

Introduction

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Como citar: PALEVIQ, Edina; USHKOVSKA, Mare; AGUILAR, Sergio.

Introduction. In: DUCROS, Hélène *et al.* (org.). **Decentering European studies:** perspectives on Europe from its beyond. Marília: University Workshop; São Paulo: Academic Culture, 2025. p. 65-66. DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.36311/2025.978-65-5954-652-7.p65-66>



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Introduction

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The ways in which the European Union interacts with its member states and the countries outside the bloc as a supranational political power can be analyzed at different levels: internal, regional, and global. In this book that aims to decentralize knowledge production about Europe, this section assembles works by Global South/Global East authors to incorporate perspectives and expertise from outside the EU. The three chapters that follow add value by presenting diverse external perceptions of Union politics and functioning and by casting new light on issues the EU has had to face recently.

Since the 1990s, the EU has sought to play a more assertive role in global affairs and has come to be recognized as an important actor in the international community. However, as its goals have expanded, so have challenges. Central to these contemporary concerns are the integration of the bloc, the enlargement process, and the role of the EU in European and international security. The authors in Part II tackle these interconnected issues from multiple angles and illustrate how the EU's internal cohesion impacts its external influence by addressing the efficacy of the EU's conditionality in the enlargement process, the dynamics and challenges of the transference of power from national to Union institutions, and finally the evolution of EU's military operations and missions overseas. Edina Paleviq examines the effectiveness of EU conditionality in Montenegro's EU accession process, arguing that, after almost two decades, "Europeanization" has failed at producing successful results beyond the mere norm adoption phase. Mare Ushkovska then discusses contemporary internal EU dynamics, explaining the dissonance that exists among EU member states in the final stage of European integration by a clash of worldviews among the populations of member states. Finally, Sergio Aguilar considers the reality of EU peace operations, arguing that the Union constantly adapts its overseas engagement in response to changes in both internal and external environments and the challenges these contexts pose.

The three chapters in this section present diverse methodological approaches. Paleviq combines a normative and empirical process, as she tests the EU's external demands (rule adoption) through the content of rules and laws in the judicial sector and freedom of expression, at the same time as she discusses routine issues visible in the media and

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reports by non-governmental organizations about implementation. Ushkovska uses the quantitative descriptive method and interpretative quantitative method to analyze social patterns and attitudes inside member states that may be associated with contemporary Euroskepticism. Finally, Aguilar grounds his qualitative analysis on insights from complexity theory and quantitative data to discuss how EU military operations and missions respond and adapt to changes in their operating environment.

This part of the book addresses the EU from three interconnected perspectives: as a bloc (focusing on internal dynamics and cohesion), as a normative power (considering its influence on candidate states), and as a player in the international security system (analyzing its influence as a global power). Importantly, these chapters explore EU policy processes based on their outcomes, rather than on their proposed commitments. Furthermore, together they address an array of internal challenges: the lack of enlargement credibility in the EU; the sources of contemporary internal contestations about the EU's values, multiculturalism, and immigration policy; and the difficulties the EU has encountered in accomplishing its ambitions in the international security field.

The topics covered provide useful insights, as the chapters navigate through the EU political and social context and emphasize dynamics that operate not only within the EU but also in its relation with its outside and periphery. The three chapters capture up-to-date accounts of some of the latest developments in conditionality, integration, and military actions abroad. In addition, they provide wide-ranging sub-themes relating to the public's distrust toward the EU, the lack of consensus among EU member states, values and policy priorities in the European project, the credibility of EU projects, and the capacity of the EU to make a difference abroad. Finally, the authors in this part of the book offer a diverse knowledge base that is balanced and informative in their attempt to shed light on the EU from an outside.