

## BOOK REVIEW

**Tina Freyburg, Sandra Lavenex, Frank Schimmelfennig, Tatiana Skripka and Anne Wetzel. 2015. *Democracy Promotion by Functional Cooperation. The European Union and its Neighbourhood. Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century*. Palgrave Macmillan, UK, 291 pages, ISBN: 978-1-137-48934-0**

**Nadiia BUREIKO**

Postdoctoral researcher, University of St. Gallen/Switzerland, and Research fellow at the Institute of Advanced Study, New Europe College, Romania  
*nadia.bureiko@gmail.com*

The fall of the communist regimes in the late 80s – early 90s has seen the European Union (EU) committed to democracy consolidation in the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs). The success of this endeavour – external democracy promotion – has been mainly facilitated by the Eastern enlargement process. However, unlike the case of the CEECs, in the countries subject to the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) the lack of EU membership perspective has often impeded democracy consolidation. Moreover, in many of the countries from both the Southern and Eastern neighbourhood the process of democracy promotion has also faced resistance of the internal political regimes due to their unwillingness or unreadiness to change.

Studying democracy promotion in the EU's neighbouring countries has challenged the academics who aim at finding better models and tools for the EU external policy or improving the existing ones.

As it stems from the title, the present book jointly written by five known authors in the field provides a study on how democracy can be promoted through 'functional cooperation' between the EU and its neighbourhood. As such, the authors undertake a solid investigation into the EU's means of promoting democratic governance via sector cooperation. The study poses the question to which extent the 'functional governance' model is able to bring alternative or complement conventional forms of external democracy promotion. To this end, the book aims to go beyond the existing literature on EU democracy promotion theoretically and empirically. The book is clearly organized and is divided into nine chapters. Together they provide

an excellent comparative analysis of the democracy promotion in three neighbourhood countries (Moldova, Ukraine and Morocco) over an extended time frame.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on three models of democracy promotion. In fact, chapter 1 gives a well-structured theoretical insight into the notion of democracy promotion and its 'ideal-typical' models – linkage, leverage and governance. As the authors claim, these three are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they complement each other.

Chapter 2 examines the effectiveness and limits of linkage and leverage as 'traditional' models of democracy promotion in the EU neighbouring countries. To test their effectiveness, the authors employ panel regression analysis which covers 36 non-member countries in the European neighbourhood (from both South Mediterranean and Eastern Europe) from the late 80s until the launch of the ENP in 2004. Based on the results of the regression, the authors claim that both the linkage and leverage have significantly contributed to democracy promotion. Concurrently, their effects are weakening, first, due to the lack of membership perspective and, second, due to the geographic location of the countries, far away from the EU core (p. 40-41).

Having this as a backdrop, in chapter 3 the authors conceptualize and elaborate the third model of democracy promotion – governance – which focuses on the transfer of democratic governance through the functional cooperation in specific sectors. Whereas the first two models target the democratization process, making use of either conditionality (leverage) or civil society support and transnational changes (linkage), the functional governance explores democratization processes at the level of sectoral policy making.

The analytical framework features three dimensions such as transparency and accountability of public conduct and societal participation in democratic public policy-making (p. 47). The governance model emphasizes principles of democratically legitimate political-administrative rule, which are promoted through transgovernmental networks of public administration (p. 58). The authors consider political liberalization and membership aspirations to be scope conditions for successful promotion of democratic governance from the EU to the neighbourhood.

Chapter 4 gives an account of the ENP introducing the countries and policies subjective to comparative analysis. It is underlined that the ENP is a unique set-up for analyzing the transfer of the democratic governance provisions through functional cooperation in the policy sectoral dimension,

since it provides the institutional framework for projecting the EU rules beyond the membership candidates (p. 63-65). The chapter discusses both bilateral and multilateral structures of external governance and explains the selection of cases for the empirical study. As the authors argue, two countries from the Eastern Neighbourhood and one from the Southern Neighbourhood (Moldova, Ukraine and Morocco) respectively have been the most promising countries with regard to their capacity to adopt parts from the EU's sectoral *acquis*. Thus, they are the candidates whose democratic governance through functional cooperation would likely have better results (p. 70-72). In addition, the chapter explains the choice of policy sectors: competition (state aid), environment (water management), and migration (asylum). The selection of these policy sectors is based on the previously codified provisions of democratic governance. In particular, it is emphasized that codification is strong in the field of environment whilst it remains comparatively salient for migration and weak for the competition policy. Therefore, the book gives the reader a broad overview of the topic while examining the country-level and sector-level conditions for democracy promotion.

The following three chapters gather relevant empirical evidence collected in Moldova (chapter 5), Morocco (chapter 6), and Ukraine (chapter 6). The case studies cover legislative adoption and the practical application of the key democratic governance rules - transparency, accountability and participation - in the aforementioned three policy sectors. The chapters with selected case studies are structured upon the defined sectoral policies with a deeply detailed analysis. They present a thorough investigation into the peculiarities of each case by including extensive interviews conducted both in Brussels and in the capitals of each country.

Chapter 8 gives a comparative analysis of the case studies and assesses the impact of the country properties and sector-specific factors on the adoption and application of democratic governance provision. Concerning the features of cooperation in different sectors, the results across the studied countries vary. The same happens with the sector-specific factors. First, it is underlined that the selected cases are dissimilar due to the EU membership aspirations of the particular country. Second, all three cases are different in terms of their openness to embracing governance reforms. Ukraine and Moldova have higher degree of political liberalization than Morocco. It means that the latter is less successful in adoption and application of democratic governance rule. As argued in the chapter, a minimum degree of political liberalization is a necessary condition for democratic governance reform. Concurrently, the

examples drawn from the case studies show that both rule adoption and application are quite similar for each studied country. In particular, rule transfer is relatively successful, whereas the implementation of democratic governance provisions remains weak.

Chapter 9 presents conclusions with a critical discussion of the governance model in the EU neighbourhood and possible scenarios for democratization through this model. The authors conclude that even if the democratic rules have been adopted, their application remains insufficient (p. 234). It is argued that democratic governance does not necessarily lead to democratization of the political institutions (p. 235), however “it may yet turn out to be the EU’s best chance in short term” (p. 239). Finally, the book brings perspectives for further researching the conditions under which the spillover effects of democratic governance promotion towards the regime change.