

European Integration in Times of Security Challenges



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Editors:

Andreas Kellerhals, Tobias Baumgartner, Fatlum Ademi

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Preface

This publication comprises the contributions presented at the 15th Network Europe Conference, held in Split, Croatia, in September 2024. The conference addressed various challenges facing the European integration process in light of current global developments, as well as aspects of the EU's enlargement perspectives.

The European Commission's *Enlargement Package* for 2023 proposed opening accession negotiations with Ukraine, Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, while also granting candidate status to Georgia. As a result, the EU now has seven candidate states and two potential candidate countries. In this context, the EU must ensure that accession requirements are met in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria. Another round of enlargement also necessitates institutional reforms, including adjustments to the composition of EU institutions and the requirement for unanimity in decision-making. The *Conference on the Future of Europe* (2022–2023) provided significant impetus for such reforms, with strong involvement from civil society.

In the realm of migration policy, notable progress has been made. The *New Pact on Migration and Asylum*, adopted in December 2023, represents a landmark initiative aimed at normalizing and managing migration in the long term. Anchored in principles of solidarity, shared responsibility, and human rights, the agreement aspires to establish a coherent and unified approach to migration and asylum across member states. Meanwhile, the EU continues to navigate the complexities of its twin digital and green transitions, with debates often reflecting the diverse interests of its members.

Another significant milestone in 2023 was the adoption of the world's first legal framework regulating artificial intelligence, underscoring the EU's ambition to set global standards. However, questions remain regarding its implementation and its implications for the digital economy, leaving room for further deliberation and adjustment.

Against this backdrop, the contributions in this publication address various crucial topics. In retrospect, the developments discussed during the conference have gained even greater significance. They highlight the dynamic inter-

play between policy-making and societal engagement and underscore the EU's ongoing efforts to balance its ambitious goals with the practical challenges of governance in a geopolitically shifting world.

Zurich, February 2025

Prof. Dr. Andreas Kellerhals
Dr. Tobias Baumgartner
MLaw, Fatlum Ademi

Authors/Editors

ADEMI FATLUM, MLaw, Europa Institute at the University of Zurich, Switzerland

BAUMGARTNER TOBIAS, Dr., LL.M., Deputy Director, Europa Institute at the University of Zurich, Switzerland

CERANIC PERISIC JELENA, Prof. Dr., Director of the Institute for Comparative Law of Belgrade, Serbia

CIBOTARU VIOREL, Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to the Kingdom of Belgium and Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Head of Mission to NATO, Belgium, Former Director of the European Institute for Political Studies in Moldova, Moldova

GOLDNER LANG IRIS, Prof. Dr., Professor at the University of Zagreb, Croatia

GORTSOS CHRISTOS V., Prof. Dr., Professor of Public Economic and European Union Law, Law School of the National and Kapodistrian, Greece

HALMAI GABOR, Prof. Dr. (em.), Em. Professor of Law, Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary

JANO DORIAN, Prof. Dr., Executive Director with the Albanian Institute of Public Affairs in Tirana, Holder of the Jean Monnet Chair, Albania

KELLERHALS ANDREAS, Prof. Dr., Director at the Europa Institute at the University of Zurich, Switzerland

LANG MAROJE, Dr., Vice Governor at the Croatian Central Bank

MCGOWAN LEE, Prof. Dr., Professor at the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland

PETROV ROMAN, Prof. Dr., Jean Monnet Chair in European Union Law National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine

PORTELA CLARA, Prof. Dr., Professor of Political Science at the Law School of the University of Valencia, Spain

SANTOS VARA JUAN, Prof. Dr., Professor of Public and International Law at the University of Salamanca and Jean Monnet Chair in EU External Action, Spain

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The Process, The Policy, and The Strategy of EU Enlargement

Dorian Jano*

Abstract

The European Union's (EU) enlargement represents one of its most transformative projects, reflecting the Union's capacity to foster integration, stability, and regional development. By expanding its borders, the EU not only reshapes its internal dynamics but also reinforces its normative and geopolitical influence. This article provides a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding the dynamics of EU enlargement by discussing its three aspects: process, policy, and strategy. The interplay between these aspects offers an integrated perspective to explore the contemporary discourses on institutional mechanisms, rule-based governance, and geopolitical strategy in EU enlargement.

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I. Introduction

The European Union's (EU) enlargement, a cornerstone of European integration, represents a transformative phenomenon that transcends conventional understandings of institutional expansion. Enlargement is neither a mere procedural undertaking nor an isolated (geo)political event. It is a continuous interaction involving multifaceted institutional dynamics, national politics, and

* Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dorian Jano, PhD, is Jean Monnet Lecturer (ENLARGEU, 101085529) at the University of Amsterdam and Research Fellow of the ERC SolRoutes (101053836) project at the University of Genoa.

broader strategic imperatives, leading to multiple potential outcomes.¹ Contemporary scholarship has long moved beyond viewing enlargement as a one-time event of territorial expansion, instead recognizing it as a catalyst driving changes within the EU and the candidate countries.² This development signifies a fundamental shift in understanding and studying EU enlargement: emerging from an interstate bargaining process to a sophisticated policy instrument governed by EU institutions and rule-based frameworks³ and currently (re)becoming a geopolitical strategic imperative.⁴ This shift underscores a central tension in EU enlargement: balancing its normative commitments to rule-based governance and democratization with the security-based geopolitical imperative. While normative frameworks, such as the Copenhagen criteria, emphasize democratic consolidation and institutional reform, geopolitical imperatives often prioritize stability and strategic alignment over strict adherence to these norms.⁵ For example, fast-tracking Ukraine and Moldova's candidate status illustrates how security concerns can override normative benchmarks.

Enlargement is not a unidirectional expansion emanating from the EU. Instead, it is an “entanglement” where both “inside” and “outside” simultaneously shape and are shaped by each other.⁶ This dynamic interplay emerges from the convergence of the EU’s internal dynamics, state-building challenges, and geopolitical imperatives.⁷ Enlargement fundamentally shapes the EU’s development as a polity, prompting member states to continuously reassess the nature, purpose, and trajectory of their collective European project.⁸ Beyond its insti-

¹ Ikonomou H./Andry A./Byberg R., “Introduction: towards a new understanding of enlargement,” in Ikonomou/Andry/Byberg (ed.), *European Enlargement across Rounds and Beyond Borders*, Routledge 2017.

² Schimmelfennig F./Sedelmeier U., “The Study of EU Enlargement: Theoretical Approaches and Empirical Findings,” in Cini/Bourne (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in European Union Studies*, Palgrave Macmillan 2006, 96–116.

³ Ikonomou/Andry/Byberg, 5.

⁴ Anghel V., “Why EU enlargement is a strategic necessity,” in *EU enlargement dilemmas*, The Loop, December 20, 2024. <<https://theloop.ecpr.eu/why-eu-enlargement-is-a-strategic-necessity>>/<<http://www.eiz.unizh.ch/agr.html>>.

⁵ Schimmelfennig F., “Differentiated membership’ would overcome the EU’s enlargement dilemma,” in *EU enlargement dilemmas*, The Loop. January 3, 2025. <<https://theloop.ecpr.eu/differentiated-membership-would-overcome-the-eus-enlargement-dilemma/>>.

⁶ Ikonomou/Andry/Byberg, 4.

⁷ Karjalainen T., “EU enlargement in wartime Europe: three dimensions and scenarios,” *Contemporary Social Science*, 2023 18(5), 637–656.

⁸ Sjursen H., “Enlargement and identity: studying reasons,” in Ikonomou/Andry/Byberg (ed.), *European Enlargement across Rounds and Beyond Borders*, Routledge 2017, 57–74.

tutional implications, enlargement has emerged as a crucial mechanism for promoting regional stability, democratic governance, and the EU's geopolitical influence in an increasingly multipolar world.⁹ Recent geopolitical developments, particularly the Russia-Ukraine war, have further elevated enlargement from a policy choice to a strategic necessity.¹⁰ The increasing importance of security-geopolitical concerns in the EU's enlargement logic underscores a shift from a primary focus on economic and democratization efforts to prioritizing (continental) security.¹¹

The tension between integration and enlargement, often conceptualized as a choice between deepening and widening, has become particularly salient at critical historical junctures.¹² Events such as the end of the Cold War and the Ukraine-Russia War have brought this tension into sharp relief, raising fundamental questions about the relationship between territorial expansion and institutional cohesion. While some argue that extensive enlargement risks diluting the EU's supranational character, others contend that deepening and widening represent complementary rather than competing processes.¹³ This latter perspective emphasizes their combined potential for advancing peace, stability, and prosperity across Europe. These ongoing debates illustrate the complex interplay between the EU's internal development and external engagement, highlighting enlargement's central role in shaping the Union's global position.

This analysis explores EU enlargement as a tripartite-dimensional phenomenon encompassing its procedural, normative, and strategic aspects. This approach enables a deeper understanding of enlargement as a political process, a policy instrument, and a positioning strategy.

II. The Process: Navigating the Path to Membership

Enlargement as a process refers to the series of actions, interactions, and stages through which aspiring states prepare for, negotiate, and achieve inte-

⁹ Schimmelfennig/Sedelmeier 2006.

¹⁰ Anghel 2024.

¹¹ Góra M., "It's security stupid! Politicisation of the EU's relations with its neighbours," *European Security*, 2021 30(3), 439-463.

¹² Schimmelfennig F. "The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union." *International Organization*, 2001 55(1), 47-80.

¹³ Kelemen R. D./Menon A./Slapin J., "Wider and Deeper? Enlargement and Integration in the European Union," in Kelemen/Menon/Slapin, *The European Union: Integration and Enlargement*, Routledge 2016, 5-21.

gration into the larger economic, political, and institutional framework of the Union. The EU Enlargement process encompasses key steps and stages, including meeting specific criteria, implementing reforms, and engaging in accession negotiations. It is structured around procedural milestones such as gaining candidate country status, opening and closing negotiation chapters, and signing and ratifying the Accession Treaty. Yet, the process extends beyond the mere act of becoming a full-fledged member state. The EU enlargement process involves gradual institutionalization and diverse interactions, allowing states to integrate economically and politically without necessarily achieving full membership.¹⁴

However, understanding the enlargement process solely through the lens of formal procedures and accession negotiations would be an oversimplification. A complex political, economic, and social interplay characterizes EU enlargement. It entails a profound transformation for both the aspiring candidate countries and the EU itself, shaping their respective policies, institutions, and identities.¹⁵ EU enlargement, viewed as a process of “institutional becoming,” involves continuous and iterative adaptation and changes, requiring both the candidate countries and the EU to adjust their institutions, policies, and practices to meet the integration demands.¹⁶

The enlargement process is deeply intertwined with political realities. Shaped by a complex interplay of domestic, regional, and international factors, it involves a web of stakeholders from the EU institutions, member states, and candidate countries. Each actor plays a crucial role in negotiating terms, assessing progress, and addressing deficiencies. The success of the enlargement process depends on the ability, willingness, and commitment of both candidate countries and the EU (member states included) to overcome a range of domestic and external challenges.¹⁷ Within candidate countries, issues such as corruption, organized crime, and democratic backsliding can hinder reform efforts and jeopardize accession, while socio-economic disparities and political instability further complicate the path to membership. Within the EU, “ab-

¹⁴ Schimmelfennig F./Rittberger B., “Theories of European Integration: Assumptions and Hypotheses,” in Richardson J. (ed.), *European Union: Power and Policy-Making*, Routledge 2006, 73–95.

¹⁵ Schimmelfennig/Sedelmeier 2006.

¹⁶ Jano D., “The whys and when enlarging EU to the western Balkans,” *European Journal of Economic and Political Studies* 2009 2(1), 61–77.

¹⁷ Jano D., “EU Enlargement Rounds and Dilemmas: The Successful, the Reluctant, the Awkward, and the Laggards,” in Costa, B. F. (ed.), *Challenges and Barriers to the European Union Expansion to the Balkan Region*, IGI Global 2022, 18–38.

sorption capacity"¹⁸ and "enlargement fatigue"¹⁹—characterized by the union's capacity to absorb new members and the diminishing enthusiasm among member states—pose significant challenges. This "double-sided fatigue"²⁰ stems from concerns about the economic and social impact of new members, scepticism regarding the ability of candidate countries to meet accession requirements, and internal EU debates on institutional reform and integration, all of which threaten to undermine the momentum necessary for continued engagement in the enlargement process. Additionally, external geopolitical factors increasingly shaped the enlargement process. The emergence of new geopolitical realities, such as the Russia–Ukraine war, has reinvigorated discussions on the need for EU enlargement, prompting calls to accelerate accession for Ukraine and other candidate countries. These dynamics demonstrate how the intersection of domestic and external actors and factors creates a complex and dynamic environment that can significantly impact the trajectory of the enlargement process.

This complexity makes EU Enlargement not linear but a dynamic and iterative process characterized by continuous negotiation, assessment, and adaptation cycles. This dynamic is particularly evident in the Western Balkans, where the path to EU membership has been marked by significant delays, setbacks, and renewed momentum due to the changing geopolitical realities.²¹ Despite the formal commitment to integration expressed at the Thessaloniki Summit in 2003, progress in the region has been uneven, hampered by a confluence of factors. The lack of political consensus within candidate countries, political instability, unresolved regional conflicts, and the emergence of new geopolitical challenges have significantly impeded reforms and progress.²² Bureaucratic hurdles, slow advancement in the accession negotiations, and a lack of clarity regarding the accession criteria and the timeline have complicated the process further. The influence of external actors, including Russia, has exerted

¹⁸ "Absorption capacity" refers to "[t]he Union's capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration". See European Council, Conclusions of the Presidency – Copenhagen, June 21–22, 1993, SN 180/1/93 REV 1, p. 13.

¹⁹ Szołucha A., "The EU and Enlargement Fatigue: Why has the European Union not been able to counter enlargement fatigue?" *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 2010 6, 1–16.

²⁰ The EU's 'enlargement fatigue' can lead to 'accession fatigue', that is the candidate's incapability in compliance with EU requirements. See O'Brennan J., "On the Slow Train to Nowhere? The European Union. 'Enlargement Fatigue' and the Western Balkans" *European Foreign Affairs Review* 2014 19(2), 221–241.

²¹ Jano D., "EU–Western Balkans Relations: The Many EU Approaches," *The Journal of the International University Institute of European Studies*, 2008 2(1), 143 – 160.

²² Belloni R., "European Integration and the Western Balkans: Lessons, Prospects and Obstacles," *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 2009 11 (3), 313–31.

significant pressure on the region, undermining political stability and reform efforts.²³

III. The Policy: Anchoring Enlargement in Rule-Based Governance

Enlargement as a policy encompasses the formal principles, frameworks, and instruments employed by the EU to govern the integration of new members. At its core, the EU's enlargement policy is anchored in the Copenhagen criteria, the demands that set out the fundamental requirements for democratic stability, a functional market economy, and the capacity to effectively implement the EU *acquis*.²⁴ Initially designed for Central and Eastern European Countries, these criteria have become the standard accession conditions and the crucial reference points for any enlargement policy. They codified existing enlargement practices and constitutionalized the EU's democratic values.²⁵ These principles represent a norm-based and structured approach to enlargement, guiding candidate countries to align with the EU's standards and ensuring that new members share the EU's core democratic values.

The EU's enlargement policy operates through a structured framework with several key mechanisms, including annual Enlargement packages and progress assessments. The European Commission plays a central role in this policy framework. It conducts regular evaluations of candidate countries' reforms and alignment with EU standards, publishing annual reports assessing their progress and identifying areas for improvement. These tools are designed to

²³ Petrovic, M./Tzifakis, N. (2021) A geopolitical turn to EU enlargement, or another postponement? An introduction. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 2021 29(2), 157-168.

²⁴ The Copenhagen criteria, established by the Copenhagen European Council in 1993 and strengthened by the Madrid European Council in 1995, set the accession requirements for EU membership including stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; a functioning market economy and the ability to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU; the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including the capacity to effectively implement the rules, standards and policies that make up the body of EU law (the "acquis"), and adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. See Accession criteria (Copenhagen criteria), EUR-Lex, Access to European Union law, available at <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/glossary/accession-criteria-copenhagen-criteria.html>>; Accession criteria, European Commission – Enlargement, available at <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/glossary/accession-criteria_en>.

²⁵ Kochenov D., "Behind the Copenhagen façade: The meaning and structure of the Copenhagen political criterion of democracy and the rule of law," *European Integration Online Papers* 2004 8; Thomas D. C., "Constitutionalization through enlargement: the contested origins of the EU's democratic identity," *Journal of European Public Policy* 2006 13, 1190 – 1210.

enhance objectivity and transparency in measuring candidate countries' preparedness, ensuring a merit-based pathway to accession. Although the enlargement policy framework is relatively static, reflecting its principle-oriented nature, it has extended over time to include additional obligations known as the Copenhagen "Plus" Criteria.²⁶ Notable changes include the introduction of detailed administrative capacity criteria, emphasizing the importance of administrative and judicial structures, and the "Good Neighbourhood Conditionality,"²⁷ which focuses on regional cooperation and resolving border disputes. For example, Serbia's accession has been closely tied to its normalization of relations with Kosovo, a requirement under the Brussels Agreement framework. The policy represents an institutional framework based on normative principles. It operates within a (positive) conditionality mechanism, where progress toward accession is contingent on meeting specific benchmarks. This "external incentives model" establishes links between reforms in candidate countries and their advancement in the accession process.²⁸

However, despite its structured approach, the policy framework has faced criticism for being overly broad, inconsistent, and open to interpretation.²⁹ The flexible and all-inclusive nature of criteria, coupled with continuous adjustments, has added complexities and unpredictability. These issues and perceived biases in implementation have raised concerns about fairness and equity, potentially compromising the policy's credibility as an effective framework for accession.³⁰ Uneven progress in cases like Turkey and the Western Balkans has fueled scepticism about the EU's commitment to fair and objective enlargement.³¹ Turkey's prolonged candidacy serves as a striking example. Although it applied for EU membership in 1987 and was granted candidate status in 1999, negotiations have stalled due to concerns over democratic backsliding and human rights abuses.

²⁶ The Copenhagen accession criteria have evolved from broad principles to include highly detailed and specific requirements, demonstrating a shift towards a more demanding and scrutinized path to EU membership. See Jano D. "EU Accession Criteria and Procedures: Up for the Challenge?" *EuZ – Zeitschrift für Europarecht* 2024 4.

²⁷ Basheska, E., The Good Neighbourliness Condition in the EU Enlargement, *Contemporary Southeastern Europe*, 2014 1(1), pp. 92 – 111, p. 99.

²⁸ Schimmelfennig/Sedelmeier 2020.

²⁹ Grabbe, H., European Union Conditionality and the "Acquis Communautaire", *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale de Science Politique* 2002 23(3), 249 – 268.

³⁰ Kochenov, D., Behind the Copenhagen façade: The meaning and structure of the Copenhagen political criterion of democracy and the rule of law, *European Integration Online Papers*, 2004 8.

³¹ Saatçioğlu, B., How closely does the European Union's membership conditionality reflect the Copenhagen criteria? Insights from Turkey. *Turkish Studies* 2009 10(4), 559–576.

The current policy framework requires unanimous agreement among all member states for critical decisions at various stages of the accession process, such as opening or closing negotiation chapters. This stipulation has made it easier for individual member states to delay or block accession at any time through the veto power they (mis)use to push forward their national interests and resolve bilateral disputes to their advantage, impeding or slowing down the accession of specific candidate countries.³² For example, the European Council, based on a veto, first by France and later on by Bulgaria over historical and cultural issues, has stalled and delayed the start of accession negotiations with North Macedonia (and Albania) despite the positive opinion by the Commission. This highlights the influence of bilateral disputes on the implementation of enlargement policy.³³ Moreover, the new methodology for EU accession negotiations introduces instruments for “phasing negotiations” and resolving “open issues” with member states. While intended to address challenges, these tools can introduce uncertainty and extend the accession timeline. Unlike previous rounds, it can act as a temporal device that can delay the process, making current negotiations open-ended with no guaranteed membership. Even though countries can open and close negotiations on different *acquis* chapters, the accession timeline remains unspecified, and other exemptions may restrict membership entitlement.³⁴

Geopolitical developments like the Russia-Ukraine war have further questioned the current EU’s normative policy on enlargement.³⁵ While granting candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova reflects a strategic shift, it exposes the limitations of the current policy framework. Fast-tracking Ukraine’s accession may undermine the already established criteria followed by other candidate countries. This could create perceptions of unfairness and set a precedent that complicates future enlargement steps, making it harder to maintain

³² See Marić, S., Let’s set things straight: Accession talks do not equate EU membership promise, Euractiv, 24 June 2019, available at <<https://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/opinion/lets-set-things-straight-accession-talks-do-not-equate-eu-membership-promise/>>.

³³ For a critical analysis of making EU membership conditional on the settlement of bilateral disputes with concrete examples of issues in the Western Balkans, see Basheska, E., EU Enlargement in Disregard of the Rule of Law: A Way Forward Following the Unsuccessful Dispute Settlement Between Croatia and Slovenia and the Name Change of Macedonia. *Hague J Rule Law* 2022 14, pp. 221 – 256.

³⁴ Ugur M., “Open-ended membership prospect and commitment credibility: Explaining the deadlock in EU-Turkey accession negotiations,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 2010 48(4), 967–992.

³⁵ Schimmelfennig 2025.

consistent criteria and standards. Moreover, the EU must reconcile its strategic ambitions with the practical challenges of integrating a country at war.

The limitations of the current policy framework have spurred discussions on potential reforms. Addressing the challenges of unanimity, predictability, and perceived bias is crucial for maintaining the credibility and effectiveness of the policy. The EU's policy framework necessitates recalibrations, including discussions on staged accession and differentiated membership.³⁶ The “staged accession” or “differentiated membership” proposal envisions a multi-tiered system where countries could gain partial membership with limited benefits and obligations, progressing towards full membership upon meeting all criteria.³⁷ Proponents argue that this model could incentivize reforms, restore trust in enlargement, and allow for greater flexibility in adapting to geopolitical realities. The “staged accession” could offer a path forward, allowing the EU to leverage enlargement to promote stability, democracy, and shared prosperity in its neighborhood.³⁸

IV. The Strategy: Geopolitics and Beyond

Enlargement as a strategy transcends the procedural steps of the process and the policy frameworks governing accession. It encompasses the EU's long-term goals and a broader vision for the union. It recognizes enlargement as a powerful and deliberate tool to shape the geopolitical landscape, enhance regional stability, and advance economic and security interests.³⁹ This strategic dimension, often overlooked in discussions focused on accession criteria and negotiation processes, is crucial for understanding the long-term objectives and implications of EU enlargement on peace, security, and prosperity.⁴⁰

³⁶ Delcour L./Wolczuk K., “Ukraine and the EU at the Time of War: A New Paradigm.” LibMod Policy Paper 31 January 2023. <<https://libmod.de/en/ukraine-and-the-eu-at-the-time-of-war-a-new-paradigm/>>

³⁷ On differentiated membership, see Schimmelfennig 2025, and on the staged accession proposal, see: Emerson, M./Lazarevic, M./Blockmans, S./Subotic, S., A Template for Staged Accession to the EU, European Policy Centre and Centre for European Policy Studies, October 2021.; and the revised version Mihajlović, M./Blockmans, S./Subotić, S./Emerson, M., Template 2.0 for Staged Accession to the EU, Revised proposal – August 2023, European Policy Center.

³⁸ Delcour/Wolczuk 2023.

³⁹ Anghel V./Jones E., The Geopolitics of EU Enlargement: From Club to Commons, *Survival*, 2024 66(4), 101-114, DOI: 10.1080/00396338.2024.2380203

⁴⁰ EU institutions refer to the strategy of EU enlargement as a means to promote democratic and economic reforms, thereby enhancing stability and prosperity in Europe. This strategic dimension is emphasized in various documents and policies. For example, the European

At its core, the EU's enlargement strategy aims for a "transformative regionalism," wherein enlargement is leveraged to reshape political, economic, social, and security.⁴¹ Through the prospect of membership, the EU can induce profound transformations in the neighboring regions. By aligning with EU standards in areas such as democracy, rule of law, and market economy, candidate countries are expected to undergo significant internal reforms, strengthening institutions and fostering a more stable and prosperous environment. This transformative potential is not limited to the candidate countries themselves. It also has a significant impact on the EU itself. By expanding its borders and integrating new states, the EU strengthens its internal market, enhances its geopolitical influence, and reinforces its position as a global actor. Furthermore, enlargement can contribute to resolving regional conflicts and enhancing security within the EU's broader neighborhood. The post-Cold War EU strategy of uniting the continent aimed to address any potential negative externalities of non-enlarging, such as crises and instability in East European countries, and expand the EU's zone of peace and prosperity.⁴²

The strategic dimension of enlargement is inherently reactive and context-driven. Historical and contemporary examples illustrate how external shocks and geopolitical shifts significantly influence strategic decisions to enlarge.⁴³ The rapid inclusion of Central and Eastern European countries in the early 2000s was a response to post-Cold War dynamics, aiming to prevent the resurgence of authoritarianism and integrate these countries into the Western political and economic orbit, thereby enhancing security and stability in the region.⁴⁴ This enlargement was driven mainly by the need to consolidate democracy and market economies in Central and Eastern Europe following the

Council among the priorities of the EU strategic agenda (2024-2029) include "a merit-based EU enlargement process with incentives, to run in parallel with necessary internal reforms." (Consilium, n.d.). EU strategic agenda 2024-2029 <<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/european-council/strategic-agenda-2024-2029/#secure>>; Additionally, the European Commission's enlargement policy underscores how the prospect of EU membership fosters democratic and economic reforms, contributing to peace and stability in neighboring regions (European Commission, n.d.). EU enlargement policy <https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/eu-enlargement_en>.

⁴¹ Börzel T. A./Schimmelfennig F. "Coming together or drifting apart? The EU's political integration capacity in Eastern Europe." *European Union Enlargement and Integration Capacity*. Routledge, 2017. 122-140.

⁴² Schimmelfennig 2001, 50; Anghel, V./Jones, E. Three lessons from the 2004 "Big Bang" enlargement, *Politics and Governance* 2024 12, <<https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.8358>>.

⁴³ Delcour/Wolczuk 2023.

⁴⁴ Zielonka J., "Europe moves eastward: Challenges of EU enlargement." *Journal of democracy* 2004 15(1), 22-35.