

Research Project Description

HUNDRED SHADES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- Mapping the Political Economy of the euro peripheries.

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Introduction

The European Union is a very diverse political and cultural space despite its leaning towards unity (and uniformity). One cannot understand the EU without understanding power asymmetries which are implicit to its functioning. These asymmetries resulted in the emergence of two broad peripheral regions in relation to the core (or centre): the Southern European (SE) countries and the Central and Eastern (CEE) countries, referred to as the “old periphery” and the “new periphery”, respectively.¹ In our research project, we want to enlarge our understanding of the political economy of the EU by focusing on the problem of peripheralities from the CEE and SE perspectives and with the use of comparative analysis. It means we aim to explain how political and economic processes interact and support or impede the development of the societies in question.

Peripherality is a condition and one of the starting points for the discussion about the future of the European Union. As of today, one can argue that the EU came to be a specific type of empire – with different types of hierarchies and with the core and peripheries relations that determine its decision making and functioning. When we speak about the “crisis of European integration”, we speak about the problem of coping (or not) with different types of diversities and inequalities within the European project.

Core and periphery are important (although imperfect) categories of macro-social analysis because they allow us to study and focus on structural inequalities, together with important nodes of power situated within the structures of the EU and in important economic centres of Member States. In addition, such categories allow us to grasp important social and economic problems, including (under)development, dependency and the crisis of (liberal) democracy. In short, peripherality is a condition that must be understood not only as a political precondition for progressive policy, but also as one of the determinants in Member States’ decision making and formulation of interests. We would like to underline that both categories – the core and the peripheries – have a neutral meaning in our research.

Yet, the processes and outcomes that lead to the generation of the “old peripheries” (or Southern European countries) and the “new peripheries” (or Central and European countries) show similarities and differences. Both have common and unique causes and ramifications: looking into closer detail within each of these peripheries, significant differences as well as similarities (or commonalities) in terms of socio-economic development can be further distinguished.

Problem Formulation

This research project aims to grasp a comprehensive characterisation and comparative analysis between the complex EU peripheries and seeks to prepare an informed basis for constructing adequate political responses from the radical Left, both at the European level and

¹ Historically, today’s EU peripheries have been integrated into the emerging capitalist world-system as semi-peripheries or peripheries (16th century Portugal and Spain are the exceptions).

domestic level. In addition, this project also aims to foster shared knowledge and open the dialogue between Southern and Central and Eastern European countries. An ultimate goal could be envisioned as boosting closer cooperation within the EU at the level of peripheries.

Regardless of the fact that uneven paths towards European Integration has generated the SE and CEE peripheries, a clear path of divergence of the former and convergence of the latter relative to the core has become one of the features of recent developments (see figures 1 and 2). This is a serious problem of European integration since one has to ask: is it the case that the integration of the most recent periphery contributed to (and how – this must be determined) the divergence of the older one? If so, to what extent do such development processes pose a threat to a viable future for the EU?

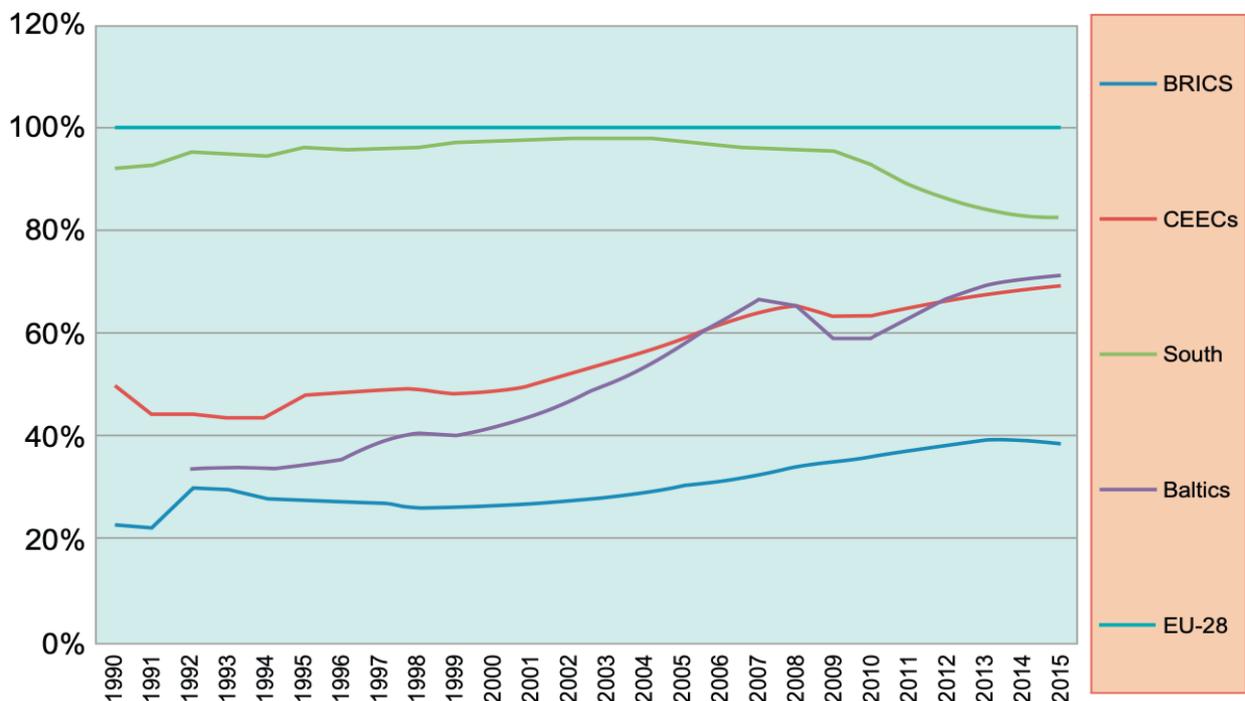


Figure 1: GDP per capita in PPP (percentage of EU-28) in CEE and Southern groups of Member States (from Caraveli, 2017)

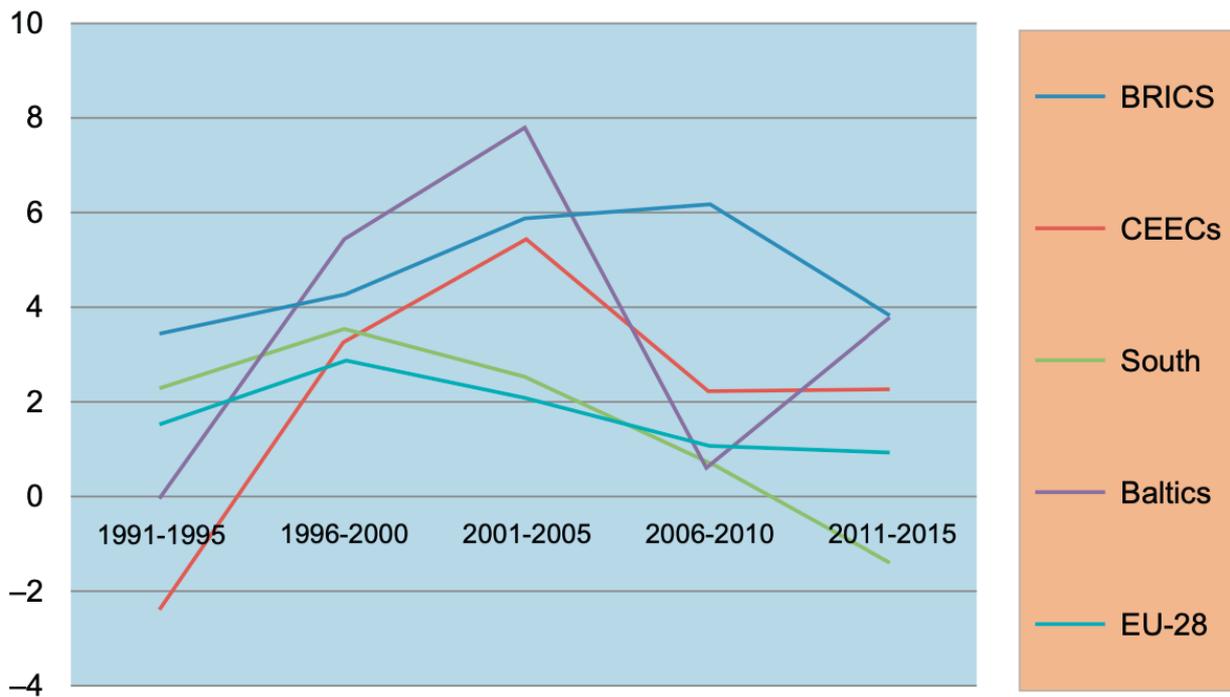


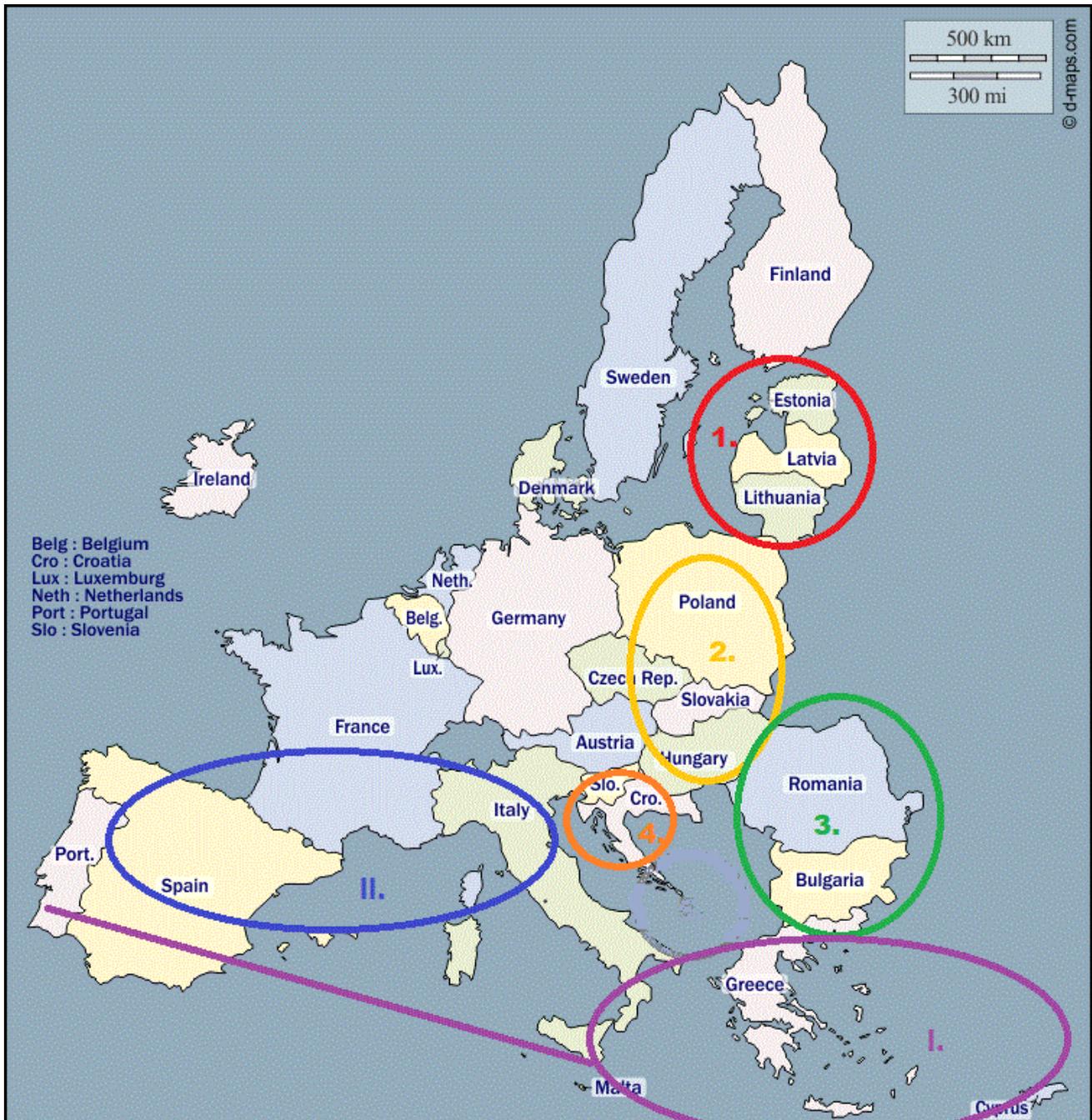
Figure 2: Five-year average real growth rates in CEE and Southern groups of Member States (from Caraveli, 2017)

These differences are a clear reflection of the (different or similar?) integration processes, which originated from different economic structures and models of economic development, while managing to keep both regions away from convergence towards the economies of the core countries.

“Diseases” of the periphery are very often the “prelude” to the crisis of the core, as witnessed following the 2008 financial crisis – especially in relation to political outcomes (rise of populism, oligarchisation, etc.). Nowadays, in the wake of the pandemic, the European Union as a whole is heavily struck by a foreseeable economic and social crisis. Nonetheless, the resistance and resilience of Member States in facing this “novel” capitalist crisis remains deeply rooted in the periphery-core divide. Therefore, it is not that the focus on the periphery is some self-centred task, but, rather, that it goes to the heart of ongoing “integration crisis”.

The first stage of the project will prepare two “maps” of peripherality, producing two intraregional comparative analyses for SE countries and CEE countries, by focusing on groups of data. By “map” we mean an analytical overview of the larger regional/peripheral landscapes of the EU. We assume that the peripherality of each of these regions within the EU has a diverse face even when there are certainly many common determinants. We need to be sensitive to these diversities in order to address the problem correctly. Although our hypothesis situates “the core” (power centre) of the EU on the axis of Germany-France-Benelux, we expect that our research will corroborate this hypothesis. We are also aware that there are “internal peripheries” (for example, Germany’s East) so neither “core” nor “periphery” are one-dimensional. Considering the SE countries it is possible to consider, not only two groups of countries within these geographic areas (Italy and Spain on the one hand; Portugal, Greece, Cyprus and Malta on the other hand), but possibly a more *bona fide* intraregional grouping involving a putative “southern development zone” (extending from north-eastern Spain to northern Italy, and possibly encompassing the south of France).

In the case of the CEE countries, which represent a more diverse unit, we propose grouping the countries in four groups of countries:



Picture 1: Diverse regions – diverse research groups: CEE: 1. Baltic region, 2. Visegrad Group, 3. Balkan group, 4. Western Balkan group (note: Slovakia, three Baltic countries and Slovenia are eurozone members. SE: I. Portugal, Malta, Greece, Cyprus and II. Spain and Italy).

As already stated, peripherality is a dependency (or asymmetric interdependency) with economic, social and, of course, political (and cultural) aspects. Given that there is no periphery without a core, our research will also help to determine the location of the core for SE and CEE countries – it is just Germany/Brussels, or it is more complex? Looking at the political economy of the EU through the lenses of core-peripheries relations will help us to grasp the interaction of

economic and political processes as a driver or obstacle for social development (considered as the wellbeing of society).

In a second phase, we aim to develop a comparative analysis between these two regions, which will improve and deepen the knowledge of one another, since where there is weak (or no) knowledge, there can be no good policy. It means that we shall situate our “map” in the interpretative framework during the second phase. This analysis is intended to provide a basis for deepening the political dialogue between regions, which will eventually lead to the formulation of specific political strategies. Our research will help to identify key problems, nodes of cooperation, as well as sensitive spots or sources of conflict, and serve as the basis of such strategies.

Focus

Within our research hypothesis we shall focus on three distinct dimensions of peripherality, since we understand it as a multidimensional problem.

Area 1: socio-economic dimension²

- Export-import patterns (within the EU and outside): who are the biggest export/import partners of SE/CEE Member States and what is the (im)balance between them?
- The basic structure of SE/CEE economies (share of industry, services, agriculture, dominant areas), as now.
- Share of large and medium-sized businesses in the national economy, as now.
- Sources of added value in the economy, distribution of product, gross operating surplus versus employee remuneration.
- Domestic capital and investments versus foreign investments, before and after joining the EU 2004/Amsterdam Treaty 1999. Are the SE and CEE peripheralitys characterised by the lack of domestic capital?
- Position and role in global value chains (in this case we determinate key global value chains in the EU and study the contribution of SE/CEE countries in these chains).
- Tax systems (progressive versus regressive) and tax evasions, as now.
- Workers and employees: minimal salary (if this exists), unemployment, median vs average salary, union membership in % of population, longer timeline 2000-2020.
- Structure of income inequalities, how (un)equal regional societies are, how (un)equal they become based on available data (distribution of wealth between 1%, 10% of rich population and 50% of bottom population, in longer time – based on [WiD research](#)).

² The biographical essay will help us to grasp the main resources of data and key literature on the topic.

- Migration of workers within the EU (who and how much), since 2001/2004, including demographic impacts at home (outgoing and incoming labour migration).
- Precarisation: salaries, type of contracts, unemployment, underemployment as now and before the Great Recession/with first measurable impacts of the pandemic, which percentage of the population might be determined as precarious (in individual countries).

Area 2: political dimension

a) neoliberalisation, the financial crisis and its political conjunctures since 1990

- The Left in the political system: election results in parliamentary elections (national and European Parliament) between 1990-2019, performance of left-wing parties (social-democratic and radical left, results, governmental engagement, opposition).
- The Left after the financial crisis (did the Left become stronger/weaker/more fragmented within the last 10-12 years).

b) relations with the EU

- EU Budget – EU Investments Funds – EU Cohesion Funds (composition of EU Budget, possibilities for influencing the EU legislative processes, contributors x beneficiaries, voting analyses – VoteWatch).
- Representation in the EU top positions and EP (influencers and *influencees*) – who represents whom?
- Opinion polls on the role of the EU, EU institutions, levels of Euroscepticism, etc. (as measured by Eurobarometer and National Surveys Agencies).

Area 3: epistemological/cultural dimension

- Cultural construction vis-à-vis the European core (euro-orientalism, the PIGS' spirit).
- Politics of imitation, paternalist patterns at home and in the EU (accession to the EU presented as “missionary process” of “spreading values”).
- Political/intellectual awareness or denial of peripherality (a state of being the other but desiring being the same as a typical dynamic of periphery-core relations).

Aims and Questions

It is necessary to underline that we shall approach these social-economic criteria as a composite part of European processes, not static or autonomous sets of data and processes. We shall combine a broader approach to (inter)regional/country data comparisons with (where suitable) case studies (due to a large scale of the research itself). We are interested in the role of the EU in these

processes within the interpretative part of the research. The key question is a) how much peripherality can be an opportunity and b) how much peripherality creates political space for infra-EU alliances? c) How much it may (or may not) represent a divergence factor in the formulation of interests in the EU? And finally, d) What are the particular political and economic manifestations of peripherality in the EU?

We believe that, to speak about and return to the topic of power asymmetries and dependencies in the centre of political discussions about the future of the EU, we must understand its current forms and manifestations first. This will be a first step that is very particular in its content.

We envision a project in which political-economic mapping of SE and CEE peripherality will not only be useful for building dialogue bridges and cooperation strategies between these regions, but also for policymakers beyond these regions.

We also believe that this project will encompass a contribution in the process of peripheries self-representations, by representing “the East by the East” and the “South by the South” (as opposed to the hegemonic representation of the core as the only dependency and power mechanism in play).

Methodological Remarks

Our research is designed as interdisciplinary with approaches and inspirations from world-system theory, postcolonial theory, theory of dependency, comparative political science, sociology, and economics.

Long-term Project Timeline

Phase	Action	Timeline	Note
I.	Call for Tenders Publication	28-29/09/2020	
	Deadline for Tenders Application	19/10/2020	
	Announcement of Tenders Results	28/10/2020	Coordination Research Team
	Meeting of the whole Research Team	11/2020	Week 1-2 of November, ZOOM
	First Data Consolidation	12/2020 – 01/2021	
II.	Main Research Realization	01-12/2021	
	Coordination Research Team Meeting	03/2021	ZOOM
	Midterm Review Research Team Meeting	06/2021	personal meeting (PRG, WIE, BRX)
	Coordination Research Team Meeting	09/2021	ZOOM
	Preliminary Outcomes	11-12/2021	– presentation - announcement of study publication
III.	Full Study Publication (3 parts) comparative analysis of SE, outcomes comparative analysis of CEE, outcomes comparative analysis of SE+CEE, executive summary	02-03/2022	Electronic (pdf.), in English Expected length: approx. 250 pages
	Executive Summary Publication in different languages	02-03/2022	Electronic (pdf.), translation in various languages of CEE and SE, plus EN, DE
	Promotion of the Research Outcomes	throughout 2022	Different channels
	Workshops, Presentations and Follow-up	06 -10/2022	Possibility depending on stakeholders' interest, EL Summer University, EL Forum, GUE/NGL...
IV.	Possibility to update and extend the Research	2022-2023	post COVID-19, economic crisis data

Biographical Guide

This is a preliminary survey of the basic resources and literature useful for the research start-up. It is in no way an exhaustive list of approaches, studies and literature available. This guide presents only a basic survey of the literature and resources available for its use before the factual research starts as an heuristic probe.

If we start with the theoretical fundament of the research project, it is impossible to do so without mentioning at least several authors and works as important inspiration in terms of theory. Immanuel Wallerstein's concept of world-system (or **world-system theory**) divided into mutually dependent centres, semi-peripheries and peripheries as key structures of world capitalist economy. His four-part *The Modern World-System* (1976, 1980, 1989 and 2011) is a classical contribution in this field. Wallerstein made an important contribution in understanding capitalism as a historical social system, while he offered his theory as a protest against social scientific inquiry that emerged in the 19th century. His "Essential Wallerstein" (2000) is a comprehensive and exhaustive case study on his thinking.

In understanding peripheral capitalism there is a broad structuralist tradition. For example, Economist Andre Gunder-Frank and his *Development and Dependency in Latin America* is a next study of core and periphery (satellite) structures of **dependency**. Another author dealing with **peripheral capitalism** is Samir Amin and his *Unequal Development. Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism* (1976). Returning to the context of Latin American periphery is the book by F.H. Cardoso and Enzo Faletto *Dependencia y Desarrollo en America Latina*, which explores the categories of **underdevelopment**, periphery and dependency in the Latin American (global South) context from a largely structuralist perspective. Gunder-Frank, Cardoso, Faletto but also Aníbal Quijano and Theotonio Dos Santos are usually labelled as from the "dependentista" school, which attempts to use the dependency as an approach to explain why Latin American countries did not develop similarly to the centre. The authors also argue that development and underdevelopment are produced by centre-periphery relations. Eastern Europe or Southern Europe are certainly not Latin America, and modernist dependency theory underwent relatively large revision and critique, but it remains an important and inspirational perspective.

Recent years have witnessed a come-back of "up-dated" neo-structuralism in the social sciences with an interdisciplinary approach largely related to postcolonial studies. Arturo Escobar [offered](#) a postcolonial critique of development as a composite part of a critique of Western modernisation theory. Aníbal Quijano, together with Immanuel Wallerstein, [introduced](#) a concept of "**coloniality**" as a "darker" side of Western modernity in the peripheries of the modern capitalist world-system. Ramon Grosfoguel [offered](#) a **decolonial option** to political economy and its paradigms. This neo-structuralist/postcolonial approach was reflected by [Manuela Boatca](#) and her studies dedicated to Eastern Europe before, during and after Second World War. Boatca explored **semi-peripheries of world-system** and compared Eastern Europe and Latin America, but also focused on topics such as multiple Europes and the politics of difference within. Very inspiring is her [comparison](#) of slavery and second serfdom as **labour regimes on the periphery**. The critique of orientalist tendencies in approaching and constructing Eastern Europe historically or during the Enlargement process were a composite part of this approach (see Böröcz, below). This is also the topic of two research articles by Veronika Sušová-Salminen focused on Eastern Europe ([here](#) and [here](#)). The post-colonial approach in interpretation of coloniality school is useful because it is based on the following principle: Culture matters, but structure matters too. On the other hand, the classical dependency school largely underestimated culture.

The term **empire** comes naturally to mind when speaking of centres and periphery, and not just from the political point of view. Empires are types of governance that rely on the uneven exchanges between centres and peripheries. There is also growing literature about the EU as an empire beyond political proclamations (in the words of Jose Manuel Barroso, [here](#)). For example, Hartmut Behr in his [“The European Union in the Legacies of Imperial Rule? Accession Politics Viewed from a Historical Comparative Perspective”](#) argues that the EU might be understood as a (new) empire, its accession policy operated in the legacies of the 19th century imperial rule. Also Jan Zielonka [sees](#) the European union as a new type of empire with a neo-medieval nature. Zielonka accentuates the role of Eastern enlargement in the process of neo-medieval empire-building. He also argues that the EU moved away from the Westphalian state system. The Westphalian system is about “exporting military imposition and containment” while the **neo-medieval system** is about “export of laws and modes of governance” (see example [here](#)). On the other hand, German sociologist Wolfgang Streeck [sees](#) the EU as a “doomed, liberal empire” with a central role of Germany. His essay also focuses on important structures of uneven relations in the EU.

Centre and periphery in theory and in practice (of case studies/the EU)

Joachim Becker and Johannes Jäger wrote about [“European Integration in Crisis: the Centre-Periphery Divide while focusing mainly on the European economic centre and periphery relations in the EU: division between financialising and export oriented countries”](#) (2011). Jose M. Magone: [Centre-Periphery conflict in the European Union? Europe 2020, the Southern European model and the eurocrisis](#) (2011). In the same direction goes the book of proceedings Jose. M. Magone – Brigid Laffan and Christian Schweiger (eds.): “Core and Periphery Relations in the European Union. Power and Conflict in a dualist political economy” (2016), one theoretical chapter of which is available online ([here](#)).

András Blahó focused on the [tensions](#) between centre and periphery in relation to Central and Eastern Europe and the EU without considering the southern countries. His study from 2012 focuses on various types of capital, as well as on dual social world of periphery or on communication codes of the centre and the periphery.

Gabiela C. Pascariu and Ramona Frunza’s [study](#) focuses on Eastern and Southern **peripherality** (2011) seen from a centre-periphery model, while they see peripherality largely as an economic and spatial problem considering examples of eastern countries (Romania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) and their southern counterparts (Spain, Portugal and Greece). Among other questions, their study tries to answer whether the southern peripherality can be a model for the eastern one. Another book of proceedings goes in the very same direction (economic with a clear dominance of neoliberal economy) (2016) “Core-Periphery Patterns in the European Union. Case Studies and Lessons from Eastern and Southern Europe” edited by Gabriela Pascariu and Maria Adelaide Pedrosa da Silva Duarte. There are various data and graphs available in this book.

On the other hand, John Agnew [reflects](#) on, at that time still ongoing, Eastern enlargement (2001) as a problem of uneven development, rather than of centre-periphery relations. He asks how many Europes exist, both within the EU and outside of the EU. Agnew points out that the EU under neoliberalism increasingly focuses on uneven development as an instrument of “global competitiveness” of the EU.

Alistair Cole and Romain Pasquier deal with the problem of impacts of the European integration on centre periphery relations as a [comparison](#) of the cases, France and the United Kingdom (2012). In this study they concentrate on the multilevel governance of the EU, questions of convergence and mobilisation based on the study of cohesion policy from 2000-2006.

H. Caraveli and E.G. Tsonias used an approach of new economic geography in studying centre and periphery in the European union. Their [study](#) works with a U-shaped curve/non-linear relationship focusing on several indicators such as agglomeration, welfare, production and others in the regional context of the EU. Dominic Hartmann, Mayra Bezerra, Beatrice Lodolo and Flávio L. Pihheiro see core-periphery structure in terms of **income inequality** in relation to international trade and development traps, and thus beyond the EU framework. Their [study](#) involves 116 countries and focuses on **income inequality** associated with imports and exports. Boyka M. Stefanova [focuses](#) on the outsourcing process and its political economy in the context of Eastern enlargement of the EU.

The study of Matteo Gaddi and Nadia Garbellini (2018) “Evolution of International **Production Chains**” represents a valuable case study into intra-EU value chains, which can be used for analysing the division of labour and functioning of value chains in the EU in regard to Southern and Eastern countries and their roles in these chains. Markus Ahlborn and Marcus Wortman [focus](#) on the topic of business cycles in the study of core-periphery relations.

Another study by Maciej J. Grodzicki and Tomasz Geodecki [investigates](#) core-periphery relations within the enlarged EU by assessing the involvement of Member States in the **international division of labour**. Secular stagnation and growth in the Western Balkans from the perspective of the core and periphery interdependence [is studied](#) by Will Barlett and Ivana Prica in their 2006 published paper.

The EU decision making and policy, public perceptions

The centre-periphery relation in the **cooperation patterns** in the Council of Ministers is reflected by the [study](#) of Mart Laartsit and Michael Keading (2011). Their study focuses on the features of cooperation in the Council of Ministers after the Eastern enlargement in 2004. The study shows some examples of cooperation patterns between new Member States and EU-15. The study also involves broader literature about **coalition building in the EU decision-making**. For this topic, it is useful to see also the report of ECFA findings, [here](#). [VoteWatch](#) can also be used as the next important instrument and source of data.

The report by the Robert Schuman Foundation [focuses](#) on the functioning of the 8th legislature of the European Parliament. It argues that the **under-representation** of some countries in the EP correlates with the **low participation** in the European elections in these countries. However, the study is much more complex in its evaluation of the EP.

The next dimension of decision-making in the EU is the role of **lobbies**. There are several studies and reports focusing on the problem. The Transparency International EU [shows](#) the state of the lobbying in the EU, including the geographical distribution of lobbyists in the EU (among others it shows absolute under-representation of the Eastern flank in lobbying, while the South is represented by Italy). On the other hand, the Lobby report [concentrates](#) on the role of multinational corporations in lobbying in the EU while evaluating their influence as “incredible”. More information about lobbying is [provided](#) by the EU in the Transparency Register, too.

The Eurobarometer [focuses](#) on the public opinion in the European Union and offers a systematic view of the perception of the EU and its functioning in the Member States, including **Euro-sceptic** moods and opinions. It also [provides](#) an interactive option (according to categories of questions).

The Enlargement, Europeisation/third-wave democratisation

[“The European Union as a Regional Normative Hegemon: The Case of European Neighbourhood Policy”](#) by Hiski Haukkala studies the problem of **the EU’s enlargement** from the perspective of international relations. It sees the EU as a normative power and whole enlargement

policy is presented as an important factor shaping the EU. Jan Delhey asks if the enlargement [did make](#) the European Union less cohesive while focusing on the trust between EU nationalities – trust being seen as an indicator of social cohesion. [“Empire’s New Clothes. Unveiling EU Enlargement”](#) by Jozsef Borocz and Melinda Kovács is an important contribution and analyses imperial substance, **orientalism** and other power practices behind the Eastern Enlargement. Their approach is rather distinctive from the “mainstream” narrative.

Both Southern and Eastern Europe share the mainstream narrative of so-called third-wave democratisation between 1974 and 1989 (see Samuel Huntington 1991: “The third wave: Democratization in the late twentieth century”). There are, however, distinctive processes typical for each region. In both cases they were linked with accession to the European union (European Economic Community) based on **conditionality**, (peripheral) re-integration to European economic space but also **othering** (such as orientalism or cultural constructions of “southernness”). All these phenomena were a composite part of the **“Europeisation”** process. For the overview of Southern experience see for example *Journal of Integration History* special volume dedicated to Southern Europe ([here](#)). Obviously, there is a huge wealth of literature about third wave democratisation, EU enlargements and Europeisation, including their critiques.

Statistics, reports, indicators (for the use of Focus)

For economic profiles and updated information about the most important data it is possible to use the database of [Trading Economics](#). The *Harvard Atlas of Economic Complexity* offers [economic profiles](#) of individual countries according to export and import patterns, goods and services exported and imported and partners in exports and imports. In addition, it offers a longer time to grasp possible changes. It is possible to consult it or combine it with a slightly different [database](#) of the *Observatory of Economic Complexity*. Both databases use visualisations and offer comprehensive information and data about the structure of individual economies. For observing long time periods it is possible to use the [Megatrends](#) page, which includes various historical statistics about economic and social developments in different countries.

The *World Bank* open data is a next important source of information based on [countries](#) or [indicators](#), such as economy and growth, financial sector, external debt, social development and many others. Similarly, the International Monetary Fund with [its data](#) can be used as an important source of data about economic profiles.

Eurostat provides statistical information about EU Member States according to various indicators, including those that are crucial to our research. Besides Eurostat, it will be necessary to work with national statistics available, usually online, in national languages. The data of national [statistical](#) offices is also useful (for statistics dedicated to economic data, investments, etc.) to explore the statistical information of central banks. The national statistical offices offer a large scale of data considering economy, demographical development, migration, employment and other categories needed for our research and indicated in the project under the chapter Focus.

It is also possible to use more targeted statistics and reports. For example, in studying the situation with FDI one can use OECD data, as well as central bank data, but also more specific tools. One of these tools, focusing on Chinese investments, FDI in the European Union is [the report](#) from MERICS for 2019. The report maps the distribution of Chinese investments according to regional criteria and between 2012 and 2019. OECD [databases](#) are a good source for data about FDI in terms of inflow and outflow, but also according of partner country.

[WID](#), the world inequality database, is an important source mapping income distribution worldwide and nationally. It is possible to study national reports, as well as to carry out comparisons

between countries. For questions of taxes, including tax avoidance, the use of illicit schemes and tax evasions, it is useful to start with information on the [Tax Justice Network](#).

The quality of living and working conditions in the EU is [observed](#) by Eurofond, which offers data, surveys and reports about the quality of life, work-life balance and other categories. Eurofond is the EU Agency for the improvement of living and working conditions. In relation to the topic of the EU's cohesion there is a [useful report](#) by the European Council for Foreign Affairs mapping all Member States. The study by Henry Goecke and Michael Hüther [deals](#) with regional convergence in the EU. The collective [report](#) by CEPS focuses on the income convergence in the EU as a two tales story. This question is also addressed by ETUI, the European Trade Union Institute, in its [reports](#).