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The European Union : a "Soft Power" with Civilian Means?

Kultura i Polityka : zeszyty naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Europejskiej im. ks.
Józefa Tischnera w Krakowie nr 2/3, 60-74

2008

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

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Elsa Tulmets*

THE EUROPEAN UNION: A “SOFT POWER” WITH CIVILIAN MEANS?¹

Introduction

Scholars in the field of European integration and international relations did not pay great attention yet to the discourse on “soft power” which developed recently in the speeches on external relations of the European Union (EU). The expression was first defined by Joseph Nye within a debate on the foreign policy of the United States (Nye 1990a, 2004). But in the European context, it represents a specific approach recently developed to define the EU’s foreign policy identity on the international stage.

The article relies on an analysis of speeches and discourses by national / European politicians, Commissioners and higher civil servants interested in shaping EU’s foreign policy. Speeches are analysed to highlight how discourses are constructed and conceived at the EU level (Van Dijk, 1985). This is complemented by interviews conducted between 2003 and 2006 at the European Commission with civil servants of DG Enlargement, DG Relex and EuropeAid. Factual information is traced in confronting these various sources with secondary literature.

The article deals with the case study of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)². The ENP was launched in 2003 and aims at including, rather than excluding EU’s neighbours by resorting to similar policy ideas and philosophy as enlargement without – paradoxically – proposing any perspective for

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¹ This article is a shorten and modified version of: “Can the Discourse on “Soft Power” Help the EU to Bridge its Capability-Expectations Gap?”, *European Political Economy Review*, no. 7, Summer 2007, pp. 195–226. www.eper.org.

² The ENP was first addressed at countries of the Community of Independent States (CIS), then also at countries of the Mediterranean space and at the three countries of the South Caucasus, thus at following countries: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine. Russia refused in 2003 to be part of the ENP.

accession. In this case and in general, the article shows that the discourse on European “soft power” is an attempt to go beyond traditional understanding of foreign policy and of conditionality by relying on the power of attraction and on persuasion to define bilateral partnerships. But in practice, the EU can only rely on its civilian means, i.e. on the export of its internal norms and policies, to implement its foreign policies.

1. “Soft power”, the European Way: Attraction and Persuasion

Since the creation of European Political Cooperation (EPC) as a precursor of the Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP), academic debates have structured around different terms reflecting the evolution of specific EC/EU foreign and external relations. One cannot understand how the notion of EU “soft power” is used in the current international context without looking at the academic debate which started more than thirty years ago on the capacity of the European Community to become an international actor. After the failure of the European Defense Policy (EDP), François Duchêne (1973) described the EC as a “civilian power”, which Hedley Bull (1982) qualified as a “contradiction in terms”, as “power” alludes to “coercion” and “civilian” to “legitimacy” (Sjursen 2006a: 172). Given the large part of trade in EC’s foreign relations, Richard Rosecrance has described the EC by analogy to a “trading state” (Rosecrance 1998). The debate on EU’s foreign policy became actual again at the end of the 1980s and the EC started to use conditionality in its foreign relations: it began to promote norms in exchange of assistance and trade preferences in its relations with third states. In 2002, Ian Manners thus proposed to speak of the EU as a “normative power”, i.e. as capable to affirm itself on the international arena through the exportation of its own norms and values. The debate took a new orientation after the launching of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) at Maastricht (1992) and of an European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in 1999: Some authors asked if this development would mean the end of EU’s civilian power (Smith K. 2000), others explained that the making of military capacities did not mean its end as the EU itself responds to security issues more in a civilian than in a military way (Stavridis 2001). The war in the Western Balkans at the beginning of the 1990s for example revealed the extreme weakness of the EU’s military capacities. The EU preferred to get engaged in conflict prevention and crisis management activities rather than in hard military actions. This trend was intensified after a more “soft” understanding of security was brought up by “neutral” member states (Austria, Finland, Sweden) and new forms of threats defined after 9/11. The European Security Strategy of 2003 was partly elaborated in reaction to the American security strategies issued after this event. It highlights the political will of the EU to rely on civilian

means to resolve security issues (Solana 2003). The Barcelona report on “Human security doctrine” handed out in 2004 to J. Solana proposes to adopt this doctrine inspired by the experience of the Organisation for security and cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to enhance EU’s civil-military capacities to deal with conflicts (Barcelona report, 2004). In the context of the war in Iraq in 2003, the dominant positions of France and Germany against military interventions emphasised the different policy styles the EU and the US are ready to adopt to respond to new security challenges and to foster democracy in their neighbourhood and abroad. Robert Kagan schematised the (transatlantic) dispute as following: EU’s power, based on the diffusion of norms and values and characterised by poor military capacities, “comes from Venus”, while the more military and martial American approach clearly “comes from Mars” (Kagan 2002). The old debate between “hard” and “soft” power, originally risen by realists and institutionalists for the American foreign policy alone, recently took the shape of transatlantic discourses of the United States’ (hard power) versus EU’s (soft power) foreign policy cultures³.

Although many analysts have noticed a recent change in the American conception of foreign policy evolving towards a softer approach of foreign policy, the underlining premises of the US and the EU “soft power” are not exactly the same. In the US conception, “soft power” cannot be separated from the presence of “hard power”: it can work only if economic and military might is present as a credible threat of sanction. Joseph Nye argues that Americans are right to be concerned about the changing position of their country in the world after the end of the Cold War, but wrong to see this change as a decline (Nye, 1990a). The main idea is that, at the era of information age and of globalisation, the nature of power has changed and enables the United States to be still very present on the international stage.

The sources of power are, in general, moving away from the emphasis on military force and conquest that marked earlier eras. In assessing international power today, factors such as technology, education, and economic growth are becoming more important, whereas geography, population, and raw materials are becoming less important (Nye 1990a: 29).

Even in the context of the war in Kosovo and later, of the engagement of the Bush government in the war in Iraq in the early 2000, Nye argued that “soft power” should be privileged over “hard power” so to increase the policy’s legitimacy abroad, as well as to favour mid- or long-term influence and stabilisation processes (Nye 2002, 2004). Although used in various contexts, Nye’s definition of “soft power” did not change over time, it still represents.

³ For more details on these debates, see (Sjursen 2006a).

the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. When you can get others to want what you want, you do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction. Hard power, the ability to coerce, grows out of a country’s military and economic might. Soft power arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced” (Nye 2004: 256).

According to Nye, “soft power” means lower costs in the longer run through avoiding the use of traditional coercive foreign policy tools like conditionality, sanctions and military interventions (“carrots and sticks”). But a policy will gain legitimacy if a country relies more on its “soft power” than on its “hard power”, i.e. on co-optive methods rather than on coercive ones (Nye 2004). This is apparently what inspired the new European discourse on “soft power”. However, the EU’s “soft power” lies on different premises than the American one. In absence of military “hard power”, European “soft power” mainly relies on negative conditionality (advantages are suppressed or suspended if reforms not conducted) and economic sanctions⁴. But in practice, the EU is reluctant to use this “hard power” (e.g. Wilde d’Estmaël, 1998) and prefers to use positive conditionality (reforms are supported with assistance) and to play with its power of attraction and of persuasion.

In the 1990s especially, the rather coercive approach of conditionality – as it is often described in the literature (e.g. Dolowitz, Marsh, 1996) – has therefore been complemented by more voluntary measures like new policy ideas (commitments to common values), a philosophy based on differentiation, mutual agreements or joint-ownership (partnership), participation and deconcentration / decentralisation as well as by innovative ways of controlling and evaluating the meeting of accession criteria or commitments. These have been tested in a more extended way in the reform of EU enlargement and of EU development policy before being adopted in the European Neighbourhood Policy (Tulmets, 2003, 2006). But while in enlargement, the security question was solved by extending abroad the policy of justice and home affairs, imposing the Schengen regime to the East and supporting the parallel accession of EU candidates to the NATO, in more classical foreign policies, the EU has to deal with different security issues.

In 2003, the Commission concluded that the fifth enlargement was “EU’s most successful foreign policy” (EC 2003a: 5). When Macedonia was granted the status of candidate country at the end of 2005, the Commissioner for enlargement Olli Rehn stated that enlargement had been “the most powerful political instrument” the EU had at its disposal to stabilise and transform third

⁴ I thank Pascal Vennesson for his very useful remarks on this point. On economic sanctions, see (Wilde D’Estmael 1998).

countries into “stable and prosperous democracies” and that this was due to the specific “soft power” approach adopted during the fifth enlargement of the EU (Agence Europe 2005).

Another important difference lies in the fact that the EU prefers mid or long-term approaches rather than short term ones.

If we look at the likely shape of the world in 50 years, the ability to deploy considerable soft power will be vital. Today the EU and US have unrivalled influence in terms of relative wealth and power. But power relationships may look rather different in the future” (Ferrero-Waldner 2006a).

In practice, the main way for the EU to gain influence and to secure its environment is to export its own internal norms and policies abroad, but also to develop the external dimension of these internal policies.

2. EU’s “Soft power” in Practice. The Recourse to Civilian Means

In practice, the European Union growingly mobilises civilian means to implement its “soft power”. For Kirste and Maull, a civilian power’s “conception of its foreign policy role and behaviour is bound to particular aims, values, principles, as well as forms of influence and instruments of power in the name of a civilisation of international relations” (Kirste, Maull, 1996: 300). It also refers to five policy dimensions, 1) constrain and monopolise the use of force and promote the peaceful settlement of conflicts; 2) promote the rule of law and institutions; 3) promote the culture of non-violence; 4) promote social fairness and distributory justice, and 5) promote participatory decisions. This definition was defined for the post World War II Germany, but perfectly apply to the way the EU intends to give flesh to its “soft power”.

2.1. The Experience of Enlargement: Create Stability in Extending EU Policies Abroad

To some extent, the European Union is an answer to globalisation as it grew up around a common internal market. With globalisation many of these internal policies have developed an external dimension. The politicisation of the various sectorial issues built the ground for the export of EU’s internal norms and values abroad in addition to classical foreign policy tools. This process was made possible as policy adaptation took place from internal policies to the external ones, *via* enlargement, a process which is often seen as an answer to globalisation.

We already have an impressive range of policy instruments, including development aid, diplomacy, trade policy, civilian and military crisis management, and humanitarian assistance. We also need to do more to recognise and utilise the external dimension of the EU’s internal policies. Thanks to globalisation, most internal policies now have an international element. (Ferrero-Waldner, 2006a).

As a matter of fact, these policies are as diverse as agriculture, competition, environment, fisheries, justice and home affairs, etc. Enlargement always represented a strong incentive and window of opportunity for the European community/Union to reform itself and thus to better export its own norms abroad. The deepening running parallel to the fifth enlargement thus played an important role in helping the EU to define its own identity, especially through the two Intergovernmental Conferences (conventions) aiming at constitutionalising EU’s norms and values. In this sense, it is difficult to separate deepening from enlarging, as both participated to link internal policies to external ones, thus to externalise EU policies, norms and standards.

2.2. The Experience of the Western Balkans

The war in the Western Balkans in the 1990s had important consequences on the European foreign policy. It was a first – unfortunately negative – test for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) born in 1992. The war in Kosovo has particularly conducted to the creation of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Under the German presidency of the European Council, guidelines were set to coordinate the resources of the member states in the field of non-military crisis management (Nowak, 2006: 21). The Council of Helsinki of December 1999 adopted an “Action Plan for non-military crisis management of the EU” with four priority areas – civilian police, rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection – which were approved at the European Council of Feira in 2000. Civilian police and special units was envisaged for targeted interventions in countries where public security problems and weak institutions could make purely civilian interventions too risky and a European Gendarmerie Force was created for ESDP operations. As far as the rule of law is concerned, the experience of the Balkans and Kosovo showed that the substitution measures are initially needed to replace failing or non-existing state structures, focusing primarily on law, order and the penal system Civilian administration can be provided by the EU in order to assume on a temporary basis the management and performance of the usual administrative tasks of a regions in crisis. In 2002, a Community Civilian Protection Mechanism was established as a civilian protection tool within the EU as well as for external missions of EC humanitarian aid.

3. A “Hard” Case for EU’s “Soft Power”. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)

Speeches at the EU level and documents of the Commission on the ENP show that many elements of enlargement policy have clearly been taken over and adapted to the context of neighbourhood (EC 2003a, 2004a; Del Sarto, Schumacher 2005; Tulmets 2005b; Kelley 2006). However, both policies have totally opposed purposes: Enlargement aims at including countries while the ENP insists on maintaining a certain distance between the EU and the neighbours. Nevertheless, specific policy ideas, concepts and methods have been shaped to export internal policies abroad and to implement the ENP on the basis of the experience of enlargement to build policy, which should be able to exert a “soft power” on its neighbourhood. However, contrary to enlargement, the EU’s “soft power” sometimes means the ability to attract, sometimes the ability to persuade. And in practice, it mainly relies on civilian means to implement the ENP.

3.1. A Policy between Attraction and Persuasion

The policies of enlargement and of Neighbourhood represent the first external policies of the European Union where the notion of “soft power” was explicitly formulated in official public discourses. The Commissioner for External Relations and ENP Ferrero-Waldner clearly mentioned in her speeches on EU foreign policy of January 2005 the importance of EU’s “soft power” in the world as an answer to R. Kagan’s critique that the EU is coming from Venus and the US from Mars (Ferrero-Waldner 2005a). She more recently stressed the role of the ENP as a way to use and improve this “soft power” (Ferrero-Waldner 2006b). Eneko Landaburu, previously director at DG Enlargement and now Director General at DG External Relations, used several times the expression “soft power” since the speech entitled “From Neighbourhood to Integration Policy: are there concrete alternatives to enlargement?” (Landaburu 2006). Like the European Security Strategy suggests, it is a way for the EU to present itself as an important, influential and legitimate actor, despite the weakness of its defence policy (Solana 2003).

However, the contexts of enlargement and of neighbourhood are rather different. Scholars in the field of European studies and international relations mainly emphasise the strong economic links and geographic proximity between the enlarged European Union and its new neighbours, but also all possible risks emerging at EU’s borders and from an unstable neighbourhood. This context incited the EU to launch tighter political, economic, and cultural relations with these countries rather than to build a new dividing curtain.

When looking at official speeches, the EU does not envisage any brand new structure to deal with security issues in its neighbourhood. The European Union has learned lessons from negative experiences with conditionality in Eastern non-candidate states: traditional (negative) conditionality imposed on Belarus authoritarian state have yielded little, and the EU had little influence over the Transdnistria conflict in Moldova⁵. Thus, like in enlargement, success or failure of negative and positive conditionality is mainly linked to the national context and to the political will of third states to cooperate and to introduce national reforms (interviews, EC, DG Enlargement, 2004; DG Relex, 2006). Like Günter Verheugen explained in 2004.

One basic principle behind the ring of friends we are forging is joint ownership. Of course, we cannot impose the policy on any neighbour. We are offering closer co-operation across the broad spectrum of our relations, from political dialogue to economic integration. (Verheugen, 2004)

As a matter of fact, the Commission mentioned in its communication of 2003 that “the new neighbourhood policy should not override the existing framework for EU relations with [third] countries..., instead, it will supplement and build on existing policies and arrangements” and respect the rhythm of each country in coming closer to the EU (EC 2003a: 15,16). The Commission proposed that benchmarks “should be developed in close cooperation with the partner countries themselves, in order to ensure national ownership and commitment” (EC 2003a: 16), thus to counter-balance the unilateral approach of conditionality as benchmarks “offer greater predictability and certainty for the partner country than the traditional *conditionality*”. (Ibidem)

All the interviews conducted at the Commission between 2003 and 2006 systematically emphasise the difference of context between enlargement and Neighbourhood: “The EU has no means to impose norms to sovereign states actually not in the position or not able to become a candidate state” (Interview, DG Relex, February 2006; also EC, 2003a). The only way out for the EU is to rely on its power of attraction or “gravitational power” like Benita Ferrero-Waldner and Eneko Landaburu clearly stated in their speeches and, if needed, on its power of persuasion.

As a matter of fact, not all neighbours are interested in the EU’s offer. At least three groups of countries can be identified according to their governmental political positions (presence or absence of expectations *vis-à-vis* the enhanced cooperation with the EU) and/or to their perspective of accession (presence or absence of expectations linked to accession):

⁵ Previous economic sanctions toward the USSR, South Africa and Iran also offered negative experiences for the European Community (Wilde D’Estmael 1998).

a) The first group of countries is not participating in the ENP, as a result of a political decision on the neighbour state's side (e.g. Russia, Belarus, Algeria) and/or of the lack of political consensus on the EU's side (e.g. Belarus, Libya, Syria). Depending on the political situation and will of the neighbouring countries (e.g. Belarus) and on the evolution of political discussions within the EU, these countries could become an active part of the ENP.

b) The second group consists of the countries which negotiated Association Agreement (AA) or Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) and are interested in enhancing their relations with the EU in various policy fields through the negotiation of more precise and politically engaging Action Plans. These countries are part of the ENP but have no perspective of accession or have not expressed interest in EU membership so far (e.g. Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Armenia, Azerbaijan). Differentiation among this group is important as the degree of cooperation with the EU varies greatly.

c) The third group is composed of countries motivated by closer ties to the EU, in particular because they have a right – and expressed the wish – to become candidate countries to the EU (e.g. Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova). But at the moment, the ENP clearly represents an “offer”, a “concrete alternative” to enlargement (e.g. Landaburu 2006) which tends to take the shape of a policy with variable geometry (Tulmets 2006).

Therefore, one has to differentiate between the power of attraction and the power of persuasion of the EU “soft power” in the ENP. What the concept of “soft power” entails – and the academic notions of civilian / normative / civilising power do not address⁶ – is the will of the EU to become a *pole of attraction* for third states.

How can we [the EU] use our soft power, our transformative power, our gravitational influence, to leverage the reforms we would like to see in our neighbourhood? ... We are a ‘pole of attraction’ for our region – countries along our borders actively seek closer relations with us and we, in turn, want closer relations with these neighbours” (Landaburu 2006: 2, 3).

One of the main lessons learned from enlargement is that the adoption of EU norms was facilitated by the incentive of accession and the political will of third countries to do so. Without the perspective of accession, the only option for the EU is to be attractive so that third states comply to its norms and take recommendations seriously.

The goal of accession is certainly the most powerful stimulus for reform we can think of. But why should a less ambitious goal not have some effect? A substantive and workable concept of proximity *would* have a positive effect ... It must be attractive, it must unlock new prospects and create an open and dynamic framework. (Prodi 2002).

⁶ For an academic discussion on these terms, see (Sjursen 2006a).

In various speeches, “soft power” also means the ability of the EU *to persuade* third states to comply with its norms and values.

It is true that our principal source of power – our power of attraction – is “soft” rather than “hard”. But it is no less potent... If we are to preserve an international order based on the rule of law and respect for those values we hold dear – human rights, democracy, good governance – we need to be using all means at our disposal to persuade emerging powers to sign up to it now (Ferrero-Waldner, 2006a).

These elements have also been stressed by Robert Cooper, a British diplomat working at the Council, and Eneko Landaburu, Director general at DG Relex. B. Ferrero-Waldner further made references to Chris Patten’s expression of “soft power” as a “weapon of mass attraction”, a quotation which comes from the previous Commissioner’s book “Not quite the diplomat” (Patten 2005)⁷. For B. Ferrero-Waldner, “soft power” does not exclude the complementary use of “hard power”, i.e. the use of military means or economic sanctions: “We need to link intelligently firm action to soft influence, ‘hard power’ to ‘soft power’” (Ferrero-Waldner 2005a; 2006a).

In absence of credible military means, conditionality is considered as EU’s “hard power”, it means that the EU can rely on various instruments like the suspension of economic agreements when engagements are not respected. In the context of the last enlargement, conditionality particularly “worked” because of the incentive of accession. Without this incentive, EU’s “hard power” loses legitimacy. Interviews at the Commission revealed that persuasion through negotiation in committees or in forums as well as shaming through annual reports are considered as a more efficient way of shaping relations with third states than traditional (negative) conditionality (interview, DG Enlargement / Western Balkan, April 2006). The mutually agreed political contracts (Action plans) should represent a way to answer criticism on the asymmetry of economic agreements (association agreements, partnership and cooperation agreements) as well as on the unilateral character of conditionality.

3.2. Implementing the ENP. The Use of Civilian Means

The potential threats – terrorism, illegal traffic, instability in bordering regions – listed in the speeches on the ENP also contributed to justify the financial expenses of €12 billion for the period of 2007–2013 towards the ENP countries. In 2002, R. Prodi explained that the Union needs to take the necessary measures to answer its growing global responsibilities: “If we want to satisfy the rising

⁷ I thank René Vandermosten, European Commission Fellow at the EUI in 2005–2006, for alerting me on this point.

expectations and hopes of countries abroad and the peoples of Europe, we have to become a real global player. We are only beginning to act as one” (Prodi 2002).

While the phase of launching of the ENP in 2002–2004 corresponded clearly to a process of limited rationality, it seems that the ENP now slowly enters this phase of learning from past failure for the new political context. As described by C. Lindblom (1959), limited rationality implies that civil servants reproduce or imitate in a different context what they can do best. In the first speeches, “soft power” referred to EU’s specific way of building stability through enlargement: “The ENP is an opportunity for us, and our partners, to share the benefits which we have derived from half a century of peaceful integration” (Ferrero-Waldner 2005b; see also EC 2003a). In practice, the EU still prefers positive civilian to coercive military measures (Smith 2003: 111; Sjurson 2006b: 237): “Access to the world’s biggest internal market and our sizeable assistance programmes are considerable carrots” (Ferrero-Waldner 2006a).

However, the redefinition of cooperative and stable relations with EU’s new neighbours is more challenging in practice than enlargement. As a matter of fact, several countries are struggling with internal crisis or linked to regional ones and their geographical proximity is perceived as a danger for EU’s stability and security. In its strategy documents, the Commission mentions the tensed situations in Transdnistria (Moldova), between Morocco and Western Sahara, in the Middle-East and in South Caucasus (EC 2004a). Therefore, one expects the EU to grasp further experiences than enlargement in order to ensure peace and stability. This is what the EU does, but the way the EU intends to deal with situations of conflict is still consistent with the definition of a civilian approach. The European Security Strategy for example emphasises the civilian dimension in the field of crisis prevention and management (Solana 2003). Recent interviews at the Commission reveal that the experience of war in the Western Balkans still plays a major role in the way the implementation of the ENP is thought through. EU officials do not want to replicate what is often considered as a “failure” in EU’s external policy on European territory and are open towards greater reflexive approach on what can be learned from the past to perfection the ENP. This is especially the case in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management, like the Rule of Law mission EUROJUST Themis in Georgia and the ESDP mission on border management at the Ukrainian-Moldovan border show⁸.

Conclusion. The EU, a “Soft Power” with Civilian Means

The article has highlighted the fact that the discourse on “soft power” represents a specific approach recently developed by the European Union in order to

⁸ More on this, see the contributions in (Nowak 2006).

co-opt rather than to coerce third countries. It refers to a combination of policy discourses on the attractive power of European values and norms, the power of persuasion, but also a philosophy based on partnership, differentiation and participation. Contrary to Nye’s conception of US “hard power” referring to military and economic might, EU’s “hard power” only relies on conditionality and potential economic sanctions. The article also shows that, in practice, the EU relies on civilian means, i.e. mainly the export of its internal policies, to give flesh to its “soft power”. The case of the European Neighbourhood Policy shows that enlargement has offered innovative policy ideas and policy tools, and that situations of conflict prevention and management mainly mobilise civilian resources. As the ENP recently started to be implemented, the question is open to know if the EU’s “soft power” with civilian means will be efficient enough to contribute to the effective “stability, security and prosperity” in its neighbourhood.

Abstrakt

Artykuł analizuje pojęcie „soft power” w odniesieniu do jednego z instrumentów Wspólnej Polityki Zagranicznej UE, Europejskiej Polityki Sąsiedztwa (EPS). Przedstawia debatę dotyczącą miękkiej i twardej siły rozgorzałą na przełomie XX i XXI wieku pomiędzy intelektualistami i aktorami politycznymi Stanów Zjednoczonych i Europy.

Artykuł analizuje EPS jako nowy instrument polityki UE, budzący stale kontrowersje oraz przedstawia EPS jako egzemplifikację europejskiej „soft power”.

Analizując możliwości i skuteczność EPS zderzono spojrzenie administracji europejskiej z opiniami podmiotów tejże polityki – przedstawicielami z Gruzji i Ukrainy.

Abstract

The article shows that the term “soft power”, first coined for the American foreign policy, is now used in the speeches on external relations of the European Union. It explores the hypothesis that this discourse represents an attempt to go beyond a traditional understanding of foreign policy and of conditionality. While in the European context the notion of “soft power” means either the power of attraction or of persuasion, in practice, the EU tries to position itself on the international stage by preferring civilian over coercive means. To show this, it analyses the case of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), a policy launched in 2003 for the new neighbours of the EU which draws on the experience of enlargement by exporting internal norms and policies abroad. Keywords: European Union, soft power, civilian means, European Neighbourhood Policy

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