

Introduction

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This volume explores whether and how EU-integration policies and multi-tier governance structures could support sustainable solutions to some outstanding ethno-secessionist crises at the periphery of the EU, where ‘sustainable’ means that these solutions are perceived as both efficient and just. It studies the relevance of the process of Europeanization for the settlement of four secessionist conflicts: in Cyprus, Serbia and Montenegro, Georgia-Abkhazia and Moldova-Transnistria. All four cases entail unresolved secessionist crises:

- Cyprus has been divided since 1974. Recent proposals by the UN, in the context of EU accession, have made considerable use of federal models within a multi-tiered EU setting.
- Montenegro and Serbia have recently adopted a loosely federal Union constitution, which was achieved – precariously – with the help of strong pressure and incentives from the EU. The survival of the new State Union remains uncertain, with dissolution a tangible threat.
- In Moldova, the region of Transnistria has been *de facto* independent since the early 1990s. Competing proposals for federalization, sponsored by the OSCE and the Russian Federation, have been discussed recently without yet coming to fruition.
- Abkhazia seceded from Georgia after the war of 1992-93 and has since been *de facto* independent. So far, the UN-led attempts to resolve the question of its political status have failed.

The study makes a comparative assessment of the potential for supra-national and international settlement of these conflicts. It focuses on the role that could potentially be played by EU integration policies and institutional models borrowed from the European Union and its members – in particular, federations – together with mechanisms from other European institutions such as the OSCE or the Council of Europe, in the design of institutional solutions to such conflicts. In all these cases, conflict settlement may have to be facilitated by the intervention of third-party players.

Europeanization is the key concept in this study. In the field of secessionist conflict settlement and resolution, Europeanization should be understood as a process that is activated and encouraged by European institutions – primarily the European Union – by linking the final outcome of a conflict to some degree of integration into European structures for the opposing sides.

The European Union generates a new type of multi-level governance which leads to the transformation of the notion of sovereignty. The key mechanisms available in this process for addressing sovereignty-linked conflicts include conditionality and socialization. Of particular relevance in this context are institutional mechanisms allowing different forms of regional integration, division of sovereignty and the federalization of foreign policy.

This project sets out to study how such forms of governance and Europeanization mechanisms are considered in each of these cases, and the particular difficulties with their implementation. The prospects for a conflict settlement in these cases are related to

the parties' prospects of being integrated into the European framework, although the actual form and degree of Europeanization may vary widely from one case to another.

The concept of secession refers to the withdrawal of an area from the authority of a state through the creation of a new sovereign state.¹ Actions aimed at withdrawing an area from the authority of a central government may lead to secessionist conflicts, without necessarily leading to secession. Some of these secessionist conflicts may escalate to open violence, whereas others remain peacefully constrained within a legal and political order. When secession does take place, the new state may be considered in law to be a '*de facto*' state, without being recognized as sovereign by the international community. All these distinctions are essential for our research purposes.

There are several secessionist conflicts in Europe at present. Some are taking place within EU member states, others on the European periphery. Only some are violent. Among the violent ones, some have led to the creation of *de facto* states, while others have been suppressed by force. The selection of these four case-studies rests on two key presuppositions.

In the first place, we are interested in secessionist conflicts in divided states that, at the time of our research (April 2003-March 2004), were located outside the institutional boundaries of the European Union. We therefore do not respond to the questions of whether or how European integration and multi-tier governance structures in the new EU setting support state unity in EU member states such as Belgium, Spain or the United Kingdom, which are likewise confronted with secessionist movements. Instead, we focus on outstanding secessionist crises on the periphery of the EU, assuming that the process of Europeanization has very different effects on secessionist crises in states within the European Union and in states at its external boundary. The primary meaning of the concept of a periphery refers, in our research, to the centre-periphery model of European integration, where the centre is gradually incorporating countries at its periphery.² The states in the four case-studies we have selected have to varying degrees been integrated into the European Union and have very different prospects for acceding to it.

Cyprus has been accepted as a member of the EU. The State Union of Serbia and Montenegro is initiating a process of closer integration with the EU, with the prospect of

¹ On the definitions of 'secession' and 'secessionist processes' see Bruno Coppieters, Ivan M. Myhul and Michel Huyseune, "Introduction", in Bruno Coppieters and Michel Huyseune (eds), *Secession, History and the Social Sciences* (Brussels: VUB University Press, 2002), pp. 19-20 (<http://poli.vub.ac.be>) and Bruno Coppieters, "Introduction", Bruno Coppieters and Richard Sakwa (eds), *Contextualizing Secession: Normative Studies in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 4-5.

² The concept of a periphery carries different meanings in each of the cases considered. According to the European Union model of European integration, the European centre is gradually incorporating other European countries at its periphery, and this constitutes the first meaning of 'periphery' in the European context. In the Conclusion to this study, we elaborate on other distinct meanings of a periphery in relation to our four case-studies. On the distinction between the various meanings of a periphery, as applied to relations between the EU and Georgia in the early years after Georgian independence in 1991, see Bruno Coppieters, "Georgia in Europe: The Idea of a Periphery in International Relations", in Bruno Coppieters, Alexei Zverev and Dmitri Trenin, *Commonwealth and Independence in Post-Soviet Eurasia* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), pp. 44-68. This approach has been updated, to include the most recent period, in Bruno Coppieters, "An EU Special Representative to a New Periphery", *Chaillot Papers*, No. 65 (December 2003), The South Caucasus: A Challenge for the EU, edited by Dov Lynch, December 2003, pp. 161-170, <http://www.iss-eu.org/chaillot/chaif65e.pdf>.

full membership in due course. Moldova has made close association with the EU an official policy goal, and was included in 2003 in the EU's Wider Europe/New Neighbourhood framework. In Georgia, which is geographically farther than Moldova from the borders of an enlarged EU, the degree of Europeanization is low, but the Georgian government regards EU membership as a long-term goal. All the states considered are members of European organizations such as the OSCE or the Council of Europe.

The more peripheral these countries are to the European Union, the less compelling the incentive of Europeanization and, more importantly, the stronger the influence of Moscow and Washington. We call these two parallel processes Russification and Pax Americana, for short. We consider the compatibility, or risks of inconsistency, between the approaches taken in these conflicts by the three main third-party players.

Secondly, this comparative study does not consider all types of secessionist conflicts on the EU-periphery. We do not consider conflicts between central governments and secessionist movements generally, but exclusively secessionist conflicts between particular types of states – either between recognized and ‘*de facto*’ states³ (in the case of the conflicts involving the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Transnistria and Abkhazia) or between federated states (between Serbia and Montenegro). We assume here that the process of Europeanization – and particularly the application of the mechanisms of conditionality and socialization – have different effects on state structures headed by recognized governments or governments of ‘*de facto*’ states and on secessionist movements operating outside state structures.

In accordance with these two presuppositions, our choice of case-studies could also have included the conflicts on the status of Kosovo, Chechnya, South Ossetia or Nagorno-Karabakh. In these four cases too, a central government at the European periphery is confronted with a secessionist state entity and no final settlement on the question of status is in sight. Analysing the impact of European integration and multi-tier governance structures on the prospects for conflict resolution and a settlement in these four cases would probably reveal interesting individual features which are not present in the four cases we have selected (such as UN involvement in Kosovo or the ‘irredentist’ nature of the conflict on Nagorno-Karabakh). Settlement prospects in three out of those four cases (Chechnya, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh) are not, however, directly linked to the parties’ prospects of integration within the institutional framework of the European Union, and are thus in this respect quite similar to the conflict on Abkhazia, which is one of our case-studies. Kosovo’s prospects for integration into the European Union are closely linked to those of Serbia and Montenegro, which we also analyse in this volume. A broadening of our comparative research to other European cases would not, therefore, include new types of secessionist conflicts in divided states on the European periphery, insofar as the links between the prospects for a conflict settlement or

³ The criteria for determining whether statehood has objectively been established include a reasonably well-defined territory, a permanent population, a stable government, the capacity to enter into relations with other states and substantial independence from other states – see James Crawford, *The Creation of States in International Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. viii. In the case of the ‘*de facto*’ statehood of Chechnya, according to these criteria a distinction thus has to be made between the situations before and after the beginning of the Second Chechen War in 1999. It is also worth discussing to what extent some of the secessionist entities in Europe could be regarded as having substantial independence from neighbouring states and could thus be defined as ‘*de facto*’ states.

conflict resolution and the prospects of integration within the European Union or other European structures are concerned. In this respect, the European cases of secession that have not been addressed in our study are similar to our four case-studies. This is sufficient reason for restricting our comparison to four cases that have clearly different prospects of accession to the EU.

Our research has been carried out by combining theoretical expertise with the perceptions and experience of local players – officials, politicians and scholars in these conflict regions – who have been consulted through focus groups. Discussions with these groups were held in each of the four countries in 2003 and were organized separately for each of the parties involved in a conflict.⁴ A workshop organized in Brussels on 23-24 January 2004 enabled the authors of this publication and local scholars and players to compare European policies in the secessionist conflicts. By these means, this project set out to identify more precisely the problems raised by EU policies and by proposals to introduce European institutional models as instruments of conflict resolution for secessionist crises on the European periphery.

The next chapter to this book introduces some central concepts and distinctions, such as the concept of Europeanization, the mechanisms of conditionality and socialization, and the distinction between the European Union as an active player and as a framework organization. It compares the various federal options offered by a two-tier and a three-tier framework. Four chapters deal with the case-studies mentioned above. They analyse various forms of Europeanization in secessionist conflicts with different domestic and geopolitical backgrounds. The final chapter of this volume presents some elements of comparison and analysis.

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⁴ The discussions and interviews in Georgia and Abkhazia took place between 26 May and 3 June 2003, those in the southern and northern parts of Cyprus between 10 and 17 June 2003, in Serbia and Montenegro between 29 June and 6 July 2003, and in Moldova and Transnistria between 8 and 13 July 2003.

⁵ This study will also be published in Russian, Dutch and Chinese.

Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy.⁶

Marius Vahl gave a presentation comparing the cases of Cyprus and Moldova at a high-level conference in Chisinau on 11-12 September 2003. The conference, “Frozen Conflicts in Europe – The Approach of Democratic Security” was organized by the Moldovan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the secretariat of the Council of Europe, in connection with Moldova’s Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The opinions expressed in this book are of course the sole responsibility of the authors.

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⁶ ‘EU Policy on the Southern Caucasus’, policy paper for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Parliament (meeting of 20 January 2004), on the Internet on <http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/committees/afet/20040120/wider%20europe%20caucasus.pdf>

Cyprus

Population:	800,000 (of which approximately 210,000 Turkish Cypriots).
Capital:	Nicosia (Lefkosia or Lefkosha).
GDP per capita (in US dollars):	€15,000 in southern Cyprus and €4,400 in northern Cyprus.*
Key Historical Dates:	<p>1571: Cyprus becomes part of the Ottoman Empire.</p> <p>1878: Cyprus becomes part of the British Empire.</p> <p>1960: Cyprus becomes independent. The parties sign the Treaties of Establishment, Guarantee and Alliance.</p> <p>1963: The Greek Cypriot side unilaterally alters the constitution, and inter-communal fighting erupts. With the departure of the Turkish Cypriots, the Republic of Cyprus ceases to be a bi-communal Republic.</p> <p>1974: Following the Greek junta's coup extending the Greek dictatorship to Cyprus, Turkey intervenes militarily. The war ends with Turkey in control of 37% of the island.</p> <p>1975: The Turkish Cypriot authorities declare the establishment of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus.</p> <p>1977: The first high-level agreement is signed by the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot leaderships, committing them to the establishment of a bi-zonal and bi-communal Republic. (The second high-level agreement is signed in 1979).</p> <p>1983: The Turkish Cypriot authorities declare the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.</p> <p>2004: Under UN mediation, the parties launch the final round of the peace process to secure the reunification of the island before Cyprus's accession to the EU in May 2004. The UN Plan is put to referendum, passing in the north, but failing in the south.</p>
Relations with the EU:	Greece has been a member of the EU since 1981. Turkey has been a candidate for EU membership since 1999, but has not yet launched accession negotiations with the Union. Cyprus applied for EU membership in 1990 and joined the EU in May 2004.

* Source: European Commission, *Comprehensive Monitoring report on Cyprus's preparations for membership*, http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_2003/index.htm, p.52.

** Source: *ibid.* p.5.

Serbia and Montenegro

Population:	8.3 million (of which approximately 670,000 Montenegrin citizens). ¹
Capital:	Belgrade (capital of Montenegro: Podgorica).
GDP (in million of dinars):	1,006,900. ²
GDP per capita (in US dollars):	1,879. ³
Key Historical Dates:	<p>1918: Integration of Montenegro into the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, renamed Yugoslavia in 1929.</p> <p>1946: After the Second World War, communists take over power. Yugoslavia becomes the Yugoslav federation (SFRY), and adopts a new constitution which re-founds the state as a federation of six republics (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia).</p> <p>1991-92: Dissolution of the SFRY and foundation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), consisting of the republics of Serbia and Montenegro, on 27 April 1992.</p> <p>1999: The Kosovo war leads to the creation of an international protectorate with responsibility for the Serbian autonomous province of Kosovo. Montenegrin leadership, which has already begun to distance itself from Serbia, now affirms its intention to create an independent republic of Montenegro.</p> <p>2000: Downfall of Milosevic.</p> <p>2002: On 14 March, Serbia and Montenegro sign the Belgrade Agreement in which the two republics commit themselves to establishing the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro.</p> <p>2003: Adoption of the Constitutional Charter of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in February 2003.</p>
Relations with the EU:	The State Union of Serbia and Montenegro is part of the EU Stabilization and Association Process, which offers the prospect of EU membership. On fulfilment of the EU's requirements, the State Union is expected to negotiate and sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU.

¹ 2003 EBRD Transition Report. The population of Kosovo is not included in the total.

² 2003 EBRD Transition Report.

³ 2003 EBRD Transition Report.

The Moldovan-Transnistrian conflict

Population:	4.4 million (of which 600,000 in Transnistria). ¹
Capital:	Chisinau (capital of Transnistria: Tiraspol).
GDP:	1.9 billion US dollars. ²
GDP per capita:	460 US dollars. ³
Key historical dates:	<p>1812: Annexation of Bessarabia by the Russian Empire.</p> <p>1918: Unification of Bessarabia with Romania proclaimed by the Sfatul Tarii (legislative body), sanctioned in 1920 by the Treaty of Paris.</p> <p>1940: Soviet Army invades and occupies Bessarabia and creates the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic.</p> <p>1941-44: Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the Moldovan Union Republic comes under the control of Romanian military administration.</p> <p>1947: Signing of the Treaty of Paris, under which Romania cedes Moldova to the Soviet Union.</p> <p>1989: <i>31 August</i>, the Supreme Soviet of Moldova adopts legislation making Moldovan in Latin script the official state language, and provoking violent protests from various minorities.</p> <p>1990: <i>23 June</i>, Moldovan declaration of state sovereignty. <i>19 August</i>, proclamation of the Gagaouz Union Republic. <i>2 September</i>, proclamation of Dnestr Moldovan Republic.</p> <p>1991: <i>27 August</i>, declaration of independence of Moldova. <i>13 December</i>, Moldovan police return fire for the first time against Transnistrian forces around Dubassary; escalation of hostilities.</p> <p>1992: <i>28 March</i>, a state of emergency is declared by the Moldovan authorities. <i>June</i>, the 14th Soviet Army, stationed in Moldova, intervenes on the side of the Transnistrians and puts an end to hostilities. <i>21 July</i>, a cease-fire is signed in Moscow between the Moldovan and Russian presidents, and peacekeepers are deployed.</p> <p>1997: A Russian proposal for a 'Common State' is signed by Moldova and Transnistria.</p> <p>2001: The Communist Party wins the parliamentary elections.</p> <p>2002: A proposal for the creation of a federation ('the Kyiv document') is put forward by the three mediators, Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE.</p> <p>2003: A Joint Constitutional Commission is established to draft a new constitution. The EU and the US impose a travel ban on the leadership of Transnistria. A proposal ('the Kozak Memorandum') is put forward by Russia and rejected by the Moldovans.</p>
Relations with the EU:	A Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Moldova and the EU, signed in November 1994, entered into force on 1 July 1998. In 2004, an Action Plan for Moldova is developed within the framework of the EU's Wider Europe initiative.

¹ Source: 1989 Soviet census.

² International Monetary Fund, Country Report No. 04/39, February 2004.

³ International Monetary Fund, Country Report No. 04/39, February 2004.

Georgian-Abkhaz conflict

Population:	1989: 5.4 million (of which 525,000 citizens in Abkhazia including approximately 240,000 Georgians, 93,000 Abkhaz, 76,500 Armenians and 75,000 Russians). ¹ 2002: 4.4 million (excluding the population of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; the population figures of Abkhazia are contested).
Capital:	Tbilisi (capital of Abkhazia: Sukhumi (in Georgian) / Sukhum (in Abkhaz)). ²
GDP (in millions of lari in 2002):	7,457 (lari per US dollar, 2002 exchange rate: 2,196). ³
Key Historical Dates: ⁴	1783-1870s: Expansion of the Russian Empire into the Caucasus. 1918-21: Independent Georgian state. 1921: Soviet annexation of Georgia. 1989: Mass mobilizations and armed clashes in Abkhazia. 1991: Georgia declares independence and Zviad Gamsakhurdia is elected president of Georgia. 1992: Gamsakhurdia deposed in a <i>coup d'état</i> and Eduard Shevardnadze returns to Georgia to head the Georgian State Council. 1992-93: Georgian-Abkhaz war and defeat of the Georgian forces. 1994: Abkhazia declares sovereignty. 1995: New Georgian constitution. 1999: Abkhazia declares independence. 2003: Resignation of Eduard Shevardnadze. 2004: Mikheil Saakashvili elected president of Georgia.
Relations with the EU:	The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the European Union and Georgia came into force on 1 July 1999. It institutionalizes a 'political dialogue' between the signatories and creates a legal framework for all spheres of cooperation.

¹ Daniel Mueller, "Demography: ethno-demographic history, 1886-1989", in: George Hewitt (ed.), *The Abkhazians* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999), p. 237.

² Paulo Neuhaus *et al.*, *Georgia. Selected Issues and Statistical Appendix*, International Monetary Fund, IMF Country Report No. 03/307, 7 November 2003, p. 53, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.cfm?sk=17009.0>

³ *Ibid.*, p. 50

⁴ Jonathan Cohen (ed.), "A Question of Sovereignty. The Georgia-Abkhazia Peace Process", *Accord. An International Review of Peace Initiatives*, Vol. 7 (1999), pp. 80-87.