern job possibilities.

Lastly, Georgia is in principle a democratic republic, with the head of the executive being the president which is currently Micheil Saakaschwili. However, Mr. Saakaschwili is often accused of being too authoritarian, undermining democratic values. Hence, further democratization is also included in the Action Plan described above.

#### 4.1.4 Data ↔ Hypothesis

As found out, all of the identified criteria for interpreting the incentives provided by the EU as highly beneficial are met. This would mean, in accordance with the hypothesis of this study, that EU influence is high in this country due to high benefits for Georgia. However, consideration about the form of government and the dissatisfaction among the citizens can be made: Citizens feel they need Russia – thus a more Eastern-looking policy – the unemployment rate creates dissatisfaction and democracy is not fully executed by the Georgian government which means a lack of democratic values. This means, the cooperation with the EU for Georgia implies considerable costs because the government needs to go through a political change in order to turn a very weak democracy into a strong one. Moreover, although the conflict with Russia created a very anti-Russia attitude in Georgia, the feeling that they need Russia is still present and creates uneasiness to grant too much EU

influence. However, the dependency on the EU in terms of trade involves the need to grant EU influence. This is in line with the complex interdependence theory outlined above. To put it in a nutshell, the size of benefits for Georgia is, overall, neither high nor low since several considerations about the indicators must be made.

Connecting this to the dependent variable, EU influence, shows the hypothesis to be tentatively confirmed as regards Georgia. As pointed out in section 4.1.2, EU influence is ‘medium’ which fits to the findings of this part, namely, medium size of benefits.

## 4.2 Ukraine

### 4.2.1 The Action Plan

The Action Plan for Ukraine covers similar priorities for action like in Georgia. One is titled ‘political dialogue and reform’ including the strengthening of the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Under ‘Economic and social reform and development, progress is to be achieved in establishing a fully functioning market economy, cooperation in foreign and security policy, including conflict prevention and crisis management, and sustainable development. Then, in the area of ‘trade, market and regulatory reform’ action shall be done in furthering the ‘movement of goods’, the ‘right of establishment; company law and services’, the ‘movement of capital and current payments’ and the ‘movement of persons including movement of workers’. Other priority areas are the cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs, Transport, energy, information society and environment and lastly people-to-people contacts constitute the last priority area.

As one can see, the Action Plan itself is more focused on integrating Ukraine into the EU internal market. The prospect of benefitting from the EU market is more real than it is for Georgia.

The next part describes the progress made in Ukraine and which is overall positive. To recall, this, as described in the operationalisation part of the thesis would mean that the EU has strong influence in the country.

### 4.2.2 The Progress Report 2009: EU Influence in Ukraine

The progress report 2009 is quite positive. The Commission uses expressions like “substantial progress was made” and “significant achievements took place” (p. 2). Among the achievements is the progress in energy cooperation for example, which led to the approval for Ukraine to accede to the Energy Community Treaty on condition that an Ukrainian gas law is brought in conformity with EU law. More progress is achieved in democratic reforms whereby the last elections were held as in conformity to EU standards. This is judged by the Commission as “significant progress” (p.3). As regards human rights and fundamental freedoms, Ukraine improved the pre-trial detention conditions and various human rights NGOs monitor the respect for human rights. However, reports from such organizations still include “complaints of torture and ill-treatment in penitentiary and detention facilities” (p.5), violating the rights of refugees and asylum seekers as well as anti-Semitism occurred. Anti-discrimination legislation has seen no progress. By contrast, “significant improvements” (ibid) can be seen as regards the freedom of expression. More and more, a pluralistic media environment develops which deliver much political information to the citizens. However, Ukraine has not established a public service broadcaster in line with international standards yet. The areas of children’s rights and gender equality have a positive development in Ukraine. Likewise, various other areas of cooperation are evaluated as very constructive by

the Commission and Ukraine conforms to most of the EU CFSP declarations. In addition, in order to reduce poverty, the government adopted an action plan, next to the signing of a Law on subsistence minimum and minimum wages (p.8). However, Ukraine made no progress in adopting the amended draft Labour Code. Another negative point is, the non-fulfilment of obligations concerning product safety, market surveillance etc. and the limited progress in as regards customs commitments. However, still, five rounds of negotiations for an EU-Ukraine DCFTA took place in 2009, indicating a positive attitude by the Commission of developments in Ukraine and thus, symbolizing strong EU influence. Similarly, expressions like “Ukraine continued to be fully committed [...]” (p.7) indicates the strong EU influence in Ukraine and the willingness of Ukraine to turn to the EU respectively.

### 4.2.3 The Size of Benefits

	2007	2008	2009
GDP (Mrd. US\$)	143,2	178,9	117,3
GDP per Capita (US\$)	3.069	3.867	1.986
Economic Growth (%)	7,9	2,3	-15,1
Unemployment rate	6,4	6,4	8,8
Long-term unemployment rate	1,4	1,2	
Inflation rate	16,6	22,3	12,3
<b>Trade (Mio. US\$)</b>			
Exports	49.248	66.954	39.703
Imports	60.670	85.535	45.436
Balance	-11.422	-18.581	-5.733

**Figure 4: Economic data Ukraine**  
(Source: gtai may 2010, Eurostat 2010)

EU's share in total Ukrainian imports amount to 40,8 % (2008), and the share of total exports is 28,5 % (Commission Directorate General Trade 2009). Russia's imports into Ukraine amount to 29,1 % of all Ukrainian imports and 21,4 % of all Ukrainian exports goes into Russia (gtai 2010). As can be seen, the EU is the most important trading partner of Ukraine followed by Russia. The next trading partner is China with only 8,7% of imports and 8,2% of exports. Hence, for Ukraine both – the EU and Russia – are very important; losing one of them would significantly worsen Ukrainian economy. Accordingly, the economic power vis-à-vis the EU is low. One consideration is, however, the fact that Ukraine constitutes an important transit country for gas imports into the EU. 20% of EU's gas consumption is supplied via the Ukrainian gas transit system (Commission 2009) carrying 80% of Russian gas exports to the EU and much of Central Asian gas exports to the EU. Therefore, this fact might constitute an important factor influencing negotiations between the EU and Ukraine with the EU being to some extent dependent on Ukraine. This, in turn, might determine the degree of EU influence in Ukraine. Likewise, Ukraine is highly dependent upon Russia for gas supply. Hence, a good relation with Russia seems an absolute requirement for Ukraine. However, facing the threat to be cut off from Russian gas supplies necessitates that Ukraine ensures gas supplies elsewhere, i.e. in Europe. Therefore, and as seen by the fact that Ukraine took significant steps towards energy cooperation with the EU and has already been approved to accede to the Energy Community Treaty (see previous section), the benefits of cooperating with the EU is high. Furthermore, with a low GDP of 117,3 Mrd US\$ in 2009 and 1.986 US\$ GDP per capita, Ukraine is not a very rich country. In addition and connected to the last point,

dissatisfaction among the citizens is present like in Georgia. However, even more than in Georgia, many citizens are against turning to Russia and for a more European-looking policy. This is exemplified by the protests in May 2010 where about 2000 citizens protested against the approximation to Russia, pursuit by president Janukowitsch (Welt Online, 2010). However, also citizens with a pro-Russian attitude live in Ukraine and are dissatisfied with EU policies. Like Halpin (2010) from the Times wrote “Ukraine’s society is deeply divided into pro-Western and pro-Russian factions”. In addition, calls for democracy are part of demonstrations. For example, during the last elections in February 2010, women protested against the end of democracy and demanded "Enough raping our democracy!" (news.com, 2010). Moreover, the unemployment rate of 8,8% in 2009 is also a factor influencing public satisfaction with the current situation. As a SIPU report for the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) states “[with] an expected increase in unemployment Ukraine is facing huge popular unrest, which the current government may not survive” (2009, p. 8). In Ukraine there are a lot of religions (about 50); however, still, Christianity prevails (97%). The presence of Christian values is assumed to be a facilitator of turning to the EU. The Ukrainian form of government is a parliamentary-presidential republic, during the last elections in Ukraine in February 2010 for the first time these elections were judged as fulfilling democratic standards. This is seen, however, as sceptical and the winner of the election, Janukowitsch, as threat to this new and weak democracy (Veser, 2010).

#### 4.2.4 Data ↔ Hypothesis

As found out, since all indicators are present in Ukraine, it is very likely that the Ukraine government values EU cooperation much, and thus the benefits for cooperating are higher than the costs. The interdependence between the EU and Ukraine as regards gas supplies is an important driver for cooperation. Energy security is especially in Ukraine not given since Russia can very much control gas supplies to Ukraine which has not many other gas resources available. The EU can fall back on its gas reservoirs and other energy sources like renewable energy etc. Consideration must be made about the ‘pro-Russian’ factions among the citizens Halpin (2010) writes about, because they might be very dissatisfied with the strong cooperation with the EU. However, low GDP, low, economic power vis-à-vis the EU, the economic (including energy) dependency on the EU makes it highly beneficial for Ukraine to cooperate; facilitators are the same religious values and the relatively established democracy. As concerns the dependent variable, EU influence, it is found out that due to the spelling of the Progress Report and the actual progress achieved it is to say that EU has strong influence in Ukraine. Hence, for Ukraine as well, the hypothesis is tentatively confirmed since high benefits for Ukraine are involved while the EU has strong influence.

#### 4.3 Belarus

For Belarus, there is no Action Plan available yet and hence no Progress Report as well. Hence, EU influence is quite weak in Belarus with the Belarusian government not willing to implement EU policies and to comply to the conditions for setting up an Action Plan. Yet, Belarus is also part of the Eastern Partnership in which it participates actively which is welcomed by the Council. Moreover, the Council in its conclusions on Belarus (17. November 2009), “welcomes the increased high-level EU-Belarus political dialogue, the establishment of a Human Rights Dialogue [and] the intensified technical cooperation” (p.1). However, although some minor progress towards closer cooperation is made in Belarus, several severe issues of concern are at stake. Many Human Rights breaches and denials of fundamental freedoms are observed in Belarus and democracy development lacks behind as

well as the rule of law. The Council states it “deeply regrets the recent lack of significant progress” and also the death sentences in Belarus. The Council demands Belarus to abolish the death sentence. Freedom of the media is also highly hampered with censorship of all kind of media, including the internet (Kuhn, 2010). The Council continuously states its determination to deepen the cooperation and to grant many benefits to Belarus on the condition Belarus makes progress and fulfils the requirements. However, as mentioned above EU influence in Belarus is low.

### 4.3.3 The Size of Benefits

	2007	2008	2009
GDP (Mrd. US\$)	45,3	60,7	48,8
GDP per capita (US\$)	4.675	6.264	5.150
Economic Growth (%)	8,6	10,0	0,2
Unemployment rate	1,0	0,8	1,0
Long-term unemployment rate	0,1	0,1	
Inflation rate	12,1	13,3	10,1
<b>Trade (Mio. US\$)</b>			
Exports	24.275	32.571	21.282
Imports	28.693	39.381	28.564
Balance	-4.418	-6.810	-7.282

**Figure 5: Economic data Belarus**  
(Source: gtai may 2010, Eurostat 2010)

The percentage of imports coming from the EU amounts to 23,2 % whereas imports from Russia amounts to 58,3 % . Exports to the EU is 43,5 % of all Belarusian exports and to Russia 31,3 % . This distribution shows that the EU is an important trading partner for Belarus, losing the EU as importer of Belarusian goods would significantly worsen the economic situation of Belarus. Furthermore, Russia seems to be an important supplier of goods, more important than the EU. Belarusian economic power is therefore quite low and a GDP of 48,8 Mrd. US\$ with a GDP per capita of 5.150 US\$ is low as well.

Moreover, evidence for dissatisfaction among citizens in the form of protests and demonstrations cannot be found in newspaper articles and the like as easy as for Ukraine and Georgia. In 2006, on the day of the election of current president Alexander Lukashenko (third seven year term), demonstrations were going on with the opposition claiming the election results to be invalid. (BBC, 2006) Demonstrations like those are violently stopped by the police. In addition, the citizens are very likely not well informed about their possibilities and about their rights since “Belarusian authorities continue to use the criminal justice system and onerous administrative demands to control civil society, political opposition, and the media” (Human Rights Watch, 2009). Another point is the very low unemployment rate which increases satisfaction among the citizens.

As concerns the religion in Belarus, it belongs to Christianity. Regarding the form of government, Belarus is a presidential republic in which the opposition parties have very few powers. It lacks democratic standards to a considerable degree.

### 4.3.4 Data ↔ Hypothesis

As found out, the benefits for Belarus to cooperate with the EU are low from the perspective of Belarusian government which ultimately takes the decision. The government controls the

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citizens and the oppositions and does not convey democratic values. Moreover, the dissatisfaction among the citizens is not obvious. Hence, Belarus attaches low value to the cooperation with the EU, compared to the costs it would incur when implementing the EU reforms. As regards the hypothesis it is also in this case tentatively confirmed. This is because EU influence is found to be very weak, while the benefits are low which is in line with the relationship in the hypothesis.

### 4.4 Sub-Conclusion

	<b>Low economic power</b>	<b>Low GDP</b>	<b>Dissatisfaction among the citizens</b>	<b>Christian religion</b>	<b>Democratic form of government</b>	<b>EU Influence</b>
Georgia	Yes, dependency on the EU	Yes, GDP per capita holding a medium position compared to Ukraine and Belarus	Yes, calls for democracy, unemployment rate creates dissatisfaction, calls for a turn to the EU, but still many calls for turning to Russia, still no full media freedom	yes	In principle yes, but not to the full extent, still better than in Belarus	Medium: good progress report but still much to do
Ukraine	Yes, dependency on the EU, also on Russia but not as much as Georgia	Yes, GDP per capita the lowest	Yes, calls for democracy and turn to the EU, moderate calls for turn to Russia compared to Georgia and Belarus, relatively free media	yes	Yes, but weak	Strong: very good progress report, integration in various areas already achieved
Belarus	Yes, dependency on the EU, but highest dependency on Russia	Yes, but GDP per capita is the highest	It cannot be identified as easy as in Ukraine and Georgia, since protests, opposition demonstrations and the like are violently stopped, no freedom of the media; citizens are not fully informed	yes	In theory yes, but in practice there are various undemocratic processes	

Figure 6: The Results

Part four of the thesis provides the comparative case study of Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus. The findings support the hypothesis that in ENP countries where the cooperation with the EU implies high benefits, EU influence tends to be strong whereas in ENP countries where cooperation with the EU implies low benefits, EU influence tends to be weak. Belarus is an example of weak EU influence due to low benefits; Ukraine is an example of high EU influence compared to high benefits; Georgia lies in between. The main differences found between the

countries are the degree of democratic development, the satisfaction among the citizens and economic dependency on the EU. GDP per capita is lowest in Ukraine, followed by Georgia and highest GDP per capita in Belarus. This could also constitute a determinant factor for the dissatisfaction among the citizens with Belarus having the lowest dissatisfaction and Ukraine the most urgent need among the citizens to bring about a change. Likewise, the freedom of the media with Ukraine having the most free media and Belarus the most censored media sector. Citizens cannot be fully and truthfully informed and express their views and wishes.

A further factor which came up during the study is the different degree of Russian influence in the country. Economic dependency on Russia and social proximity to Russia must be named as possible influential factors in the relationship between the size of benefits and EU influence. For example, over half of Belarusian imports come from Russia whereas in Ukraine, where EU influence is high, EU imports lies by 40,8% in 2008.

### **Part Five: Conclusion and Recommendation**

This Bachelor thesis dealt with the EU as a conflict manager within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Security is threatened through various channels in the world and the ENP, as a foreign policy instrument serves to secure the EU area and more broadly then, the world. Instability in a country facilitates the outbreak of conflicts of various kinds, dissatisfaction within societies lead to violence and can be said to be a cause of the spread of terrorism. Global security is constantly threatened and it is essential to help instable conflict-laden countries to help themselves to reform. This is what the ENP aims at and constitutes a tool for conflict management with all its dimensions, i.e. prevention, resolution, coordination. However, differences in the strength of EU influence in the various ENP countries can be observed. These differences were studied in the thesis by finding an answer to the following research question: Why is the European Union influence stronger in the conflict management of some members of the European Neighbourhood Policy than in the conflict management of others? The hypothesis was developed on the basis of available literature on the topic and the complex interdependence theory by Keohane and Nye (1977), and the external incentive model provided by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004). It is proposed that in ENP countries where the cooperation with the EU implies high benefits, EU influence tends to be strong whereas in ENP countries where cooperation with the EU implies low benefits, EU influence tends to be weak. It is found out that it depends on various factors whether a country attaches high or low value to a benefit arising out of the cooperation with the EU. For example, strong indicators for the attachment of high value to cooperating with the EU was found to be the presence of democracy, a lack of economic power and dissatisfaction among the citizens with regard to the current situation, even stronger the call among citizens to turn to the EU or the suffering of poverty and unemployment. Moreover, it was found that media freedom is very important in this context, since for citizens being aware of the benefits possibly arising out of the cooperation with the EU, they must be informed. This is demonstrated by the fact that in Belarus, where weak EU influence was observed, the government strongly controls the media and leaves no room for criticism, even the internet is censored. In addition, protests and demonstrations against the government are brought to a halt with violence and arrests of opposition actors. Furthermore, unemployment rate seems to be very low in Belarus, increasing satisfaction among the citizens. Next to this, Belarus' economic power is low; however, it is found that dependency on Russia is even greater than the dependency on the EU with over 50% of imported goods coming from Russia. As a result, the EU influence is very weak in Belarus as can be seen by the fact that no Action Plan could

have been negotiated yet. In Ukraine, where a positive Progress Report and hence a strong EU influence can be observed, the democracy is more developed with the last elections meeting international standards. Also among the citizens calls for democratic values and a turn to the EU are present. Citizens are not satisfied with the already achieved progress and they seem aware of the benefits implied in the cooperation with the EU. Furthermore, although the media environment is not yet fully in line with international standards, significant progress was made and a pluralistic media repertoire develops more and more and thus citizens are politically informed. Moreover, the threat of being cut off the Russian gas supplies is real with regard to previous experiences. This means, Ukraine realizes the need to cooperate with the EU in energy security cooperation, underpinned by the fact that Ukraine is only one step away from fully acceding to the Energy Community Treaty; approval by the EU has already been given. In addition, the EU is most important trading partner of Ukraine, implying the economic dependence on the EU. So as found out, overall, cooperation with the EU implies high benefits for Ukraine which results in high EU influence in the country. By contrast, EU influence in the third country, Georgia, is found to be medium. That is because Georgia's democracy is weaker and with it the democratic thoughts and values and moreover, although the general attitude among the citizens is for democracy and for a turn to the EU, they feel they need to improve relations to Russia. Furthermore, the media is still biased and polarised in Georgia preventing citizens to be fully informed about the political life and about the benefits of EU cooperation. However, a further factor indicating an attachment of high value to EU cooperation is the fact that EU is most important trading partner. Moreover, the high unemployment rate increases dissatisfaction among the citizens and a realization of the need for EU cooperation. To put it in a nutshell, especially as compared to Ukraine and Belarus, Georgia's attachment of value to the benefits of the cooperation with the EU is medium.

In conclusion, a concrete answer to the research question is that EU influence in the conflict management of some members of the ENP is stronger than in others is because of the different value the individual country attaches to the benefits of the cooperation. And in line with the hypothesis, the higher the size of the benefits, the stronger is EU influence in the country. A consideration to be made here is, the factor 'Russian influence'. The case selection intended to control for the influence of Russia to exclude it as reason for differences in EU influence in the respective country. However, during the study it came up that Russia is nevertheless a very important factor in these countries; more specifically it seems that the strength of Russian influence changes the strength of EU influence. For example, in Belarus, Russian influence is very strong while EU influence very weak. A further study, therefore, should investigate this relationship. Another point for further investigation which came up is the influence of the citizens on the actions of its governments, with the degree of media freedom and the degree of citizen's attitudes towards the EU as possible explanations for differences in EU influence. In this, the role of the civil society should be included.

On the basis of the findings, some recommendations for strengthening EU influence in the country and hence the effectiveness of the ENP are listed shortly:

- Addressing the citizens of the respective country more, giving them a perspective for improved living conditions, impart possible feelings of peace and welfare to the citizens  
→ trigger bottom-up approach, create a learning environment
- The media must be strengthened to spread true political information
- Strong integration of NGOs
- Improving relations with Russia so that the countries do not have to choose one side, cooperating with the EU shall not result in conflicts with Russia



An effective implementation of the ENP instrument can be judged to reduce security threats by stabilizing the individual country economically, socially and politically. The ENP first and foremost, ensures security in Europe, but in today's world of globalisation this has also consequences for countries outside Europe in the long run. Moreover, the effectiveness of the ENP can constitute a role model for dealing with conflict laden countries. Since it is a relatively new instrument, whether the ENP can secure the EU area is to be judged in a few years and whether this results in global (in) security in the long run is to be seen.

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