

1 Building regional stability through cross-border cooperation

Changing spatial imaginaries and sovereignty concepts of EU neighbourhood policies

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Ten years after the initiation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the relations of the European Union with its eastern neighbours are more complicated and tense than ever. In the midst of the Ukrainian crisis it is time to look back and assess to what extent the European Union has managed to fulfil the great expectations raised by a policy that profiled the Union as an international actor. In the political rhetoric of 2004, the EU was, in the boldest visions, referred to as a force for good in the world and in more practical accounts of policy tasks as an advocate of regional stability in the European neighbourhood. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the will and ability of the European Union to promote peace and stability beyond its borders has been the object of intensive debates and visionary theorising. In discussions on the post-Cold War international order, the EU has been regarded as a new kind of international actor that, instead of using military force, is building its external relations on normative soft power (see, among others, Manners 2002). Instead of securitised notions of territorial integrity typical of the Cold War era, the EU has based its policies on programmes of territorial cooperation designed to create stability both within and beyond its boundaries (Scott 2005: 429–454; Telo 2005).

Through its policies of cross-border cooperation (CBC) the EU has, indeed, been actively engaged in spreading its influence beyond its external borders. On the one hand, it has promoted new spatial imagery of shared Europeanness or a common European Neighbourhood that goes beyond the geopolitical dividing lines and frigid national policy frames typical of the so-called Westphalian international order of the Cold War period. On the other hand, as part of its cross-border cooperation policies, the EU has adopted, and encouraged its neighbours to adopt, new thinking modes that diverge from traditional conceptions of sovereignty in terms of national interests and territorial integrity. Parallel to constructing internal supranational administrative structures, the EU has generated new practices of *shared* or *pooled sovereignty*. In its external relations, it has developed new sovereignty-challenging practices that have sometimes been seen as an opening towards a new era

of *post-sovereignty* (for a critical summary of this discussion, see Haukkala 2010). This type of visionary theorising on EU policies has not been limited to academic literature but can also be recognised in the political discussion that has schematised the EU as a peace project, most notably in connection with the granting of the Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union in 2012.

This chapter studies the role of the EU as an international actor by analysing the spatial imageries and sovereignty concepts applied in EU policies of CBC. It attempts to identify what kind of place-making (and *othering*) strategies have been attached to EU policies of regional cooperation, especially in relation to its eastern neighbours. The analysis is built on a close reading of the EU's CBC programmes, from the early INTERREG programmes to documents of the ENP and present-day formulations of common foreign and security policies. The focus of the study is on the sovereignty concepts that have been attached to the shifting spatial imageries of defining Europe and European neighbourhood.

What notions of pooled or shared sovereignty were attached to the first INTERREG programmes when the European Community was elaborating policies of CBC on its internal borders in the late 1980s? How and to what degree were these concepts later modified in documents defining the tasks of EU policies of pre-enlargement and the role of the EU in post-enlargement Wider Europe? Is it possible to uncover certain path dependencies or competing rationales, especially with regard to the Union's relationship with its Eastern Neighbourhood? How consistent has the formulation of EU policies been in this respect? By examining the coexistence and clash of novel sovereignty discourses (sometimes referred to as post-sovereignty) and the traditional geopolitical rhetoric of territorial integrity, this chapter attempts to critically comment on and contribute to the broader discussion on the role of the EU as a new kind of international actor and as a promoter of regional stability beyond its borders.

Shifting sovereignty concepts of making Europe and the European Neighbourhood

Through its cross-border cooperation programmes, the European Union has been actively engaged in reconfiguring borders in its immediate neighbourhood. Along and beyond its external boundaries, it has advanced shared European cooperation agendas that target political and social modernisation and convergence to EU norms. In the scholarly literature on post-Cold War international relations, EU programmes of CBC have often been seen as a key element in the shaping of a new type of normative, value-based foreign policies (see, for example, Bachmann and Sidaway 2009: 94–109). In contrast to military security-dominated Cold War policies, EU programmes of cross-border cooperation have been said to represent new (for some, postmodern) security thinking seeking to exercise soft or normative power calibrated to the new post-Westphalian realities. Emphasis on common Europeanness has been held to signify an

alternative policy frame in which national borders and their integrity no longer are at the centre of international relations. Similarly, the introduction of the notion of a European Neighbourhood can be viewed as an alternative perspective to building clear-cut dividing lines between power blocs and civilisations in the sense of the traditional East–West juxtaposition (Browning and Joenniemi 2008: 519–551; Joenniemi 2008). In the study of EU–Russia relations this approach has sometimes been characterised as policies of post-sovereignty or as sovereignty-challenging practices. Lately, the main line of argument has been to set off EU policies of post-sovereignty against more traditional Russian policies that are thought to emphasise territorial sovereignty in a sense typical of a (bygone) Westphalian period (Barbé and Johansson-Nogués 2008: 81–96; Haukkala 2010; Kostadinova 2009: 235–255).

From the perspective of future-oriented policy analysis, such models, bound to certain time periods (Westphalian vs post-Westphalian), can in many instances hide as much as they reveal. Indeed, there is an obvious need for more nuanced approaches to EU policies and the relationship between cross-border cooperation and the broader architecture of international relations. Today, it is evident that parallel to its neighbourhood policies the EU has at the same time been developing a territorially fixed security area that aims, amongst other things, at stopping undocumented immigration and addressing other perceived threats through military potential provided by NATO. Clearly, these objectives are in themselves partly contradictory; they contain both elements of potential regional partnerships and exclusionary or discriminatory aspects. In terms of spatial imagery and sovereignty, it is obvious that the European Neighbourhood Policy is not just an implementation of post-Westphalian notions of post-sovereignty.

With regard to the elaboration of EU common foreign and security policies, scholars have questioned the one-dimensional models of normative soft power and traditional hard power and stressed the need for more sophisticated approaches to the relationship between cross-border cooperation and the broader architecture of international relations. In more nuanced terms, it has been asked whether normative policies can primarily represent an unequivocal new type of soft power and whether the tightened conditionality of the EU's normative policies actually comes close to traditional policies of regional hegemony (Haukkala 2009: 1757–1775; Jones and Clark 2008: 1–27; Kochenov 2008; Sasse 2008: 295–316; Scott and Liikanen 2011: 1–16).

In the case of the post-Soviet space it has been noted that actions undertaken by a neighbour, such as Russia's self-exclusion from the ENP, can easily reinforce the conditionality of EU policies in the name of shared European values. This has created competing joint agendas between ex-Soviet states and other relevant actors; indirectly, EU normative policies of cross-border cooperation have placed post-Soviet countries in a situation where there is an obvious tension between the attractions of the ENP and traditional cooperation with Russia (Averre 2011; Haukkala 2008a: 38). The 2014 Ukrainian crisis can partly be read as an ultimate expression of this tension.

However, this is not to say that the development should be characterised as a return to Cold War security-driven policies. As Derek Averre has noted, there are not just competing rationales behind the EU's normative policies and Russia's approach of territorial sovereignty but behind the EU policies themselves; tensions between elements of normative and structural power exist in the relations of both powers with the countries in their neighbourhood (Averre 2011: 5–29).

In this sense, the boundaries between traditional hard power and normative soft power are fuzzier than anticipated in the discussion about shared European values and common European neighbourhood policies, and the conception of the EU as a normative power can in many ways be contested. The distinct national preferences of (big) EU member states alone mean that the idea of the EU playing a new kind of role in international relations should be regarded with a lot of caution. Furthermore, EU external relations encompass a wide range of financial, legal, regulatory and environmental policies which go beyond classical foreign policy and are linked to various internal EU policy agendas and rationales (Averre 2011: 7). When considering EU programmes of CBC as tools of regional stability it is thus necessary to keep an eye on these competing rationales embedded in EU policies of external relations and especially in their relation to NATO. More importantly, the notion of competing rationales should also be extended to the long-term configuration of EU policies of CBC. The context and goal-setting of these policies have varied from internal economic and social cohesion to enlargement and pre-integration and finally to deepening institutional integration and the constitution of the political union of the Lisbon Treaty. In order to evaluate the role of the European Union as a new kind of international actor in relation to its neighbours, one obviously needs to analyse in detail what discursive layers can be recognised in the development of EU policies of CBC and what place-making strategies and sovereignty concepts are linked to these competing rationales: To what degree do EU documents of CBC reflect the post-Cold War perspectives of political innovation in international relations and the new constructivist approaches in academic discussions?

INTERREG: CBC as a tool of apolitical cohesion policies of the European Community

Roots of the common European CBC policies can be found in the so-called INTERREG initiative, designed in the late 1980s to stimulate cooperation between regions of the European Community. The first INTERREG programme (1989–1993) was financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and was later continued as INTERREG II (1994–1999) and INTERREG III (2000–2006). The first INTERREG programme documents aimed at diminishing the influence of national borders in favour of an equal economic, social and cultural development of the entire territory of the European Community. In the Technical Fiche of INTERREG I, the main

aim of the programme was defined as 'preparing the border areas for the opening of the Single Market, with an eye to the economic and social cohesion of the European Community' (European Communities 1990: 1). This was to be achieved by measures that exclusively concerned social and economic cohesion: (a) helping these regions to overcome problems arising from their isolation from the main economic and decision-making centres; (b) promoting administrative collaboration and the development of cooperation networks on both sides of internal borders as well as establishing links between these networks and wider Community networks; and (c) preparing external border areas for their new role in this integrated market by exploring possibilities for cooperation with third countries (European Communities 1990: 1). It is important to note that in the initial phase of EU common cross-border cooperation policies, even the measures concerning external border areas and third countries were targeted at promoting adjustment to internal integrated markets – a target quite far from the visions of a new kind of international order.

In a broad sense, this emphasis remained until the end of the INTERREG programme periods. This vein can be recognised even in the 2001 Communication of the Commission on INTERREG III, which defines its primary starting point by stating that 'the objective of interregional cooperation ... is to improve the effectiveness of policies and instruments for regional development and cohesion (European Commission 2001a: 1). This time the task of interregional cooperation is, however, explicitly broadened to include third countries:

The Commission considers that interregional cooperation offers an additional dimension to the field of cooperation activity over and above that provided by cross-border and transnational programmes. It allows non-contiguous regions to enter into contact and to build up relationships, leading to exchanges of experience and networking which will assist the balanced, harmonious and sustainable development of the European Union and of third countries.

(European Commission 2001a: 1)

During the whole INTERREG period, CBC along the external borders of the Union was mainly conceptualised in a similar manner, that is, in terms of regional development and cohesion policies. The 2001 Communication defined the main aim and added value of interregional cooperation as 'improving the effectiveness of policies and instruments for regional development and cohesion' (European Commission 2001a: 1). Typical for the Commission's documents was that they used an 'apolitical' language of regional planning which tended to bypass questions of sovereignty and to naturalise a liberal understanding of economic development. In terms of spatial imaginaries, the Europe of these documents referred primarily to the EU. At the turn of the new millennium, the preparation of the INTERREG III programme broadened the agenda and introduced tasks that were more closely connected to policies of pre-enlargement:

The overall aim of the INTERREG initiatives has been, and remains that national borders should not be a barrier to the balanced development and integration of the European territory. The isolation of border areas has been of a double nature: on the one hand, the presence of borders cuts off border communities from each other economically, socially and culturally and hinders the coherent management of eco-systems; on the other, border areas have often been neglected under national policy, with the result that their economies have tended to become peripheral within national boundaries. The single market and EMU are strong catalysts for changing this situation. Nevertheless, the scope for strengthening cooperation to the mutual advantage of border areas throughout the Community remains enormous. The challenge is all the greater when the future enlargement of the Community is considered, as this will increase the number of its internal borders and, progressively, shift the Community's external borders eastwards.

(European Commission 2004a: 23)

Targeted more specifically to address problems of the Union's external borders, the Communication from the Commission to member states on 28 April 2000 defined guidelines for a Community Initiative concerning trans-European cooperation intended to encourage the harmonious and balanced development of 'European territory'. It demanded effective coordination between INTERREG III and external community policy instruments, especially with a view to enlargement. Similarly, INTERREG III's General Principles, defined at the Cohesion Forum held in Brussels in May 2001, explicitly included in its task of 'economic and social cohesion' 'balanced and sustainable development of European territory' and 'territorial integration with candidate and other neighbouring countries'.

In terms of place-making strategies the first INTERREG programme clearly views the European Community as Europe. CBC and cohesion policies are discussed in a shared European frame but common Europeanness is above all emphasised in the context of building a stronger European Community understood in apolitical terms as a frame for economic progress and regional development. The same apolitical approach is typical of the sovereignty concept that can be recognised in the documents – if the question was raised at all. A certain internal sharing or pooling of sovereignty was evidently accepted as part of the goals of promoting regional development and cohesion. This apolitical approach, originally calibrated for internal development, was later – and without any deeper discussion – adopted for planning new programmes concerning the external borders. The question what kind of sovereignty concept this approach represented in regard to the broader architecture of international relations or EU–Russia relations was never raised in the policy documents. Nor did the first INTERREG programmes discuss how this apolitical approach to economic cohesion might fit in with the post-colonial features of developments in the prospective new eastern neighbour states of the Union: Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine.

INTERREG III: CBC as a tool of enlargement – and transition

During the INTERREG III programme period, the documents governing CBC came to reflect a rather clear pre-enlargement agenda. Under the title *Structural Policies and European Territory: Cooperation without Frontiers*, the Commission published in 2002 a brochure that explicitly defined preparations for the enlargement as the primary goal of CBC by stating that aid to Central and East European countries (CEEC) and regions bordering the Union was ‘providing them with a real opportunity to become acquainted with the methods and rules of Community programming’. The brochure also referred to the task of deepening integration of the so-called candidate countries by advocating accelerated preparations for post-enlargement programmes of cross-border cooperation and regional development (European Commission 2002).

It was understood early on that the planned 2004 enlargement would create a completely different setting for cooperation across the new external borders of the Union. After the accession of Finland in 1995, the EU had come to share a border with the Russian Federation and initial cross-border cooperation programmes had been started and received rather positively on the Russian side, especially on the regional level (Liikanen and Virtanen 2006: 113–130). Now, there would be new neighbours and, with the Baltic countries seeking membership of both EU and NATO, a neighbouring Russia that might no longer have a positive attitude towards cross-border relations. This setting called for action to create better preconditions for effective cooperation on the external borders, e.g. in terms of coordination between INTERREG programmes and the EU Technical Aid Programme for Countries of the ex-Soviet Union (TACIS). In 2001 the European Commission published *A Guide to Bringing INTERREG and TACIS Funding Together*, a booklet which rather enthusiastically re-assessed the tasks of CBC on external borders:

This guide reflects our joint determination to ensure that cross-border cooperation with Russia is a success today. ... At the cross-border level between the EU and CIS countries, the ultimate aim is to create new opportunities for the population living in border areas, to promote the spirit of cooperation and to foster trust between the authorities on each side of the border. At the wider regional level (i.e. the Baltic region), there is a need to promote interstate and interregional cooperation with a view to assisting the development of the Northern Dimension and moving towards enlargement.

(European Commission, 2001b: 3, 5)

With TACIS CBC, a new programme was designed to offer support to partner states undergoing transition. At this point the EU officially set as its goal to accelerate the transformation process in partner states through their cooperation with border regions in the European Union or CEEC. This could be seen as a starting point for giving CBC policies new tasks aimed at influencing

domestic developments in neighbouring countries – not just the prospective member states but also neighbouring states that had joined the new CIS. In this sense TACIS CBC meant introducing a new kind of sovereignty thinking that linked the old aid programme to EU-defined goals of the INTERREG programme:

Objective: TACIS CBC is one of the multi-country programmes of TACIS and covers four partner states: Belarus, Moldova, Russia and the Ukraine. The TACIS regulation defines the purpose of cross-border cooperation as:

- assisting border regions in overcoming their specific development problems;
- encouraging the linking of networks on both sides of the border, e.g. border-crossing facilities;
- *accelerating the transformation process in the partner States through their cooperation with border regions in the European Union or Central and Eastern Europe;*
- reducing trans-boundary environmental risks and pollution.

(Council of the European Union 1999, Article 2.
Emphasis added)

Ultimately, the coordination of CBC policies and the nascent policies for external relations was given a more systematic formulation in the major policy document *Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours* (European Commission 2003). The document laid the foundations for the reconfiguration of EU CBC programmes in more ideological tones than in the case of the administrative streamlining of INTERREG and TACIS. Summarily, it defined the main goals of policies towards the EU's post-enlargement neighbourhood. The Union was to avoid drawing new dividing lines in Europe and, instead, to commit itself to promoting stability and prosperity 'within and beyond its new borders'. Furthermore, it was to develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood (a 'ring of friends') with whom the EU would enjoy close, peaceful and cooperative relations. In addition, Russia, the three western newly independent states (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine) and the Southern Mediterranean countries were offered the prospect of a stake in the EU's Internal Market. This was to be accompanied by 'further integration and liberalisation to promote the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital', also known as the four freedoms (European Commission 2003: 4, 12).

In this sense, *Wider Europe* continued the reconfiguration of new sovereignty-challenging principles that had started already a year earlier at the Copenhagen European Council, which had decided that the Union should take the opportunity offered by enlargement to enhance relations with its neighbours on the basis of 'shared values' (Council of the European Union 2002). Behind this alignment of EU policies, it is possible to recognise a logic that is

crystallised in the concept of transition, commonly used at the time to designate post-Soviet change. The concept promotes the idea of a clear-cut shift in social organisation towards a goal known in advance: from communism to capitalism, from totalitarianism towards a Western model of political democracy (Neumann 1996; Prozorov 2006). EU programmes of CBC were thus tied to a goal of promoting a particular pre-given economic model beyond its boundaries. The Wider Europe that the EU was building was consequently comprised not only of the candidate countries but also of Russia and the neighbouring ex-Soviet states, at least as far as they were progressing on the path of transition. In terms of spatial imaginary, a new vision of a Wider Europe, a shared European space of cooperation, was initiated – but not without conditions.

Wider Europe describes an emerging hegemonic political project, an EU striving for the redefinition of both its external political agenda and the territorial frames of its policies. It is possible to discern here conceptual shifts and political innovation both in terms of territorial imagination and new sovereignty conceptions. There is a strong vision of shared European neighbourhood as a frame for a new kind of policies of regional cooperation. The transition logic-based conditionality was, however, still present, though in a new form. According to the new programme rhetoric, the EU saw itself as the force for good in a world where other players were stuck in old notions of territorial sovereignty and integrity. The new language of common Europeanness introduced the notion of shared European norms and values which in hindsight can well be recognised as tools of pre-enlargement and an identity-political project of a hegemonic EU at the height of its appeal to the neighbouring post-communist countries.

European Neighbourhood policy: CBC as a frame of pooled sovereignty and soft power

Preparations for the accession of ten new member states initially led to the drafting of new regional cross-border programmes and amendments to upgrade the existing programmes to include the candidate countries. The primary aim at this point was to coordinate INTERREG with the instruments for accession and programmes concerning third countries, i.e. TACIS, PHARE and CARDS (see, for example, European Commission 2004b). This practical task should, however, be placed in the context of a broader reconfiguration of EU policies of external relations. With *Wider Europe*, the idea of the EU as a new type of security community using normative or soft power was officially added to the rhetoric of EU documents. This was reflected, for instance, in the objective of avoiding drawing new dividing lines in Europe and promoting stability and prosperity ‘within and beyond the new borders of the Union’. The document was based on the idea that interaction could itself be a means to promote stability, security and sustainable development (European Commission 2003: 4). These formulations of *Wider Europe* can be understood as an important element in the broader discussion on building up the EU’s

policies of soft power as an alternative to securitised Cold War visions of conflict.

In the new rhetoric, institutional streamlining was accompanied by new notions of European values and conditionality which have since become important tools of EU external relations. Already, *Wider Europe* referred to the need of establishing a strong partnership based on historic links and common values expressed in earlier Partnership and Cooperation Agreements in effect with Russia, Ukraine and Moldova (European Commission 2003: 6). The idea of common values was, however, not only promoting place-making strategies of common European space but was from the beginning linked to the notion of conditionality: 'In return for concrete progress demonstrating shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms, including reforming legislation in line with the Acquis, the EU's neighbourhood should benefit from the prospect of closer economic integration with the EU' (European Commission 2003: 4). And:

The setting of clear and public objectives and benchmarks spelling out the actions the EU expects of its partners is a means to ensure a consistent and credible approach between countries. Benchmarks also offer greater predictability and certainty for the partner countries than traditional "conditionality". Political and economic benchmarks could be used to evaluate progress in key areas of reform and against agreed targets. Beyond the regulatory and administrative aspects directly linked to market integration, key benchmarks should include the ratification and implementation of international commitments which demonstrate respect for shared values, in particular the values codified in the UN Human Rights Declaration, the OSCE [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe] and Council of Europe standards. Wherever possible, these benchmarks should be developed in close cooperation with the partner countries themselves, in order to ensure national ownership and commitment.

(European Commission 2003: 16)

With the introduction of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004 this normative commitment to shared values was in practice adopted as a key element of EU policies of CBC (European Commission 2004e). The explanatory memorandum introducing the Commission's proposal on the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) opens, however, rather prosaically with a reference to the Commission's earlier communication on financial perspectives (European Commission 2004c: 2). This blunt opening is well justified by the fact that the necessity of creating the new instrument was, indeed, first introduced in the Commission's communication *Building Our Common Future: Policy Challenges and Budgetary Means of the Enlarged Union 2007–2013* (European Commission 2004d), targeted at streamlining administration in the field of CBC. The Commission committed itself to adopting the principle, strongly highlighted in the text, of one instrument per

policy area and one fund per programme. It stated that 'EU funding instruments will, as far as possible, be consolidated and rationalised so that *each policy area* responsible for operational expenditure has a *single funding instrument* covering the full range of its interventions' (European Commission 2004d: 30–32; original emphasis). A connection to the broader streamlining of the political architecture of the Union is set out by underlining the importance of developing an area of prosperity and close cooperation involving the European Union and the neighbouring countries 'as recognised in the draft Constitution' (European Commission 2004c: 2). Whereas the reference to the Constitution is here limited to a single sentence, it is more visible in the work of the so-called Peace Group, which first put forward the idea that the European Union's framework for external assistance should be rationalised and simplified by a reduction in the number of legal bases, budget lines and programmes. More precisely, it recommended that 'the complex structure of existing aid programmes ... covering a wide range of interventions ... should be significantly streamlined' and that European Community and Member States policies and implementation should be harmonised' (European Commission 2004c: 39).

The European Neighbourhood Programme laid the groundwork for a pooling of sovereignty in EU policies of external relations for the coming years. In addition to defining a common policy frame, the objective was to create a single policy instrument. This task of administrative streamlining can be connected with the topical aim of consolidating EU administration that crystallised in the unsuccessful constitution project. In this sense, the elaboration of policies of neighbourhood and pooled sovereignty were intimately linked with the creation of the EU as a political union. The new spatial imagery of European neighbourhood had a sovereignty-challenging dimension in terms of external relations. At the same time, the conception of European neighbourhood was vital for the consolidation of the EU as a stronger international actor and it can even be interpreted as an attempt to institutionalise the hegemonic position that the EU enjoyed at the time (Liikanen and Virtanen 2006: 113–116; Liikanen 2013: 58–69).

In the 2007 review of the ENP, it was insisted that 'a motivating framework should be established, based on agreements with ENP countries which respect fundamental European values, are willing to integrate more closely with the EU and demonstrate objective performance in terms of ENP action plan implementation' (European Commission 2006a). With its emphasis on European values, the ENP constitutes perhaps the starting point for the institutional and discursive Europeanisation that has fuelled later discussions in the neighbouring countries about national sovereignty and territorial integrity (Scott and Liikanen 2011: 4–7). Obviously, the introduction of the concept of European Neighbourhood brought a new layer to the sovereignty-challenging policy definition of earlier CBC programmes. This neighbourhood was not only a frame for a certain type of economic development and interaction but an area of cooperation under EU normative soft power with conditional perspectives for collaboration based on EU-defined European or shared values.

Common foreign and security policy: post-sovereign responses to a changing European Neighbourhood?

With the Lisbon Treaty establishing the political union in 2009 and the formulation of EU common foreign policies, tasks of earlier CBC policies have been completed to a large extent. This has, however, not led to a thorough redefinition of the CBC policy frames, although individual documents signalling changes in the institutional architecture of EU common foreign policies have been published. A policy paper, 'A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood. A Review of European Neighbourhood Policy', was published in spring 2011 as a Joint Communication by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission (European Commission 2011c). It provides a topical short-term analysis of the current state of the EU's external relations. Perhaps the most interesting fact is that this brief review also offers the first official account of the role of cross-border cooperation policies in the design of EU common policies for foreign affairs.

The document gives, however, a rather thin account of the connection between EU external relations and the promotion of regional and intraregional cooperation. This connection is taken as a self-evident starting point rather than an object of serious analysis. The paper concentrates on reviewing EU policies in the context of current topical events along the EU's eastern and southern borders. Important self-critical observations are made in regard to the application of CBC policy instruments as tools for promoting common foreign policy goals. These observations are, however, more a reaction to external impulses, most notably the Arab Spring, than a profound analysis of earlier programmes of regional and intraregional cooperation and their significance for the formulation of common foreign policies. In the assessment of the changes that occurred in the European neighbourhood, the specification of the ENP's tasks remains unrelated to broader discussions concerning the role of the EU as a foreign political actor:

The new approach must be based on mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It will involve a much higher level of differentiation allowing each partner country to develop its links with the EU as far as its own aspirations, needs and capacities allow. For those southern and eastern neighbours able and willing to take part, this vision includes closer economic integration and stronger political cooperation on governance reforms, security, conflict-resolution matters, including joint initiatives in international fora on issues of common interest.

(European Commission 2011c: 2)

The European values that earlier might have been seen as part of a hegemonic ideological project are now described as universal or shared values. In this

sense, they can perhaps better be understood as a foreign policy argumentation that different parties are individually expected to recognise than as part of place-making strategies of building a Wider Europe and common Europeanness. In addition, references to conditionality are now more naked, without appeals to shared European values. 'Increased EU support to its neighbours is conditional. It will depend on progress in building and consolidating democracy and respect for the rule of law. The more and the faster a country progresses in its internal reforms, the more support it will get from the EU' (European Commission 2011c: 3). Together with downgrading European values to tools of conditionality, spatial imageries and space-making strategies, too, are recalibrated to a less ambitious level. Instead of emphasising common Europeanness and a shared European neighbourhood, the aims are now defined more modestly:

The EU will propose to neighbouring partners to work towards the development of a Common Knowledge and Innovation Space. This would pull together several existing strands of cooperation: policy dialogue, national and regional capacity-building, cooperation in research and innovation, and increased mobility opportunities for students, researchers and academics.

(European Commission 2011c: 10)

The concept of Eastern Partnership introduced in 2009 as a new frame for recalibrating the European Neighbourhood Policies can be interpreted as a further step back from the sovereignty-challenging features of the notion of European Neighbourhood. Eastern Partnership is again more clearly something agreed between distinct international actors without aspirations towards post-sovereign spatial imageries:

The establishment of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) has strengthened mutual relations with partner countries in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus. It has helped to initiate and consolidate a difficult process of change. The region has seen general progress towards democracy over the past decade, including situations of regime change. The region continues to face major economic challenges – it is poor, with significant differences between individual countries, and susceptible to external factors and influences.

(European Commission 2011c: 13)

The rise of the Eastern Partnership to the status of a new key concept of EU external relations had already started at the time the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in 2009. In a speech given in February 2009, the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, introduced the Eastern Partnership as an ambitious project for twenty-first-century European foreign policy. Using as a starting point

security threats stemming from Russian policies, she set out to formulate classical foreign policies in a traditional geopolitical context with rather little hints of searching for a new role in international relations (*Statement by European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, on the Eastern Partnership* 2009). Here, Russia is clearly the *other* of European Neighbourhood and not anymore a part of this space. This return to a more traditional security-based foreign policy rhetoric was also evident in the 2009 Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit. The EU was clearly distancing itself from the most far-reaching tasks attached to the European Neighbourhood and allowing for a reconsideration of how far it wanted to engage itself:

The pace of progress is determined by the degree to which partners have been willing to undertake the necessary reforms, and more has been achieved in the economic sphere, notably trade and regulatory approximation, than in the area of democratic governance. However, the pace of progress also depends on the benefits that partners can expect within a reasonable time frame. Here the extent to which the EU has been willing to engage itself with the partnership has also had, and will continue to have, a significant effect.

(Council of the European Union 2009)

Thus, it is possible to discern in this formulation of common foreign and security policies a certain duality. On the one hand, spatial imagery of a shared European Neighbourhood is prevailing as a kind of long-term task of shared post-sovereign space. On the other hand, the EU is now clearly building external relations to distinct international actors in a context defined in rather traditional geopolitical terms. One might perhaps speak of a certain type of selective sovereignty notion attached to the definition of common foreign and security policies. In his study on the limits of post-sovereignty, Hiski Haukkala concludes that in contrast to the internal pooling of sovereignty, 'in its external policies the EU has a more variegated logic whereby it advocates a host of sovereignty-challenging practices while seeking to preserve its own sovereign prerogatives in full' (Haukkala 2010: 24).

The formulation of common foreign and security policies has more openly brought to the fore separate concepts for inclusive policies concerning internal borders and exclusive policies of securitised external relations. This can probably be explained in part by changes in the external environment. Since the Georgian war in 2008, and especially with the Ukrainian crisis of 2014, policies towards Russia have been sustained by geopolitical rhetoric that hardly leaves room for visions of a shared European space. At the same time, the turn reflects the EU's internal problems and the economic crisis that has been weakening the hegemonic position the Union was occupying in the eyes of its neighbours. The securitisation of borders, tight migration policies and the increased conditionality of ENPI agreements can be seen as means of

building a Europe with a more clear-cut spatial image under the NATO umbrella. It remains to be seen whether this means an end to the conceptual innovation and vanguard spatial imagery of the earlier documents of CBC policies that introduced notions of a Wider Europe and a European neighbourhood as symbols of a shared European space of cooperation.

Conclusions: CBC and sovereignty-challenging spatial imaginary in the European Neighbourhood

Through its cross-border cooperation programmes, the EU has been engaged in promoting regional stability beyond its external borders, in its immediate neighbourhood. It has adopted and encouraged a new spatial imagery of shared Europeanness or of a common European Neighbourhood that goes beyond the frigid dividing lines of the Cold War period. At the same time, the EU has elaborated new policies of shared or pooled sovereignty that diverge from traditional conceptions of sovereignty in terms of national interests and territorial integrity. There are, however, clear differences in what form and to what extent these sovereignty-challenging notions have been included in EU policies of CBC during different periods. Shifts in EU policies of CBC can be linked to changes both in the internal and external political environment (especially Russia's ambitions), to tasks concerning deepening integration and institutional consolidation of the political union, as well as challenges to border control by migration and smuggling. These changes have also affected the position of the EU's eastern neighbours and the way that sovereignty-challenging features of EU policies have met the realities beyond the border.

The first cross-border cooperation programmes (INTERREG I and II) were initially targeted at promoting interregional cohesion within the EU (at first the European Community (EC)) and based largely on an apolitical vision of (economic) cross-border regionalisation. In this respect, the sovereignty concept of the initial policy frames and instruments were not calibrated for tackling the problems of post-colonial and post-communist transition and barely suitable for promoting regional stability on the external borders. In terms of spatial imagery, INTERREG did not at first offer groundbreaking geopolitical visions to the neighbours. It promoted a supranational idea of Europe but this referred mainly to the existing EC or EU. For neighbours, this image of Europe appeared at worst as an exclusive concept and at best as a model for developing economic and political institutions in order to solve problems of post-communism. The first INTERREG programme did not include sovereignty-challenging practices in regard to the external borders. However, the apoliticised vision of regional development and economic cohesion naturalised the liberal models of EU internal policies and thus indirectly offered neighbours a model for solving problems of transition.

The INTERREG III programme (2000–2006) was modified significantly to meet post-communist conditions, although the logic of transition and the idea of Western models remained part of the document's architecture. INTERREG III

introduced a new place-making rhetoric and sovereignty-challenging policy formulations that mainly served as a tool for enlargement and pre-integration. At the same time, the concepts of Wider Europe and European Neighbourhood introduced new spatial imaginary of a shared European space of cooperation that went beyond the EU's boundaries. The programme language, that openly emphasised cross-border regionalisation even on external borders, was in this regard imbued with notions of shared European values. This added to the document a rather strong dimension of identity-political Europeanisation targeted primarily at easing the accession of Central and Eastern European countries. The elements of conditionality embedded in this rhetoric were at the time broadly discussed in the candidate countries and have later been openly criticised, especially in Russian political debates. With the souring of EU–Russia relations, this has exposed other countries of the ex-Soviet Union to pressures stemming from competing rationales contained in the policies of the Russian Federation and the EU as the case of Ukraine sadly testifies.

The ENP created a separate agenda for cross-border cooperation on the external borders and introduced country-specific agreements for implementing it in the neighbouring countries. At the same time, the beginnings of the ENP were closely linked to the institutional streamlining of the EU and the project of establishing a constitution, which later led to the Lisbon Treaty. With its emphasis on European values, the ENP promoted institutional and discursive Europeanisation that later fuelled discussions in the neighbouring countries, especially in the context of Russia's refusal to join the programme. The introduction of the concept of European Neighbourhood brought a new layer to the sovereignty-challenging policy definition of earlier CBC programmes. This neighbourhood was not only a frame for a certain type of economic development and interaction within the future enlarged Europe but a broader area under EU normative soft power with conditional perspectives for cooperation based on EU-defined European or shared values.

In the later formulation of EU common foreign and security policies it remains possible to discover the spatial imagery of a shared European Neighbourhood as a new kind of post-sovereign space. At the same time, the EU is clearly building external relations to distinct international actors in rather traditional geopolitical terms. Increased conditionality of the individual ENPI agreements carries ideas of European models that can be seen to hinder the neighbours to find their own paths through post-communist social change, nation-building and democratisation. In fact, a certain type of selective sovereignty notion attached to the definition of common foreign and security policies can be detected here. In contrast to the internal pooling of sovereignty, the EU is pushing forward with a more variegated logic in its external relations that advocates sovereignty-challenging practices for its neighbours while seeking to preserve its own sovereignty in rather classical terms.

Moreover, the formulation of common foreign and security policies has brought to the fore separate concepts for inclusive policies concerning internal borders and exclusive border policies of securitised external relations. The

securitisation of borders, tightening migration policies and the increased conditionality of ENPI agreements can all be seen as means of building a Europe with a more clear-cut spatial image – and perhaps an end to the sovereignty-challenging spatial imagery that was introduced in documents of CBC with notions of Wider Europe and European Neighbourhood.

Obviously, the direction EU policies have taken in terms of place-making strategies and sovereignty-challenging practices is not unequivocal at the moment. There are palpable tensions embedded in the political rhetoric and even institutional practices originating from earlier layers of CBC policies and especially from the growing tensions in relations with Russia. Their careful analysis and open discussion is a precondition for developing a common foreign policy in line with the task of making the EU a new kind of actor in international relations capable of promoting stability beyond its borders.