

Research Activity Nr.	2
Person in charge	Prof. Dr. Daniel Göler, Prof. Dr. Thomas Wünsch
Title	The normative dimension of EU-EEU relations: Role concepts, mutual perceptions and diverging norms
Description	<p>Since the social constructivist turn in IR, the relevance of norms, ideas and identities in international relations have been highlighted in many studies. Especially EU Foreign and Security Policy has been analysed in view of role concepts (Kirste/Maull 1996), civilian power (Orbie 2006) and normative power (Manners 2002). In all of these research approaches the self-perceptions of the EU as well as the perceptions of the EU by others and the EU's perceptions of others play an important role.</p> <p>Looking from this perspective at EU-Russian relations in the aftermath of the Ukrainian crisis, the subproject will analyse the EU's self-perception and to the Russian perception of the EU's foreign policy. As one explanation for the existing conflict are diverging fundamental role concepts, the analysis of both perspectives is crucial to understand and improve EU foreign policy. The assumption is that the EU considers itself a normative power that diffuses universal norms such as democracy, the rule of law and good governance, Russia perceives the EU as a "normal" geopolitical player that tries to expand its zone of influence by supporting regime changes in former Soviet Republics (Göler 2015). While the EU sees international cooperation as a win-win situation, from a Russian perspective it is seen as a zero-sum game, whereas the EU strongly beliefs in the positive-sum character of international cooperation.</p> <p>Against this backdrop, the research project aims to analyse the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How are Russia and the EEU (and their external policies) perceived in the European Union? 2) How is the EU (and its external policy) perceived in Russia? 3) What are the role concepts of the EU, Russia and the EEU? 4) What fundamental principles do the EU and the EEU/Russia consider as the driving forces of international cooperation (i.e. zero-sum or positive-sum assumptions)? 5) What consequences can be drawn from the research findings for the EU's future policy towards Russia and the complete Eurasian region? <p>These questions will be answered by an interdisciplinary research team based at the University of Passau. The strength of this research team is the combination of West European / EU expertise (Prof. Göler) and East European expertise (Prof. Wünsch) as well as the combination of a political science perspective (Prof. Göler) and an history perspective (Prof. Wünsch)</p> <p>The research project will draw on the following literature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Göler, Daniel: Wenn normative Macht zur geostrategischen Herausforderung wird. Überlegungen zur aktuellen Ukraine Krise, in: Zeitschrift für Politik, 62 (2015) No. 3, pp. 289-305. - Kirste, Knut / Maull, Hanns W.: Zivilmacht und Rollentheorie, in: Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen, 3 (1996) No. 2, pp. 283-31. - Manners, Ian: Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms? In: Journal of Common Market Studies, 40 (2002) No. 2, pp. 235-258. - Orbie, Ian: Civilian Power Europe Review of the Original and Current Debates, in: Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association, 41 (2006) No. 1, pp. 123-128.

Methodology	<p>The research project draws mainly on qualitative research methods. Especially by applying frame analysis the self-perceptions of the relevant actors as well as the perceptions of each other will be uncovered. Additionally, frame analysis should be used to investigate the basic principles and norms underpinning current conflicts. The data sample will consist of official documents of the EU and the EEU as well as of the Russian government. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with decision makers in the EU and the EEU will be conducted. The interviews will be conducted during field research trips to Brussels (EU-Institutions), Moscow (EEU Institutions), Yerevan (Armenia as a hard case for EU-EEU relations) and Budapest (special perspective of Central Eastern European Countries on the EU-EEU relations).</p>
Impact	<p>By combining the disciplines of political science and history a more holistic understanding of the EU, its foreign policy and Russia's/EEU's perception of it is provided, especially by reviewing current conflicts and their historic roots. Moreover, the project aims at strengthening the analysis of EU foreign policy by tracing the impact of mutual perceptions and role concepts.</p> <p>Apart from addressing the scientific community, the project also aims to contribution to the political debate. Therefore, the results shall not only be published in academic articles and conference papers but also in the format of concise policy papers aiming to reach political decision-makers.</p>
Resulting publications	<p>The first results of the project will be presented in a panel at a leading academic conference. Based on this panel one (or more) academic articles will be published in peer review journals. Depending on the contributions of the conference panel, a special issue in a leading international journal will be considered. In addition to the panel, researchers of the project will present their results in several conference papers at international scientific conferences.</p> <p>To reach a non-academic audience, the main results of the project will be also published in an executive summary designed for decision-makers and stakeholders.</p> <p>The results will also be published at Eastblog (https://eastblog.univie.ac.at/) at the website of the University of Vienna and in the newspaper "Der Standard" (https://www.derstandard.at/international/ub-eastblog).</p>