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The Resilience of the EU Neighbours to the South and to the East: A Comparative Analysis*

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Abstract

Resilience is a widespread concept and a key priority for the EU. We focus on resilience's relations with stability. These notions have been subject to ongoing theoretical debate and have not been clearly separated in EU discourses. We explore how resilience and stability have been used regarding the Southern and Eastern dimensions of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and suggest how their different meanings may be better distinguished and conceptualised. Resilience has penetrated the ENP's discourses unevenly and attracted the limited interest of the neighbours. Besides, the EU's policies will likely face numerous practical problems mostly similar to the ENP's both dimensions. The EU's policies themselves have disturbed stability in its neighbourhood, and now, even restoring the old stability would be problematic, let alone attaining a more positive one. Furthermore, the EU could impose its views regarding stability and/or resilience. Also, Brussels could de facto uphold negative stability and/or resilience.

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Introduction

The influential interdisciplinary notion of resilience has been increasingly widespread in International Relations (IR) and the European Union's policies. The Canadian scientist Crawford Holling (1973) introduced it as a distinctive ecological term in a 1973 article. One of the central and original contributions made by Holling was to distinguish and, in a sense, even oppose two notions – those of resilience and stability. To cite his example, a “budworm forest community is highly unstable, and it is because of this instability that it has an enormous resilience” (Holling 1973: 15). It is on the two notions of resilience and stability, and the ways they are used in policy discourses in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), that our argument in this article is focused.

Certainly, understandings of resilience in IR need not be confined to ecology (Bourbeau 2018). Nevertheless, it is Holling's ideas that have attracted the most attention in social sciences and influenced the EU's adoption of the resilience notion. At the same time, Holling's distinction between resilience and stability has often been blurred in theory and practice. It is a remarkable example of how academic concepts may assume broader, and sometimes ambiguous, meanings over time. Thus, we do not consider Holling to be exclusively ‘right’ about resilience and stability. We only acknowledge that his insights have been influential regardless and also that the distinction between stability and resilience is heuristically useful, albeit in need of further refinement.

Holling's dynamic understanding of resilience would be *prima facie* much more fruitful for a social science discipline such as IR than a static notion of the stability of an ecological system. ‘Stability’ as applied to society is always relative; social practices are subject to change, even if implicit and/or slow. However, the notions of resilience and stability have continued to be puzzling. One question is whether resilience can indeed account for the dynamism of a society. On the other hand, how much instability and fluctuation can a society tolerate to be meaningfully called ‘resilient’? People are not budworms; if a budworm community manages to be resilient through large-scale fluctuations of its numbers, to describe in the same terms a human society's resilience seems at least awkward. One can then ask whether stability, in some senses, can be considered a

positive feature for society, despite the sometimes-conservative ideological connotations that the notion of stability has attracted. If yes, should stability always be opposed to resilience, or can it be a building block for it?

There have been protracted debates on the resilience/stability nexus, as well as on the appropriateness of 'resilience' for the social sciences. Yet, the literature on the ENP has not sufficiently reflected these debates. Regarding policy practice, the EU's and its neighbours' common discourses have featured both resilience and stability. However, the definitions and connections of stability and resilience have remained imprecise. Moreover, their uses have been uneven across different policy levels and the Southern/Eastern dimensions of the ENP.

Accordingly, we aim in this article at demonstrating how the notions of stability and resilience have been used in these discourses and suggesting how their different meanings may be better distinguished and conceptualised to account for EU policies.

This article's methodology is inscribed in the growing research on resilience as a complex interdisciplinary notion. We build on a critical review of approaches to resilience in the literature to form our analytical framework. We then apply it by conducting a discourse analysis of the sources relevant for the ENP. We try not just to review the existing research and sources, but also to contribute to resolving the respective research problems and identifying policy contradictions. Given a lack of systematic studies exploring resilience and stability in the ENP as a whole, the application of our theoretical suggestions is deliberately broad, covering the ENP's two dimensions. Our analysis thus has some theoretical and empirical novelty.

Resilience and Stability: theoretical aspects

There are various interpretations of resilience and stability. It may be suggested that they are both "essentially contested concepts". Their meanings would be rhetorically debatable. The said, however, would not imply that resilience and stability are just labels for incommensurable interpretations. Essentially contested concepts do not admit of a single 'final' definition, but they do admit of a relatively rational argument. It is within

specific arguments and controversies that essentially contested concepts acquire their meanings (Garver 1978). Accordingly, our approach to resilience and stability is intended not to close the discussion, but to move it forward. Below, we will give Holling's definitions of resilience and stability, and suggest some refinements. Also, resilience and stability are often variously connected with fragility and democracy. Fragility may be defined as the antonym of resilience, and we do not undertake defining democracy: this would be much beyond the scope of this paper; we are just interested in how democracy appears in specific arguments connected to resilience. Nevertheless, neither Holling's definitions, nor our suggestions are 'timeless' or 'universal' definitions, including in normative terms. They are instead tentative heuristic devices that might refine our theoretical vision at this stage and be applied to understand the EU's concrete practices better.

In Holling's (1973: 14) initial formulation, stability referred to "the ability of a system to return to an equilibrium state after a temporary disturbance", stability was opposed to fluctuations. On the other hand, resilience referred to "the persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change and disturbance and still maintain the same relationships between populations or state variables" (Holling 1973: 14). Therefore, to repeat Holling's point noted above, a system may be "highly unstable", yet, because of that high instability, it may be very resilient. Later, scholars building on Holling's 1973 paper attempted "to define and refine the concepts of stability and resilience" (Ludwig, Walker and Holling 1997).

However, the meanings of resilience and its relations to stability have remained one of the principal controversial issues. Often, Holling's original separation of resilience and stability has been almost forgotten.

The issue largely depends on the dominant understanding of resilience within a given discipline. Therefore, "[r]esiliency has been framed as persistence, adaptation, and transformation" (Davoudi 2018: 3). Thus, physics and "some versions of ecology" operate with the concept of "engineering resilience" understood in terms of "bounce back" and "equilibrium" (Martin and Sunley 2015: 4, Table 1; see also Davoudi 2018: 3-4). The concept of resilience as developed in other ecological theories, notably drawing on Holling, is related by some authors to "adaptation"

(Davoudi 2018: 3; see also Martin and Sunley 2015: 4, Table 1). Yet, Simin Davoudi (2018: 3) believes that “[b]oth the engineering and the ecological definitions of resilience” rely on “equilibristic” and “mechanical” ideas. Davoudi (2018: 4, italics in original) adds that there is *evolutionary resilience* which is considered in “complexity theory” and takes into account “ruptures and transformations”. Ron Martin and Peter Sunley (2015: 4, Table 1) discuss a perhaps related understanding of resilience “[f]ound in psychological sciences and organizational theory” and implying a “positive adaptability” and “bounce forward”. Specialists in psychology and medicine increasingly suggest understanding resilience as a process (Liebenberg and Moore 2018; Windle 2011). In general, then, not only Holling, but also representatives of some other disciplines have called for variously acknowledging resilience’s dynamic features.

The resilience/stability nexus provokes particularly active discussions in the social sciences. For example, as put by Cecile de Milliano et al. (2015: 18), resilience is debatable, *inter alia*, regarding whether it contributes to “development objectives”, “wider change” or represents “a means of preserving the status quo”. Numerous scholars have instead associated resilience with the status quo. Lennart Olsson et al. (2015: 2) seem to suggest that resilience, when seen as directed against transformation and at the same time as normatively ‘good’, is perceived to be at odds with “social science focusing on social change over stability”. Often, the critics condemn resilience as “reactionary”, and aimed “to perpetuate, sustain and reinforce a hegemonic status quo of dispossessing, predatory capitalism” (DeVerteuil and Golubchikov 2016: 144).

However, there is a growing trend to approach resilience in a more multifaceted fashion than critics of neoliberalism have often done (Bourbeau 2018; DeVerteuil and Golubchikov 2016; Schmidt 2015). For instance, according to Geoff DeVerteuil and Oleg Golubchikov (2016: 145), “[r]esilience is far ... less inherently sinister and conservative”, therefore, it is not fruitful to offer mere “caricatures” of it. Alexander Laufer et al. (2018) see resilience as precisely what is needed to tackle the problems that necessitate “fundamental changes in patterns of behaviour” and “being willing to challenge the status quo” (Laufer, Little, Russell and Maas 2018: 56).

The literature on the European Neighbourhood Policy faces further problems. Discussions of resilience here have not been very systematic. They have not used to the fullest the wealth of ideas accumulated in the general literature on resilience. This echoes the situation with the relevant policy discourses within the ENP, where resilience has also penetrated unevenly and has been defined imprecisely.

Concerning the literature on the ENP's Southern dimension, systematic studies on resilience are exceedingly rare (though see Colombo, Dessì, and Ntousas 2017). Has the political discourse mostly been based on traditional notions, the academic literature has continued to operate with the old dichotomies between these notions (notably between 'democracy' and 'stability').

Consider, for example, an article by Cilja Harders, Annette Jünemann and Lina Khatib (2017), which aims to give a thorough overview of the state of the EU's relations with the Arab countries. The authors analyse resilience rather briefly and do not offer a systematic definition of the notion. Yet, they presume that "[i]nstead of democracy, the EU will now promote 'resilience'" (Harders, Jünemann and Khatib 2017: 449). Indeed, the EU's particular uses of resilience might turn out to be opposed to democracy in practice, but this leaves open the question of whether the very concept of resilience necessarily excludes democracy. Harders et al. (2017: 449) also suggest that resilience "neatly ties in with the logics of a preference for stability and regime survival". Again, this may echo the EU's discourse which approximates resilience and stability, but this does not yet show that these two concepts are identical in principle. Note that Harders et al.'s approach is in direct opposition to Holling's initial distinction between resilience and stability. Also take a policy brief on Tunisia by Giovanni Faleg (2017), which has "fragility" in its title. It, however, does not address resilience as the antithesis to fragility, as we may have expected given that EU discourse itself opposes resilience and fragility, e.g., in the EU Global Strategy (EUGS) (2016: 23). Faleg (2017: 8, footnote 10) refers to resilience briefly in a footnote. Instead, Faleg (2017: 2) rather sees fragility in opposition to "the country's progress towards stability".

As for the ENP's Eastern dimension, the EU's policy is analysed through the lens of Europe's role in transforming the region.

Resilience fits into the established tradition along with the concepts of 'normative power' and 'external governance', reflecting Brussels' officially proposed formula "sharing everything with the Union but the institutions" (Prodi 2002). Without actually considering the issue of membership prospects of its neighbours, the European Union has relied on those indirect ways of monitoring their development that would contribute to establishing the norms and values in those states similar to those in Europe.

However, some experts opine that the emergence of resilience was the result of a gradual process of the EU's re-conceptualisation of its governance strategy in the neighbourhood regions. This opinion, for example, was expressed by Elena Korosteleva. Furthermore, she identified such an important condition for resilience to be effective as forgoing external governance by Brussels in the spirit of neoliberal rationality (Korosteleva 2018).

In contrast to the dichotomy mentioned above between stability and democracy in the South, the following needs highlighting. The start of discussions on the adaptation of resilience to the Eastern Neighbourhood demonstrated a clear intention to link it to the imperative of reforms. Resilience was proposed to be understood not as the EU's abandoning democracy promotion in the East, but as a call to a more comprehensive approach, involving the solution of deep problems leading to the weakness of statehood and democracy in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries (de Waal and Youngs 2015). Moreover, discussions on the resilience of the EU's Eastern neighbours are inseparable from the Russian factor. A considerable number of researchers in the West believe that Russia is a major threat to the resilience of Eastern neighbours. Reforms are perceived as an instrument to make those countries less vulnerable to Russia's influence.

Thus, the above review of the literature points to three underlying problems. First, the senses of resilience, its relations to stability, and its fruitfulness for the social sciences have been subject to debate. Second, stability has been under-theorised, often seen as a negative feature (at least implicitly), and dichotomously opposed to progress and democracy. Accordingly, a 'good' resilience in much of the literature is associated with change, not stability. Third, resilience and stability have been underexplored in the literature on the ENP.

Although it would be challenging to conceptualise stability and resilience better, we may suggest certain avenues for reflection. For one thing, Holling's very distinction between stability and resilience is fruitful for social science. Nevertheless, social systems are much more complex than and, in some respects, irreducibly different from those ecological. A purely ecological approach applied to society would, therefore, be both too simplistic and normatively problematic.

Regarding stability, it seems it can have both relatively negative and positive senses. The negative sense would refer to attempts at conserving a status quo that is not sensitive to the always dynamic social practices and the needs of the population.

However, crucially, stability can have a positive meaning, i.e. refer to a degree of order and predictability. In this sense, stability is, indeed, not opposed to resilience, but is a building block for it. Positive stability would admit of change and even presuppose it because long-term stability cannot be maintained without considering social dynamics. It involves stable, yet flexible enough political institutions. Positive stability seems thus a necessary condition for a positive resilience. Nevertheless, the two notions are still not identical.

What is then the added value of resilience? We can also distinguish between its more positive and negative uses. A positive understanding of resilience would ideally involve both positive stability, but also the capacities to react to crises flexibly and without suffering much damage, and even to achieve specific progress.

On the other hand, one negative sense would rest on a simplified understanding of a system's resilience: if a system has existed and somehow survived many crises, then it is assumed to be resilient and to need no reform. This understanding may be appropriate for ecological systems, but when applied to society, it is fraught with potential abuses. It may imply that if a society has been able to survive crises somehow, however tragic has been their toll, then the society would be 'resilient'. However, whereas a population of budworms from Holling's example, which may "fluctuate widely" and persist can be called unstable and yet resilient, we cannot apply the same view to human society. Mark Rhinard (2017: 26) notes, rather approvingly, that "[t]hose accustomed to hardship and those

skilled in improvisation and creativity survive the toughest challenges”, and gives the example of “shanty towns” that cope with hurricanes better than modern high-rises. Resilience may thus get close to the logic of “that which does not kill us makes us stronger” (see also Kassis, Artz, Maurovic and Simões 2018). However, this is a vulnerable logic. We doubt that we can call a community that survives in shantytowns positively ‘resilient’. That some people have to be skilled in surviving hardships does not mean that they will be able to endure forever, nor that efforts to lessen their hardships should be given up (see also Hickman 2018).

Jonathan Joseph (2014) has considered related aspects of negative resilience. He argues that the EU’s resilience-building in the Horn of Africa is not promoting resilience according to the declared objective of strengthening the respective societies. Rather, its policies represent “a technique of governance from a distance” (Joseph 2014: 286). On the other hand, one of the resilience’s effects is “helping to responsabilise institutions and populations” (Joseph 2014: 286); the vulnerable societies are expected to be somehow ‘resilient’ themselves and to cope with crises primarily on their own. Therefore, the EU may still retain influence over these societies without, however, bearing much of responsibility.

Two issues need to be addressed here. First, our approach may seem too *normatively* laden. However, in general, IR can hardly avoid a normative dimension. In the literature on resilience, there is a growing trend to take normative issues into account (see also Brand and Jax 2007). Resilient systems get positive or negative assessments: e.g., both critical infrastructure and criminal activity can be resilient. Several authors have written about “both a dark and a bright side” of resilience (Bourbeau 2018: 30), and about an “equitable resilience” (Matin, Forrester and Ensor 2018). Even the critics of the widespread uses of resilience may reflect on “the political struggle for *just resilience*” (Davoudi 2018: 6, italics in original). In an influential study on social resilience and neoliberalism, Peter A. Hall and Michèle Lamont (2013: 2) understand “social resilience” as “the capacity of groups of people ... to sustain and advance their well-being in the face of challenges to it”. They see social resilience as key to “successful societies” where people can “live healthy, secure, and fulfilling lives” (Hall and Lamont 2013: 2). Thus, Hall’s and Lamont’s understanding is close to ours in that it is dynamic

and normative. Olsson et al. (2015: 2) agree that “[g]iven the controversy around the normativity of resilience, the notions of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ resilience need to be studied more”, not less. Indeed, any concepts of positive resilience and stability, including our own, are abstractions and will be contested in many aspects. We do believe our understandings of positive and negative senses of these notions highlight values that are uncontroversial enough to generate a relatively broad consensus. Yet, again, our suggestions are not ‘universal’ or ‘final’ but intended to understand better the conditions under which specific EU policies are closer to this or that type of resilience or stability.

The second issue is that we need to engage with these different senses of stability and resilience regardless because they are more *analytically* appropriate to study society, as distinct from ecological systems. Resilience has been criticised for “overshadowing agency, conflict, and power” (Olsson, Jerneck, Thoren, Persson and O’Byrne 2015: 6), i.e., distinctively social phenomena that do not arise in ecological systems. However, for other scholars, this is a reason not to abandon resilience altogether, but to offer understandings of it that would be more attuned to social science, which precisely provides for a reason to offer an understanding of an “equitable resilience” (see, e.g., Matin, Forrester and Ensor 2018). Thus, the very specificity of the social, and the issues of contestation, power and change that arise in society make stability and resilience normatively laden concepts. Unless we engage with this normativity and contestation, we risk detaching ourselves from the very social debates that we study as scholars. The case under consideration especially clearly illustrates it, as the EU itself has consistently linked resilience with value-laden concepts such as democracy (as the EU sees it). Thus, while we do not offer ‘absolute’ definitions of resilience or stability, we still have to engage with normative issues raised by the EU itself, and with their contradictions, which allows understanding our subject in a more nuanced way.

Resilience and stability in EU’s general discourses

For the first time, the term ‘resilience’ appeared in the European Economic Community’s documents in the 1980s and referred to economic and environmental issues. Over the years,

it spread to other internal (e.g., information security, transport, job markets, and Eurozone) and external issues (the resilience of third countries, especially developing ones) (Korosteleva 2018: 9-11; Romanova 2017: 18-21). At least since the 2015 ENP review, both 'stability' and 'resilience' have been widely used in the EU's discourse regarding its neighbourhood. However, the EU has not clarified specifically what the relationships between stability and resilience are. Besides, resilience has penetrated the various ENP discourses unevenly. Below, we will first review the more general levels of the EU's discourse, i.e. the level of the Global Strategy governing the whole of external action and the level of the ENP as a whole. We will then focus on how the higher levels of the EU's discourse are problematically translated into the more specific discourses relevant for the Southern and the Eastern dimensions of the ENP.

One of the 2015 ENP review's novelties was its clear prioritisation of stability. The relevant Communication (2015: 2) stated that "the new ENP will take stabilisation as its main political priority in this mandate". At the same time, the Communication introduced 'resilience' within the ENP. However, resilience was treated in parallel with stability, nearly as its synonym; at least, the two terms were not distinguished. For example, according to the Communication (2015: 7), "economic development for stabilisation" involved "developing a country's economic resilience". Thus, starting from the 2015 ENP review, the EU has not followed, but rather opposed, Holling's distinction between stability and resilience.

Next, the ENP discourse was superimposed by the 2016 EU's Global Strategy. The EUGS did mention "stability" and related words. But the EUGS (2016: 18, 23-28) was more specific about 'resilience', introducing it as a separate notion that forms one of the EU's general "priorities". According to Nathalie Tocci (2017: 70), who coordinated the work on the Strategy, "[t]he term "resilience" was chosen as a priority for two reasons. First because resilience is a term that speaks to two policy communities... the security community and the development community"; second, because the term "reflected the notion of principled pragmatism". As famously argued by Wolfgang Wagner and Rosanne Anholt (2016: 417) based on interviews (including with civil servants from some EU bodies), "resilience" seemed a perfect middle ground between over-ambitious liberal peace-building and the under-ambitious objective

of stability". Note that stability is here characteristically considered as "under-ambitious": it is thus undervalued as not a goal particularly worth pursuing. Yet, it may be asked if stability is indeed *too* ambitious a goal for the EU, in the sense that attaining it often proves problematic, not to speak about resilience.

The Global Strategy (2016: 23) defined resilience as "the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises". 'Resilience' was opposed to "[f]ragility" in the EUGS (2016: 23). The Strategy (2016: 25) stated that "repressive states are inherently fragile in the long term". As declared by the Strategy (2016: 24), resilience comprises at once "democracy, trust in institutions, and sustainable development". Thus, the document was again not specific regarding resilience's relation with stability (and development): i.e. whether resilience was more about the capacity "to reform" or about "withstanding and recovering".

The later Communication entitled "A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's external action" (2017) did not sufficiently clarify links between resilience and stability. While, for example, the Communication (2017: 3) stated that resilience was needed "to sustain progress", it also connected resilience to "the capacity of a state ... to build, maintain or restore its core functions, and basic social and political cohesion" and to "the capacity ... to manage opportunities and risks in a peaceful and stable manner". The "Report on the Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy Review" (2017: 3) again treats 'stabilisation and resilience' in parallel. Finally, the 2018 "Implementation Report" on the EUGS (2018: 8-9) has a section on "Resilience and the Integrated Approach" which strongly emphasises stability.

Southern Neighbourhood

Currently, the EU's Southern Neighbourhood lacks both positive stability and positive resilience. On the one hand, the EU's norm promotion here has not achieved its stated goals. It has been perhaps too fragmentary to make a real difference in terms of reforming the Southern neighbours (Harders, Jünemann, and Khatib 2017: 438). However, it has been enough to become a factor that, whether purposefully or not, and along

with domestic problems of these countries, has contributed to their destabilisation.

The EU's other policy line has consisted of the de facto cooperation with the authoritarian regimes in some of the Arab states with a perceived aim of maintaining stability. This cooperation has propped up an "authoritarian resilience" (see, e.g., Nathan 2003).

While the EU's two policy lines seem to be opposed to each other, they have largely contributed to similar outcomes. The EU has alternately encouraged 'pro-Western' civil society organisations (while side-lining other important societal actors) and the ruling elites. This approach has been espoused instead of a more holistic one that would have aimed at *both* strengthening the state's public institutions (i.e., not only ruling elites' interests) and, at the same time, considering various societal actors. In some respects, the EU's policies have reduced the political and economic capacities of the state in those countries, without, however, offering an alternative equal to the state in terms of ensuring stability or resilience. The Arab nation-states' weakness connected to historical legacies and contemporary problems has been exacerbated as the EU has supported some of the non-state actors, and "neoliberal economic reform increasingly eroded the existing social contracts" (Harders, Jünemann, and Khatib 2017: 439). As a result, the EU's policies have disturbed the "old" (indeed, mostly problematic) stability, without creating a new one.

Some recent EU policy initiatives crucial for the Southern Neighbourhood are puzzling with regard to resilience/stability relations. Thus, the discourse on the "External Investment Plan" (EIP) (EC n.d.a) has featured both resilience and stability. For instance, it referred to resilience in connection to migration flows (EC 2017a: 15), and one of the first "Guarantee Tools" within this initiative has been "Resilient City Development (RECIDE)" (EC n.d.b: 1, 16). However, when explaining the rationale behind the launching of the first guarantee tools, the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn assessed it as *a long-term investment in the stability and security* (EC 2018).

The European Investment Bank (EIB)'s "Economic Resilience Initiative" also features such statements as the following: "the

investments in economic resilience will ... ideally ... contribute to enhanced stability in fragile countries" (EIB n.d). Resilience here is thus presented as just a tool for enhancing stability, and stability as the antithesis to fragility.

"The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa" refers to stability in its title. Nevertheless, 'resilience' is widely used in the discourse as well (EC 2017b). Still, again, the very understanding of resilience is here connected to the idea of "bouncing back" after crises (EC n.d.c).

Besides the above initiatives, however, it seems fruitful to zoom in on documents that have been agreed on by both the EU and its Southern partners. This would show whether, and to what extent, 'resilience' has been adopted not only by the EU but also by its Southern interlocutors.

'Resilience' has hardly penetrated the Union for the Mediterranean's (UfM) strategic level discourse. The Union's "Roadmap for Action" (2017) does not mention resilience. Instead, "the three key interrelated priorities" include "regional stability, human development and integration" (UfM Roadmap for Action 2017: 8, bold type removed). The UfM's projects fall within two categories, "Human Development" and "Sustainable Development" (UfM Secretariat n.d.). Indeed, the declared priorities have not changed very much over the twenty-four years since the Barcelona Declaration (1995). There has been conceptual inertia in the UfM, whereby it has built mainly on the more traditional notions detached from the resilience discourse.

Turning to the ENP as such, the stress on stability seems to be particularly salient in the Southern dimension. Two years since the adoption of the EUGS, with its numerous references to resilience, its above-mentioned 2018 "Implementation Report" mainly returns to stability, at least regarding the Southern neighbours. The section of the Report (2018: 8-9) on "Resilience and the Integrated Approach" treats stability as a critical priority for many of the Southern Neighbourhood's different states, specifically those concerned by the Syrian, Libyan and migration crises.

Regarding the bilateral dimension, on the one hand, 'resilience' has been widely used in the documents concerning the Syrian

crisis. Thus, the 2017 “EU Strategy on Syria” has a section entitled “Support the resilience of the Syrian population and Syrian society” (European Council, Council 2017). It includes references to the resilience of the countries hosting Syrian refugees (European Council, Council 2017). In general, as regards the Syrian situation, ‘resilience’ has been extensively used as applied to the problems of refugees. The Agreement on the EU’s Trust Fund (2016) is indicative in this respect. Yet, both the Strategy and the Agreement also contain references to stability.

On the other hand, beyond the scope of the Syrian problem and its consequences, the use of ‘resilience’ has hardly been extensive in the bilateral relationships. Thus, the EU-Algeria Partnership Priorities up to 2020 (2017: 8) mention ‘resilience’ once. Its meaning, however, is linked to the resistance to security threats and does not add much to the goals of stability and security. The document does not mention ‘fragility’. The Partnership Priorities with Jordan for 2016-2018 refer to resilience four times. The references in the document (n.d.: 1-3, 7) are, nevertheless, connected, again, to the Syrian, Palestinian and other refugees’ problem, “the Syrian crisis and regional instability”, and also to “economic resilience”. The document (n.d.: 3) has a single reference to “an already fragile economic situation”. The EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities (2016) for 2016-2020 feature five references to ‘resilience’. The document (2016: 3), however, explicitly connects it to ‘stability’ at the outset. Only a single reference to resilience presents it as a distinct, comprehensive notion: ‘community resilience’, whereby the document touches on economic, governance and social issues at once. Again, the problems of community resilience are linked in the Priorities (2016: 6), *inter alia*, to the issue of Syrian refugees. The other references to resilience in the document (2016: 4, 7, 12) concern only the economy and/or infrastructures. ‘Fragility’ is not mentioned. In similar documents with Egypt and Tunisia, references to resilience are absent (EU-Egypt Partnership Priorities 2017-2020. 2017; The EU-Tunisia Association Council 2018).

To summarise, it seems that the resilience discourse has so far penetrated the EU’s relationships with the Southern neighbours in an uneven and overall limited and fragmentary fashion. ‘Resilience’ has often been used in the initiatives which embrace not only the Southern Neighbourhood but also Africa and are built around aid and development issues (such

as the EIP and the Trust Fund for Africa). The term has also been employed in an economic sense (the 'Economic Resilience Initiative'). Finally, 'resilience' has actively been used regarding the Syrian problem, and it seems to be the case because the crisis has attracted the most attention. Even in this case, 'resilience' has not been clearly distinguished from stability, and primarily confined to the specific issue of refugees. In other cases, as shown by the EU's general discourse regarding the Southern Neighbourhood and some of the Partnership Priorities, 'resilience' may be mentioned, but, again, it is not consistently separated from stability, and is mostly referred to in connection with the specific issues of the refugees and the economy. Resilience is rarely considered as a comprehensive and multifaceted, innovative notion. In other cases, such as the strategic UfM's documents and the rest of the partnership/strategic priorities, it has still not found its way in the shared agenda of the EU and the partners.

What are then the senses of stability and resilience that the EU is or will be promoting in the South? The negative stability would involve an essentialist view of the Arab/Muslim cultures, the invocations of an "Arab exceptionalism" that putatively condemns these societies to the deadlocked choice between either dictatorships or chaos. Still, crucially, stability in its positive meaning is particularly important for the South and is a building block for resilience. The order seems to be taken as a top priority by the population of the Southern neighbours themselves (see, e.g., Ragab 2017: 61, 70).

It seems that the EU's discourse approximating stability and resilience has partly been a way to recognise the importance of a kind of stability to the Southern neighbours. Even so, two types of problems arise here. First, the EU has recognised the connections of stability and resilience in an imprecise fashion, as we have shown.

Second, there are more empirical problems. While the old stability in the South was, undoubtedly, vulnerable, it would probably be exceedingly difficult even to return to that stability, and still more challenging to build less problematic one. It seems that the EU itself is in some situations continuing to destabilise the region, notably by refusing to acknowledge the strengths of Bashar al-Assad's rule in Syria. There is also a risk that the EU would attempt to support or return to merely short-term

stability that neglects deeper political, social, economic and environmental problems of the region. For example, as argued by Jamil Mouawad (2017: 87), the various international actors' support to the Lebanese ruling elites masked the situation of "a fake "stability" in Lebanon. In Mouawad's view (2017: 83), the state institutions were "hollowed out" by private interests, i.e. the elites used the state to their narrow advantages while keeping minimal stability in the country. The aid provided by international donors helped this stability. Nonetheless, this situation did not correspond to either stability or resilience in a positive sense (see Mouawad 2017). This old minimal stability proved easy to be undermined by the protests since 2019.

Positive resilience in the South is a still more distant prospect. Instead, the EU and the Southern neighbours may switch to negative sorts of resilience. This may be provoked by the difficulties to achieve a more positive situation in the region, by the EU's financial problems and inevitable fatigue regarding the South, and/or by the EU's wielding of resilience as a simplified systemic quality or a governance technique that would involve a reduction in its responsibility towards the South.

In the Southern Neighbourhood, there are already cases that may exemplify negative resilience. In the Syrian case, without a political solution to the crisis and the elimination of hard security threats, any discourse on resilience will be empty, except, at best, maintaining a minimal resilience of some refugees by providing them with financial relief which is unable to resolve their long-term problems. So far, the EU has not done enough to anticipate a political solution.

Moreover, what has appeared in the EU's discourse regarding both Syrian refugees and forcibly displaced persons, in general, is an emphasis on "self-reliance" (see, e.g., EC 2016a; EC, HR/VP 2017b: 5, 6, 23). This emphasis may easily hide shifting responsibility on refugees for their problems without considering the root causes that made them refugees. Those causes are, meanwhile, in part connected to the EU's policies which contributed to destabilisation in the first place.

Turning again to the Lebanon case, as analysed by Mouawad, what proved to be 'resilient' was the elites' self-interested control over the state. Lebanon had minimal resilience as far as it was not torn by large-scale violence or did not "collapse"

altogether (Mouawad 2017: 86). Yet, this situation was “exclusive to certain groups” and did not contribute to “institutional sustainability or social justice” (Mouawad 2017: 86). As noted above, the situation quickly turned into instability.

Finally, the EU’s uses of ‘resilience’ in the case of Palestine are illustrative. They mostly seem to avoid tackling the fundamental political problems. Consider the “European Joint Strategy in Support of Palestine” for the years 2017-2020, jointly worked out by the EU and its Member States, as well as Norway and Switzerland, which provide development aid to Palestine. The document’s (n.d.: 1) title is “Towards a democratic and accountable Palestinian State”. The Strategy (n.d.: 30, bold type removed) explicitly acknowledges the “dependency” of Palestine on foreign aid of “[d]onors [that] have to a certain extent contributed to the management of the conflict rather than to the achievement of a lasting and inclusive solution”. The Strategy (n.d.: 39) is correct, too, in that the “situation” is “fragile” and indeed undergoes ‘deterioration’. Finally, the document (n.d.: 11) is correct in that this dire diagnosis can be overcome only through a “political progress”, without which any “sustainable development” would make little sense.

However, the same document (n.d.: 6, bold type removed) also presumes “that Palestine will stay under occupation in the coming four years”. Paradoxically, then, the Strategy’s declared objective of “a democratic and accountable Palestinian State” is declared to be practically unattainable within the Strategy’s term. There is thus a pessimism regarding a fundamental political solution: the document clearly states the problems, but still assumes that the occupation will continue. The references to resilience should be read in this light. Precisely because a political solution is not seen as forthcoming, resilience here largely turns from a positive goal into a minimalist tool for encouraging the Palestinians to get by as they have done before. One reference to resilience in the Strategy (n.d.: 38) is to agriculture as a factor of “livelihood resilience”. The meaning here concerns just survival. Another reference in the document (n.d.: 37) is connected to the goal of “resilient energy services”. However, this begs the question as to how energy services to Palestinians can be resilient in a positive sense if the considerable Israeli control continues unabated. The Strategy’s (n.d.: 30, 34) remaining two references to ‘resilience’ are more general and therefore, even more ambiguous. They

are about the resilience of the Palestinians living in Area C, the Gaza Strip and/or East Jerusalem, i.e. the territories under various but strong forms of Israeli control. The meaning here is about somehow ensuring that the Palestinians continue to live there. However, if the occupation is unlikely to end, according to this same document, then these invocations of 'resilience' can hardly mean much beyond merely encouraging the Palestinians to keep coping with their hardships. Thus, as long as the EU does not exercise an appropriate pressure on the sides of the conflict to reach a fundamental political solution, 'resilience' will at best represent short-term remedies that can even divert attention from underlying political issues.

Eastern Neighbourhood

A crucial difference in discussions of the stability and resilience of the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood from the situation on its southern border is the presence in the East of an alternative influence on the region represented by Russia. So, it was not fortuitous that the Russian factor had been a significant subject of discussions on the resilience of the EU Eastern partners. Already since the mid-1990s, Brussels has viewed Russia's bearing on security and development of countries in the post-Soviet space as excessive (Commission 2003; Commission 1996). After 2014, against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine and Russia-EU conflicts, such Russia's influence came to be perceived exclusively in terms of threats to security, spanning that of the military through that of energy.

At the same time, relations with Russia in some cases can have a stabilising effect on the situation in the states of the region. Also, their experience in the USSR is not entirely negative. Despite the legacy of wide-spread informal practices, the former republics had also inherited from the Soviet Union a relatively elevated level of socio-economic development. According to the Human Development Index, at the time of its disintegration, the Soviet Union was significantly ahead of the future EU Southern neighbours, approaching such developed western nations as the Federal Republic of Germany and the USA (Human Development Report 1990: 111). The EU Eastern partners, despite the present controversial development parameters, are not explicitly regarded as 'developing'.

An acute exacerbation of the situation along the eastern border in 2014 became one of the reasons for the term 'resilience' to percolate into the foreign-policy and security discourse of EU institutions, and in so far as it was about security — into the discourse of NATO as well. As was already stated above, resilience per se is cited frequently in the core documents on the ENP. The key document, defining the specific tasks for the Eastern Partnership, which is similar to the UfM Roadmap for Action, cites resilience eight times. The main priorities for the interaction of the EU with the Eastern partners fully replicate the traditional set of areas of the Neighbourhood Policy, namely economic co-operation, good governance and institutions, energy and transport, and people-to-people contacts. However, the emphases on the respective areas are placed differently. The 2016 document attaches greater importance to the internal parameters and development of Eastern partners, which corresponds better with the resilience thinking. Also, like in the 2011 Communication (EC, HR/VP 2011), greater emphasis is put on supporting public initiatives and actors as forces driving European choice in the relevant countries. Particular attention is paid to "strategic communication" of the EU in the area of the Eastern Partnership, which is an apparent echo of the Russian-European conflict and disinformation concerns (Joint Staff Working Document 2016).

As in the general documents on the ENP, stability is mentioned along with resilience, and there is no conceptual difference between these notions. However, based on the analysis of the text of the '20 deliverables' of the EaP, it can be assumed that Brussels sees some sequence in the priority actions — first 'stabilising the Eastern Neighbourhood', and then forming its long-term resilience. The question is whether the European Union, despite the prevailing negative assessments of Russian politics, can see Russia's role in stabilising the situation in the region.

The sectoral documents on the EaP, which do not causally relate to security or the conflict with Russia, and those that target audiences outside the EU institutions often do not mention resilience at all. Such is the case, for example, with the Reports from the Commission on Customs Cooperation with the eastern neighbouring countries (EC 2016b). In the documents dealing with specific Eastern neighbours, resilience is seldom mentioned either. The report prepared on the basis of the first

eighteen months of work by the Support Group for Ukraine mentions resilience only once, specifically in reference to the gas supply for the country during the winter season (Support Group for Ukraine 2016). The report from the Commission and High Representative on the implementation of the Association with Moldova (2018) mentions resilience twice – both in the context of “more transparent, efficient, competitive and resilient economic environment”. The report from the Commission and High Representative on the relations between Armenia and the EU under the renewed ENP (2018) cites resilience only once in a very general context. Furthermore, it lists traditional areas of the reform, which were typical of the early texts on the ENP.

However, while the frequency of references to resilience in the case of the EU’s Eastern neighbours roughly coincides with that in the Southern case, there is also some specificity to the use of this concept regarding the East. There, resilience is often mentioned in connection with the hybrid threats that, in the opinion of Brussels, some Eastern neighbours face, and that come from Russia. So, on six dozen pages of the EU-Georgia Association Agenda, three out of four references to resilience are made in regard to hybrid and information threats (Association Agenda between the European Union and Georgia, 2017-2020). In the EU-Moldova Association Agenda (2017), three out of six references to resilience have to do with information security, which is not the critical domestic problem of that country.

Terminologically, resilience has not yet become the concept that could fundamentally change the essence of the EU’s approach to and the content of its interaction with the Eastern neighbours. While there is an attempt in the core documents on the ENP to integrate resilience into the established line of thought, as we go deeper into the analysis of sources, it becomes evident that resilience thinking has not yet been formed as the basis for the development of the EU’s future policy towards the EaP countries.

In this regard, what is essential is the issue of perception of resilience by the Eastern neighbours. If the key element of this concept, as a governance practice, is the focus on the autonomy of those governed in developing their resources for resilience, then such practice requires understanding and acceptance of it by the EU’s Eastern neighbours. For the moment, as far as one can judge, they perceive resilience as yet another term from the vocabulary

of the Brussels bureaucracy. Therefore, its use by Chisinau, Kyiv or Tbilisi is limited to cases of direct interactions with the EU officials (Ministerstvo infrastruktury Ukrainy 2018; Filip 2018). Resilience is practically non-existent in the domestic debates by the Eastern neighbours about the reforms or security threats. The notion of resilience is only aspiring to become at least a boundary object — a concept whose depth and unambiguity has been shed for the sake of universality, facilitating communication between various policies and actors.

The limited level of susceptibility of the EU's Eastern neighbours to resilience discourse does not cancel Brussels's attempts to apply appropriate terminology to them, as well as the utility of resilience-stability nexus as an analytical tool. Getting back to this topic, it is worth mentioning that the corpus of the studied EU documents revealed a few nuances in the promotion of stability by Brussels. The positive stability that Brussels presumably wishes for the Eastern neighbours is built on such a social contract between the democratic state and society that would ensure trust in institutions, inclusive and good governance, and sustainable development (see the EUGS (2016)). Moreover, that positive stability should come about specifically by way of borrowing from the experience of the EU, its norms, and values.

Examples of negative stability, as seen by the EU, are those provided by post-Soviet autocracies (or 'repressive states'). There, one person or a clique of individuals find themselves above the law, distributing amongst themselves all the available resources and rigidly controlling access to the latter by other social groups. Their principal objective is to preserve power. Their ability to react effectively to internal and ambient challenges is, on the contrary, limited due to the lack of transparency of such systems of governance. As a consequence, the State is capable of exhibiting stability for a lengthy period; however, an unexpected vibration in parameters as a result of some internal or ambient shocks can trigger a complete destabilisation or yet cause a collapse of statehood, revealing the illusionary nature of such stability.

The EU's attitude to the stability of its Eastern neighbours depends on circumstances. Often, the EU cannot forgo tilting 'negative stability' it does not like to advance the prospect of cardinally changing the rules of the game in a neighbouring

state on conditions defined by Brussels. Meanwhile, negative stability needs a gradual and smooth transformation to a more positive one. Indeed, to plant those formal institutions would be more effective not by confronting the informal practices but rather by interacting with some of them (Aliyev 2017). A striking example of the vitality of informal practices is the situation with the influence of the so-called oligarchs on politics, like the one related to European integration in Moldova and Ukraine.

Furthermore, as the post-Soviet experience has shown, frequently, such negative stability is preferable to the instability with no end. Moreover, just like positive stability, it rests on a particular social contract between the ruling elite and a reasonable part of the population. A salient example is Belarus. Since the mid-1990s, the country has had a political regime criticised by the European Union for its absent democracy and lack of market reforms. Still, the authority of Alexander Lukashenka is predicated on a social contract between him and the population, 'concluded' as the result of the presidential elections in 1994. As local experts describe the content of that contract, it involved the citizens' refusal to take part in an unauthorised political activity in exchange for the socio-economic guarantees (Kaspe 2017: 37-48). As long as those socio-economic promises are kept, the system will possess a certain margin of resilience.

Under these circumstances, the key factor affecting stability in Belarus is its relationship with Russia. Since the second half of the 1990s, the maintenance of vibrant trade and economic relations, rising exports, as well as the energy supplies and financial assistance from Russia have allowed the Belarus leader to create conditions for a successful realisation of his part of the social contract with the population. Likewise, the EU's isolation policy toward the country has prompted it to strengthen its relations with Russia, thus *de facto* making the EU a co-author of the negative stability in Belarus.

Negative stability determined the formation of negative resilience as a means of constant tactical adaptation to the ambient conditions without real progress in quality. The resultant economic model in Belarus implies not only the imperative for trade and economic orientation toward Russia but also the refusal of radical reforms. The preservation of command-and-control practices of managing the economy

with the state as the principal employer, subsidised agriculture, large loss-making enterprises, and a continuous obligation to maintain full employment are essential pillars of the Belarus socio-economic model (for details, see Zaiko, Romanchuk 2011).

Moreover, the Belarus case illustrates the specificity of the EU's approach to the stability and resilience of Eastern partners. This approach features not only self-confidence in possessing the know-how about the 'right' social, political, and economic practices, but also susceptibility to being swayed by the geopolitical factor. Under the latter's influence, what Brussels perceives as 'right' or 'wrong' *vis-a-vis* the Eastern neighbours can undergo significant changes. For a long time, Belarus had been subject to the policy of isolation by Brussels. The primary condition set by Brussels for a revision of its policy was for the country to hold transparent and competitive elections.

The departure from the policy of isolation occurred between 2008 and 2009, and it was not in response to any significant steps on the part of the Belarus leadership toward democratisation. The main impetus for changing the EU's approach was the Russo-Georgian conflict of August 2008. It was precisely in its aftermath that Brussels decided to get Belarus involved in the EaP multilateral dimension. The only condition laid down before the Belarus leadership was to refuse to recognise the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

In a similar vein, the perception of the Russian factor as a threat to Moldova's rapprochement with the EU was behind the long-standing and unconditional support for the Alliance for European Integration (AEI) that came to power in the country after 2009. The rise of the Alliance was viewed as the only chance for real rapprochement between Moldova and the EU. Within a brief period, Moldova was ahead of other states of the EaP as judged by the speed and degree of its progress toward the EU (The EaP Index 2017).

That said, Brussels was unwilling to recognise that the actions of the governing coalition were a distinct iteration of the previous practices by the Party of Communists. This was driven by the fear to see pro-Russian political forces rise to power in Chisinau. Following each election to the Moldovan Parliament, the officials of the EU Member States and institutions would make considerable efforts to help preserve the AEI whose

members had not stopped vying with each other for the distribution of resources ever since the moment they joined their first governing coalition. Even the 2015-2016 Bank fraud scandal, which had demonstrated the deep corruptness of the state institutions and politicians of the Republic of Moldova, did not prompt a corresponding reaction from Brussels. A paradoxical situation emerged when one of the key forces of public protest against a corrupt pro-European government happened to be again a pro-European civil association titled “Dignity and Truth Platform” (Kostanyan 2016).

Still, given the circumstances of a confrontation with Russia and growing popularity of the pro-Russian forces in Moldova (first of all, Party of Socialists), Brussels decided to ignore the problem. Faced with an apparent difficulty to form positive resilience in the case of European integration of Moldova, the European Union acted in a somewhat ambiguous manner. Contrary to the idea of relying on civil society, Brussels opted to continue cooperation with the governing coalition that had discredited itself in the eyes of the population. According to the 2016 public opinion polls, none of the two dozen top politicians in Moldova enjoyed a positive trust rating. (Barometrul de Opinie Publică. Aprilie 2016). If following the logic of the EU officials, we assume that the level of citizens’ trust in public and political institutions is one of the indicators of the effectiveness of a social contract, which is the basis of state and societal resilience, then it is clear that, unlike in Belarus, such a contract is absent in Moldova.

Attempting to separate stability from resilience, as applied to social phenomena according to their normative values of positive and negative subtypes, is a useful instrument of analysis that reveals the nuances of resilience in the EU discourse. At the same time, as practice shows, resilience and stability of societies and states along the perimeter of the European Union have a complex and multi-layered character. So, for example, Belarus, where the current situation could be described using the concepts of negative stability and negative resilience, has a significantly lower level of corruption, higher human development indicators, and a higher level of GDP per capita than the states actively advancing along the path of reforms (Moldova, Ukraine). Additionally, it is difficult to mark off certain practices as ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ and to distinguish between the formal practices and the informal ones. The

latter can be used in the shaping of formal institutions, while immediate and uncompromising destruction of negative stability does not necessarily lead to the development of more positive forms of resilience.

Conclusions

The above analysis shows both similarities and differences between the Southern and the Eastern dimensions in two broad respects – (1) in terms of the discursive uses of ‘resilience’ and ‘stability’ and (2) in terms of the practical problems connected to the EU’s policies.

First, in terms of discourse, there are similarities between the South and the East with regard to how resilience has been used. Although resilience has become a new overarching goal in the EU’s discourses regarding its external action and the ENP, the specific content of the EU’s understanding of the notion, including the relation to stability, has not been very clearly stated. Besides, the notion has penetrated the lower discursive levels in a limited and fragmentary way.

Regarding the South, ‘resilience’ has often been used in the initiatives which concern not only the Southern Neighbourhood, but also Africa and are built around aid and development issues; it has also been employed in economic senses and concerning the widely-covered Syrian problem and refugees (including the sparse references to resilience in bilateral documents with some partners). Beyond the above (intersecting) contexts, resilience has still not become widespread in the shared agenda of the EU and the partners.

As regards the East, the key strategic document of the Eastern Partnership does feature the term ‘resilience’ and a particular ‘philosophy’ of resilience. However, the main priorities for interaction with partners primarily build on the old ones. Furthermore, in Eastern Partnership documents that do not directly concern security issues and the conflict with Russia and aim at audience external to EU institutions, ‘resilience’ may be absent altogether. References to resilience in documents concerning individual Eastern neighbours are rare and either limited to a specific area (energy or economy), or are rather general, or repeat the traditional statements on reforms.

To a large degree, there has been a predictable inertia. The relationships between the EU and the neighbours both to the South and to the East have continued to draw on the old, more traditional concepts than 'resilience'. The closer one looks at the documents, the more one can suggest that a developed 'resilience-thinking' is hardly reflected in the ENP currently. As far as one can suggest, resilience has provoked little interest on the part of the neighbours' politicians (and even experts) and has been largely perceived as another new buzzword stemming from Brussels.

The differences between the South and the East in the discourse have been rather thematic and a matter of different emphases. Regarding the South, stability has emerged as the key priority against the backdrop of the hard security threats, instability, and the migration crisis. With respect to the East, resilience is connected mainly to the reform priorities that have essentially remained the same since at least 2003, and that should, in the EU's view, strengthen the neighbours in the face of threats that the EU believes stem from Russia (these discourses emphasise hybrid threats). However, despite different emphases, the EU viewed both the South and the East largely through the same lens of hard security and geopolitics.

Second, the EU's policies will likely face numerous practical problems. They are largely similar for the ENP's both dimensions. The EU's policies themselves have been one of the drivers of instability in its neighbourhood, whether intentionally or not. The 'old' stability had, in many cases, been negative. Yet, events have proven that even a return to that stability would be problematic and attaining more positive stability and resilience still more so. The case of the recent Arab upheavals demonstrates this clearly enough. The case of Belarus, as we have argued, shows the strengths of even some negative aspects of stability, compared to the more 'reformist' neighbours. Social stability is then a complex phenomenon that needs a careful and step-by-step approach considering the specificities of various social contracts. Meanwhile, it is far from certain that the EU has taken this into account.

Furthermore, the EU may impose its own views and 'know-how' on 'what is right and wrong' regarding resilience and stability. The said would hardly be fruitful, again reproducing an old Eurocentrism. 'Resilience' may be perceived as another

unilateral concept and policy offered to the partners on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. On the other hand, Brussels's geopolitical considerations and scarce resources could prompt it to de facto uphold, in many ways, negative instances of stability and/or resilience in its neighbourhood. This may include the EU breaking its own principles. For example, fears of a large-scale 'explosion' of the situation in Israel/Palestine and a lack of political will could provoke the EU to limit itself to supporting an ever less tenable negative stability and resilience there, while declaring to 'increase' the resilience of the Palestinians. Similarly, Brussels's geopolitical apprehension of such Eastern neighbours as Moldova eventually developing closer ties with Russia may push the EU to condone practices in these countries that are negative from the viewpoint of the EU itself.

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