Normative influence in world politics.
Towards a theoretical framework of norm export and import.

by
Annika Björkdahl
Lund University
Annika.bjorkdahl@svet.lu.se


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Introduction

The ambition of this paper is to develop the idea of the European Union as a norm exporter and explore the normative influence of the EU in its neighborhood. Such investigation may be a valuable addition to our understanding of the EU’s civilian, economic and military influence in world politics. Exporting norms may be a strategy of influence and a way for the EU to create a niche for itself in international politics.¹

Over the years the member states of the EU have come to share a number of norms relating to, for example non-violent and compromise-oriented resolution of conflict, democratic decision-making processes and respect for human rights. These shared norms have created a sense of common “Europeanness” and established the EU as a cooperative arrangement of democratic and peaceful states. It is of interest to explore if and how the EU has attempted to externalize these norms guiding the interaction among its member states in its relations with other states.

The European Union is regarded to possess a “silent disciplining power on the ‘near abroad’” (Waever 1998). Bordering the EU the Western Balkans has been an important testing ground for developing the external role of the EU. The region has maintained the Union’s attention since the outbreak of the Balkan wars of the 1990’s. The rhetoric of “Europeanization” underlines much of the EU activities in the region, and the EU has confirmed its goal to integrate these states into the economic and political mainstream of Europe. The prospect of a future membership in the European Union, which has been strengthened by the former Yugoslav republic of Slovenia’s entrance to the Union May 1, may make the Western Balkan states receptive to EU norm export. This places the EU in a strong position to use its normative power to influence the states in the Western Balkans.

To analyze the influence of norm export of the EU, one needs to develop theoretical tools to analyze the mechanisms and the strategies of norm export. In addition, the link between the export and import (i.e. acceptance) of norms is of vast importance and one needs to be able to identify under what conditions norms are likely to be imported. Adopting a social constructivist perspective, the paper develops a tentative theoretical framework to explore

¹ Important work on the normative power of the EU has been conducted by for example Ian Manners, Richard Whitman, Johan P. Olsen, Nicolaidis and Howse.
norm export and import. The initial step is to identify and discuss the theoretical building blocks of relevance to such a framework. Brief empirical illustrations of the EU export of norms pertaining to liberal democracy, good governance, human and minority rights, peaceful conflict resolution and rule of law to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)\(^2\) will be provided. Macedonia will offer a pilot case for analyzing the normative power of the EU in the Western Balkan.

**On the power and influence of the EU**

European states are increasingly attempting to assert themselves on the international arena through the EU, and the EU is playing an ever-increasing role in international affairs. There has been calls for a more explicit definition of Europe’s role in the world and it has been argued that the EU needs to “develop a sense of agency and purpose and a determination to shape global politics” in order to be influential (The Laeken Convention of December 2001; Cooper 2002).\(^3\) The European Security Strategy of December 2003 can be considered an effort to define the international role of the EU and project an EU-perspective on global politics. This milestone document both clarifies a vision of a united and peaceful Europe, and the means for exporting this model of governance to the outside world. One way of realizing this vision is to externalize the norms that guide the interaction of the members of the EU. By exporting its norm the EU would contribute to “set the normative standards of the world” (Rosecrance 1998; c.f. Manners 2002)

Over the past fifty years Europe has developed an alternative approach to power politics. The EU has turned away from the traditional notion of power and moved in the direction of international laws, rules, transnational cooperation and integration. It has exerted soft “civilian” or “normative” power to influence the world (c.f. Duchêne 1972; Nicolaïdis and Howse 2002; Rosecrance 1998; Smith 1998; Manners 2002). Manners (2002: 240) defines normative power in terms of an “ability to shape conceptions of ‘normal’”. The EU has evolved into what has been characterized as a “post-modern state” (Cooper 2002) or perhaps more sarcastically, a Kantian “post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity” (Kagan 2002). Historically, the European states have moved from confrontation to integration. This is what the EU believes it has to offer the world: “not power but the

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\(^2\) From now on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will be referred to simply as Macedonia.

\(^3\) For an alternative view see Hill (1994) who has argued that the European Union does not need to become state-like to exert an influence in the world.
transcendence of power” (ibid 2002). According to the European Commission President Romano Prodi (2001) “Europe has a role to play in world governance” because in Europe “the rule of law has replaced the crude interplay of power”.

Exporting the EU model of peaceful cooperation to the rest of the world has become Europe’s *mission civilisatrice* (Cooper 2002; Nicolaïdis and Howse 2002). Prodi (2001) argues that “by making a success of integration we are demonstrating to the world that it is possible to create a method of peace”. To some this conveys a naked Eurocentrism and it is not a matter of projecting “the EU as is but an ‘EU-topia’” (Nicolaïdis and Howse 2002: 769). In spite of any eurocentrism, the EU has turned out to be attractive for most European states and the list of applicants is growing (Olsen 2002). The soft powers of the EU have had an overwhelming impact on the candidate countries and they can most likely be deployed in other states on borders of the EU that aspire on membership. The European Security Strategy states that the EU has a task “to promote a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union…” and “it is in the European interest that countries on our borders are well-governed”. The attractiveness of the EU has traditionally been strongest on its own continent and for that reason the EU is more likely to be influential in its own neighborhood. The ambition of the EU is to enjoy close cooperative relations also with the countries of the Western Balkan. By gradually geographically extend the union, through various enlargement processes, the EU can gain increased influence in this part of the world.

**A social constructivist contribution to understanding the normative influence of the EU**

During the last decade, important research on the influence of international norms has taken a “social constructivist turn” in International Relations (c.f. Checkel 1998; Adler 1997). This means that social constructivism among other things, has attempted to expand the focus of international relations by paying more attention to the influence of ideational phenomena such as ideas, norms and values (for an overview see Ruggie 1998; Christensen *et al* 2001; Björkdahl 2002b). This trend has recently begun to influence the research on the European integration and social constructivism has already contributed new and important insights to the study of the EU (c.f. Jørgensen 1998; Elgström 2000; Christiansen *et al* 2001; Cowles *et al* 2001; Checkel 2001). This paper hopes to contribute to this promising dialogue about the

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4 The term social constructivism remains contested and one cannot assume the existence of one social constructivist perspective. Steve Smith (2001: 189) for example notes that “there is no such thing as a social constructivist approach”
advantages and disadvantages of applying a constructivist perspective to the study of European integration (cf. Smith 2001; Risse and Wiener 2001). I find social constructivism well suited for expanding our knowledge about the EU’s potential to influence world politics. Consequently, this paper adopts an IR-social constructivist approach to explore norm export as a way of exercising normative influence.

The approach taken here accepts the notion that the reality is socially constructed, i.e. that it is dependent on the mind and language of the individual observer. Yet, it does not deny the existence of a reality outside our mind. The “real world out there” however, is defined by our intersubjective understandings of this reality. Furthermore, this socially constructed world is constituted both of material factors and ideas linked in complex ways (Klotz 1995; Finnemore 1996a; 1996c; Katzenstein 1996; Adler 1997; Checkel 1998; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Ruggie 1998; Björkdahl 2002a, b). This middle road social constructivist approach facilitates an understanding of the socially constructed world as it allows ideational phenomena such as norms ontological status and argues that ideational factors give meaning to the material world (Adler 1997; Wendt 2000).

Challenges to a norm-based understanding
Norm-oriented studies face a number of interrelated challenges. One challenge has been to empirically demonstrate the influence of norms. A growing number of social constructivists are now conducting in-depth empirical studies. Their research concludes that norms may have decisive influence and can explain changes in international behavior (Sikkink 1991; Klotz 1996, Finnemore 1996a; 1996b, Checkel 1998). As some of these studies have established that international norms matter and discussed how much they matter, it is time to explore why and when certain norms matter. In order to do so, I believe we need to calibrate our analytical tools more finely, and consider the possibility that different types of norms play disparate and differential roles in influencing international relations.

A second challenge is that many of these norm-based accounts of international relations are, strictly speaking, not norm-based understandings. Many studies focus in fact on other factors than norms per se. For example, the literature on epistemic communities, transnational advocacy groups and networks that has gained prominence in the constructivist study of international relations in the last decade focuses on actors and their influence on policy outcomes. Supposedly norm-based, much of the constructivist literature in fact advances
interest-group understandings of policy outcome. This facile replacement of ideas and norms with advocacy groups, transnational networks and norm entrepreneurs, clearly depicts a transition made between ideational phenomena to those who handle them. By emphasizing norms, normative structure, normative fit as well as norm exporter and norm importer this paper intends to maintain a balance between norms and those who export and import them.

A number of state and non-state actors are involved in norm advocacy. Some are more successful than others. A third challenge is to identify whether the EU’s normative influence in world affairs is special, and what makes the EU norm exporter of interest. It has been debated whether or not the EU is “unique”, and if it can be compared with states or with international organizations. It possesses some state-like features, but it also shares some of the characteristics of an international organization. The EU has at its disposal a vast number of tools that can be used for exercising normative influence. When speaking with a single voice and act jointly the EU can be regarded as a normative power (Manners 2002). It can combine attractive positive incentives with harsh negative sanctions to an extent few other actors can match. This clearly, distinguishes the EU from many other actors engaged in norm promotion. This so-called uniqueness of the EU, however, makes some question whether conclusions about socialization and norms’ constitutive effects drawn from other norm promoters are relevant to apply to the EU (cf. Checkel 2001). This paper is based on an understanding of the EU as an influential actor in world politics and one that exerts influence by constructing, diffusing and upholding norms in the world (Rosecrance 1998; Elgström 2000; Manners 2002). As an advocate of “good” norms the EU is an interesting player to study.

The fourth challenge constitutes the need to theorize how normative influence is exerted. A few influential studies have identified a number of strategies and mechanisms of norm diffusion, yet there is a need for more in-depth analysis of the motors behind these processes (Finnemore 1993; 1996; Klotz 1995; Katzenstein et al 1996; Risse et al 1999; Checkel 1999, 2003). Obviously, different actors use different strategies of advocating, promoting and exporting norms in the international arena. The choice of strategy, however, is also partly related to the target of the norm export, i.e. the intended recipient importing the norms. Some norms are more likely to be exported than others because they easily “fit” into the recipient’s normative context, while other norms demand the use of a variety of norm export strategies to persuade. I believe there is a need to identify conducive circumstances for exerting normative power and analyze conditions for successfully norm export and import.
A fifth challenge that I have noted is a bias towards moral, and in our view today “good” norms present in most of the social constructivist body of literature. Clearly, all norms are not “good” and also so-called “bad” norms can be exported, intentionally or unintentionally. However, well aware of this bias this paper also focuses on norms that in a contemporary, western ethical perspective will most likely be perceived as “good” norms.

Towards a theoretical framework
The preliminary theoretical framework for norm export and import discussed here is consistent with the overall social constructivist approach of this paper. I draw mainly on the growing body of social constructivist literature on the influence, diffusion and socialization of norms (c.f. Klotz 1995; Finnemore 1996a; 1996b; Jepperson et al 1996; Legro 1997; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Checkel 1999; 2001; 2003; Elgström 2000). I view norm export and norm import as two sides of the same coin – a process of “Europeanization”. Norm export is regarded as a process of diffusion and norm import as a process of socialization and institutionalization. When attempting to develop a theoretical framework for analyzing complex processes of norm export and import it could be helpful to start with identifying and discussing the central building blocks of such a framework. Below I will conceptualize the four building blocks; norm, norm community, norm export and norm import, as well as provide brief empirical illustrations covering EU–Macedonian relations to highlight parts of the theoretical reasoning.

On norms
A theoretical framework for norm export and import will unsurprisingly be actor-oriented and focus on the actors exporting and importing norms. However, I believe attention must be given to the norms and it is necessary to identify, conceptualize and discuss the object of this export and import namely norms. Hence, norms are investigated as one of the theoretical building blocks in this preliminary theoretical framework.

Conceptualizing norms and their influence
Common definitions of norms are based on behavior, prescription and shared expectations. A primary element in a conceptualization of norms is standards of behavior. Norms are perceived as creating regularity and consistency in behavior and Gurowitz (1999: 417) defines international norms as a “result of common practices among states”. According to Krasner
(1982: 186), norms represent “standards of behavior defined in terms of rights and obligations”. However, standard behavior is an insufficient definition of norms, as constant repetition of the same act does not necessarily create a norm of conduct. Rather, I find that norms do not necessarily identify actual behavior, but defines what appropriate behavior ought to be. This is a second characteristic in a conceptualization of norms. Norms have a prescriptive and proscriptive aspect. This is inescapable since norms involve “appropriateness” and concerns about proper behavior (March and Olsen 1998: 943-969). But what is appropriate is only known by reference to a social community (Axelrod 1986: 1097). Hence, we can conclude that norms express values that create rights and responsibilities. The third element, common to the conceptualization of norms, is shared collective expectations. Norms are considered a set of intersubjective understandings and collective expectations regarding the proper behavior of actors in a given context or with certain identity (Klotz 1995; Keck and Sikkink 1998).

When conceptualizing norms we also need to understand their functions. Norms typically function as regulating, enabling or constituting actors (Krasner 1982; 1988; Kratochwil 1989; Schweller and Priess 1997; Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999). I view norms to constitute interests and thereby enable actors to undertake certain actions that could not otherwise have been undertaken. Secondly, I view norms as simultaneously regulative and constitutive. The norm of sovereignty for example, both regulates the interaction of states in international affairs and defines what a state is (Risse 2000: 5). To argue that norms have a “constitutive effect”, is to argue that norms constitute the interest and identity of actors (Katzenstein 1996: 5). This discussion leads me to define norms in the following way: Norms are intersubjective understandings that constitute actors’ interests and identities, and create expectations as well as prescribe what appropriate behavior ought to be by expressing rights and obligations (see also Björkdahl 2002: 43).

As previously mentioned, I believe we need to refine the discussion on the influence of norms. Why do norms have influence, what type of influence do norms have, and under what conditions do they have influence? Norms that “count” tend to share certain properties. Through a survey of the literature on international norms and their influence it is possible to identify the following criteria of norm influence: substance, durability, persuasiveness, applicability, and feasibility (Legro 1997: 34; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Kingdon 1995, Björkdahl 2002: 40). The substance of the norm is clearly essential for its potential to
influence. An influential norm often contains familiar and commonly held values and is perceived to be morally persuasive. Durability refers to the time a norm has been around. A durable norm has been around for a long time and can be regarded as having long-standing legitimacy. Such a norm is more likely to be influential. A persuasive norm has the ability to resonate with a broad audience. This is related to norm applicability. Norms that make universalistic claims have expansive potential. Feasibility is related to how well the norm translates into practice and can guide action.

**Persuasive cosmopolitan norms**

The norms of interest here are so called “good” norms, such as norms pertaining to good governance, liberal democracy, peaceful conflict resolution, respect for human rights and minority rights and the rule of law. These norms belong a norm complex of norms that co-exist and confederate. They have evolved over time and are by now gaining global attention and to some extent acceptance (Finnemore 1996a; b; Checkel 1999; Risse et al 1999; Schmitz and Sikkink 2002). At large, these norms are cosmopolitan in nature concerned not only with how states treat one another but how states and individuals treat human beings.\(^5\) Therein lies their power (Schmitz and Sikkink 2002). Human rights has been judged to be “the single most magnetic political idea of the contemporary time” (Brezinski cited in Schmitz and Sikkink 2002). Supported by the widespread acceptance of human rights, minority rights is increasingly gaining influence (Checkel 1999). With the end of the Cold War and the defeat of communism many in the Western culture have come to the conclusion that democracy has become the “only game in town” (Fukuyama 1992; Putnam XX). Democracy is characteristically conceived in Western liberal terms and notably including the installation of a government chosen in free and fair election. This norm of liberal democracy has become well embedded and institutionalized in a growing number of states around the world (Huntington 1991; Clapham 1996). The norms underpinning the notion of good governance encompass both accountability and legitimacy, and a set of procedures for ensuring the that the business of government is carried out as honestly and efficiently as possible (Clapham 1996). Often combined with the norm of liberal democracy and as an essential part of a liberal democracy is the norm pertaining to rule of law. This norm contains an understanding of the governing bodies to be restrained by the law. The rule of law intends to prevent misuse and

\(^{5}\) Cosmopolitan norms are difficult to conceptualise. To some it refers to a middle path between ethnocentric nationals and particularistic multiculturalism, to others these norms can contribute to bring about global democracy and world citizenship. Paul Taylor (1999) for example defines cosmopolitanism as attempts to create a consensus about values and behavior–a cosmopolitan community.
abuse of power by the governing institutions and it stresses and protects the citizens’ personal freedom (Carother 1998; Mani 2002). Peaceful conflict resolution is an idea that can be traced to a longstanding tradition in international politics. A number of attempts have been made to realize Kant’s Perpetual Peace and to establish a peaceful international order in which war as a means of resolving conflict has been eliminated. The pacific norms pertaining to conflict prevention and conflict resolution are clearly cosmopolitan, morally appealing and idealistic in nature (Björkdahl 2002a).

To understand why certain norms matter and to what extent they matter, we may apply the previously identified criteria for norm influence. The substance of these norms is persuasive since it is founded on universally applicable and cosmopolitan values that are not context dependent. Democracy, rule of law and Human Rights have managed the test of time and can by now be considered as having long-standing legitimacy at least in Europe and are by now collectively held by the members of the EU. The success of the governing models of the Nordic countries, Canada or the EU member states demonstrates that the norms of liberal democratic norms, good governance, rule of law, respect for Human Rights and Minority Rights can be translated into practice. These norms are now well embedded and institutionalized in these states and many other states, although most of them in the Western hemisphere. These norms are clearly persuasive not only to states in Europe and North America, as most of them have been copied on other continents more or less successfully. This diffusion of norms is also a result of the universal claims of these norms making them applicable worldwide. The EU is one actor that explicitly has attempted to diffuse the peace norms that successfully have eliminated war between its members for half a century to a global audience in order to establish a more peaceful international order. However, thirty-three armed conflicts in 2000, although the lowest recorded in the post-Cold war era, indicate that compliance with these pacific norms is limited (c.f. Wallensteen and Sollenberg 2001; Björkdahl 2002).

A Norm community

A norm community\(^6\) consists of norm followers with intersubjective understandings of appropriate behavior within a particular community. By sharing norms that constitute interests and identities the members of the norm community become more alike. Hence, one would

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\(^6\) The concept of norm community used here is similar to the concept norm cascade used by Finnemore and Sikkink 1998.
expect a convergence of identity and a development of a collective and common identity within a norm community. By including new members that share the same norms and identity the norm community may expand. Some norm communities may have more or less expansive potential and ambition. Furthermore, a norm community may possess normative influence beyond its members.

**A community of norm followers**

Members of a norm community conform to their peers and comply with the norms to demonstrate that they “belong” and have adapted to the social environment (Axelrod 1986). Within the norm community the members share expectations of what appropriate behavior ought to be, and they act according to this common understanding of “appropriateness”. This create a sense of belong. Hence, there is an attractiveness of being part of a norm community, which facilitates norm export and import. The norm community may be morally driven to attempt to export the norms that guide the internal interaction of the community. This may expanding the norm community. Once a new member imports the norm a process of socialization begins and eventually the norm becomes internalized into the normative structure of the new member. A norm community tends to expand gradually, beginning with likeminded actors, who share or have a similar identity and where a normative cohesion exist. As the norm community expands, a momentum in the is created increasing the attractiveness of becoming part of the community (c.f. Risse-Kappen 1996; Finnmore and Sikkink 1998; Björkdahl 2002). The purpose of exporting norms and expanding a norm community is to bring about a normative change outside the community.

Within a norm community all actors are not equal in “normative weight”. Some may possess moral authority or being regarded as prominent and prestigious actors in high standing and whose actions are perceived as legitimate and appropriate and are therefore often imitated by others (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 901).

International organizations may be viewed as norm communities. According to Claude (1966), international organizations can be regarded to play the role of “custodians of the seals of international approval and disapproval”, hence define the appropriate behavior of an actor with a certain identity. Research shows that international organizations are crucial in

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7 This is however not an inevitable process. The process can be reversed and it can be interrupted at any point in time (Björkdahl 2002)
constructing, establishing, upholding and ensuring compliance with international norms (Barnett 1995; Finnemore 1993). Organizations themselves reflect a set of dominant norms translated into their structures and procedures. An international organizations may therefore contribute to strengthen norms by giving them institutional support and means of expression. Moreover, an international organization may also facilitate the export of norms by teaching and articulating the norms. Within some international organizations the member states may come to share fundamental values and norms, as well as a common identity.

The EU – a norm community?
Most students of the European integration agree that the EU cannot be regarded as a traditional international organization. Many even argue that the EU is exceptional, a unique that cannot be compared to other international organizations (see Jørgensen 1998 for a discussion). On the other hand, other scholars conclude that although the EU has some state-like features it cannot be analyzed as if being a state. Consequently, there is an ongoing debate what the EU actually is. To many scholars and practitioners it represents a new political form, a hybrid governance structure that is not domestic nor international – a post-modern state that challenges the Westphalian norm of sovereignty (Guéhenno 1998; Schmitter 2000; Buzan and Little 2000, Koslowski 2001; Cooper 2002). Some practitioners imagine the EU as developing into a political community that is something more than the sum of its parts. In contrast, Guéhenno (1998: 31) argues that the European Union is not a political community since the member states do not demonstrate a “sense of belonging”, and the EU is “without common feelings or fellow feelings”.

Additionally, conventional wisdom holds that there is no collective European identity, nor that there is a convergence among the various European national identities. Nicolaidis and Howse (2001; 2002) for example have questioned whether Europeanness must mean shared identity. At the same time the two authors recognize that the EU has “explored and refined new forms of solidarity beyond the state” (Nicolaidis and Howse 2002). Risse (2001) argues that actors may hold multiple identities and the European identity is one of those. This paper finds the EU to be the main institutional arrangement of the European international community. Moreover, different types of Europeanization processes can be regarded to have created a community based on a European and liberal democratic collective identity – a “europeanness” (Marcussen et al 2001; Fierke and Wiener 2001, Olsen 2002). This community has evolved through common experiences, by common procedures and a
convergence of values. Fierke and Wiener (2001: 126) argue that “through political practice,…EU member states have created a notion of belonging to a community within a particular order”. Furthermore, they find that the EU identity is rooted in shared values and norms. With negotiating the Constitution of the European Union, member states have entered into a closer and more regulated political relationship (c.f. Koslowski 2001). Manners (2002: 240) points out that this new political entity of the EU “increasingly emphasizes ‘certain principles that are common to the member states’”. The members of the Union adhere to a growing number of collectively held norms. Over time, there has been a gradual normative homogenization of the member states and certain “core” norms have now become institutionalized into the normative structure of the EU (c.f. Manners 2002, Menéndez 2002).

This can be regarded as a part of the unification process of the EU and the Europeanization of its member states (Olsen 2002). Thus, the EU may be regarded as a norm community.

The members of the EU norm community share a number of norms that constitute their interest and identities as well as those of the EU. These norms are identified by Manners (2002: 242) as the “core norms” of the EU and its member states (cf. Zürn 2000; Menéndez 2002). It is expected of the member states that they respect and comply with these norms as they are institutionalized in the normative structure of the EU. These core norms have a constitutive effect determining the international identity of the EU (Manners 2002: 241). The norms pertaining to peace are central to establishing the appropriate practice of interaction within the EU and they have been since the Schuman-declaration of 1950, the Coal and Steel Treaty of 1951 and the Treaty on Europe of 1957 (ibid). Over the past fifty years the EU has successfully been able to diffuse and institutionalize peace norms among its members, and according to Sjursen, the EU has “successfully domesticated security within the Union” and it is therefore highly unlikely that a member state would use military force against another member (Risse-Kappen 1995; Manners 2004; Waever 1998). The core norms of democracy, human rights and rule of law were first made explicit in the 1973 Copenhagen declaration. Twenty years later the so-called Copenhagen criteria for accession in the Union also highlighted these core norms of the EU, by stipulating that “membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for protection of minorities” (European Council, 1993).

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Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force in 1993 states that one of the objectives of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is the development and consolidation of “democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”. A second direct reference to the core norms is found in the following statement on external relations of the Treaty: “Community policy in this area shall contribute to the general objective of developing and consolidating democracy and the rule of law and to that of respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms”. The Treaty of Amsterdam which came into force in 1999 marks another significant step forward in integrating human rights into the legal order of the European Union. It inserts a new article 6 in the Treaty on European Union, which reaffirms that the European Union “is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States”. At the Nice Summit in December 2000 the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights was adopted to promote coherence between the EU’s internal and external approaches to among other things Human Rights. In addition, the EU member states have adopted a number of declarations and conventions in support of Human Rights and democracy, and the Commission has issued since 1995 a series of communications to the Council and the Parliament underscoring these norms.

For a norm community like the EU to be influential it must be true to its norms also in its external actions. An intentional process of globalizing these norms has commenced and the EU is expanding the norm community.

**Norm Export and Import – The Europeanization of Macedonia**

Norm export is a way of expanding a norm community beyond the original members, and spreading the norms to a growing number of followers. Here, norm export refers to a process of consciously diffusing or transmitting norms from one population or region to another. This definition, while general, captures the central dynamic of concern when studying the dispersal of norms (c.f. Checkel 2001; Björkdahl 2002; Jönsson 2002).

**Strategies of norm export**

Certain strategies of norm export may seem more of less appropriate, useful or achievable depending on the identity of the actor. Drawing on the constructivist literature this paper focuses on two main strategies of norm export: providing a model to be imitated and persuasion. By providing an attractive model a community may lure others into seeking
membership in the community. To lead by example may also mean seeking to reproduce the norm community by encouraging others to copy the successful model. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) evolved into the African Union molded after the EU (Björkdahl 2004). A community may represent a normative ideal. The exposure to a particular set of norms may change the normative convictions of the exposed. The attractiveness of the norm community’s prescriptions and normative standards may appeal to potential members. The export of norms may take place due to imitation and voluntaristic borrowing from a successful model (cf. Prodi 2001; Olsen 2002; Nicolaïdis and Howse 2002).

The constructivist literature on norm diffusion provides examples of how persuasion is used by actors who either lack traditional power resources, or find their use inappropriate. Persuasion is a frequent element in diplomacy and negotiations. Thus, I will explore how persuasion may used in order to convert normative convictions and influence potential norm importers to adopt favorable attitudes towards the “new” norms. There are however variations in how persuasion is used. For some it refers to non-coercive communications of new normative understandings (Crawford 1993; Risse 1999; 2000; Checkel 2001; 2003). Checkel (2001; 2003) distinguishes between two types of non-coercive communication: manipulative persuasion viewed as “asocial and lacking in interaction”, and argumentative persuasion seen as “a social process of interaction that involves changing attitudes…in the absence of overt coercion”. The former can be regarded as a one-way communication, whereas the latter is considered as interaction oriented two-way communication, and a type of learning-process. For others, persuasion also refers to the normatively coercive, entailing for example shaming, arms-twisting, sanctions etc (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Risse et al 1999). Coercive strategies are frequently ineffective because they may lead to “public conformity without private acceptance” (Festinger cited in Johnston 2001: 499). In addition, “norms established through coercion…lack legitimacy” according to Crawford (1993: 52). Hence, coercive strategies do not reflect authentic persuasion in a constructivist understanding, because in the absence of forced compliance the norm importer would not adhere to the norm. Clearly, the norm has not been imported into the normative structure and accepted in a way that redefines the norm importer’s identity, preferences and interests (Payne 2001: 41). Authentic persuasion involves changing normative convictions in the absence of overtly material or psychological coercion.
Norm import through socialization and institutionalization

Norm import is the other side of the coin. It can be viewed as two processes: socialization and institutionalization. Socialization refers to the process in which the imported norm becomes widely accepted and allowed to affect practice. Institutionalization is considered a process to embed the norm into the normative structure where it gains a taken for granted status. Once a norm becomes institutionalized it may redefine the normative structure and induce patterns of behavior (Sikkink 1991). When a norm is institutionalized, justification must be provided if behavior or arguments appear to override or deny the norm (Frost 1996: 110; Risse 2000: 32). However, acting contrary to the prescriptions and proscriptions of an institutionalized norm may not invalidate its taken for granted status. But, as norms and practices are considered as mutually constitutive, common practice will reinforce the norm (Risse 2000; Björkdahl 2002).

Actors that share the norms and identity of a particular norm community are likely to become members of that community if it accepts new members. Actors may use the shared norms and evoke common identity when seek to be admitted (Olsen 2002). Aspiring members of a norm community may also refer to a sense of “kinship” and belonging to a specific community (see Sjursen cited in Olsen 2002). Membership in the Union is also highly attractive for most European states making the applicant countries exceptionally receptive to EU norm export.

There are certain conditions for norm import (c.f. Björkdahl 2002a). A norm may be imported if it fulfills certain criteria. The intrinsic characteristics of the norm must be considered legitimate. In order to persuade a norm must be elevated beyond its identification with, and the interest of the norm exporter. It needs to reflect widely shared values and express prescriptions of rights and obligations that are universal (Nadelmann 1990: 482). Finally, the norm is more likely to be adopted if it fits with the identity and the pre-existing normative structure of the importer, or if such a normative fit can be constructed (c.f. Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Bernstein 2000; Björkdahl 2002a: 62).

Although a norm is imported and a socialization process has commenced there may still be pockets of resistance where old normative convictions persist and where a normative fit cannot easily be constructed (Björkdahl 2002a). Externally driven normative transformations

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9 For analytical reasons these processes are presented as sequential, but in reality these processes are more likely to be parallel (Björkdahl 2002a: 58).
may create more resistance, particularly if it is perceived as being conducted by coercive means, than if the import and normative change was domestically driven.

**Normative influence – Persuading Macedonia**

In this paper it is suggested that the EU can be viewed as a norm community, and as such it possesses normative power and a will to exercise this power. It is also understood that the EU is largely true to its collectively held norms in its external relations. When the EU act in accordance with its core norms, it has the power to persuade. A discrepancy between its norms and its practices limits its normative influence. Furthermore, it is suggested that intentional attempts are made to export these norms through a number of different strategies. The EU can make others conform to EU normative standards by deploying its external policy tools the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the, European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), development cooperation policy and humanitarian aid, but also trade and commercial policies (c.f. Allen and Smith 2003). Through the CFSP and the ESDP it has a vast range of diplomatic and military means at its disposal for example démarches, declarations, common positions, diplomatic recognition, sanctions, appointing special envoys, proposing settlements, and more recently police missions and deployment of troops (Smith 1998: 70). These means can readily be used to change normative convictions. As the largest donor of development and humanitarian aid, the EU may exert its normative influence by linking the “carrot” to norm compliance. In addition, external trade and cooperative arrangements are increasingly used and one way of exporting the core norms of the EU is to impose conditionality to ensure respect for human rights, minority rights and good governance. The Cotonou Convention, approved in June 2000, is illustrative of this as it explicitly makes provisions for the prevention of violent conflict diffusing this pacific norm to the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) (Björkdahl 2002). Offering EU membership, association agreements or other types of cooperative arrangements have increasingly been used to influence international affairs. While achieving other objectives as well, these tools and strategies can be used for norm export.

The Balkan wars have left the Western Balkans, including Macedonia, in a normative vacuum searching for new norms to guide its practices. Since its recent independence Macedonia has been (re)-constructing its identity and like many other post-communist states it is attracted by

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10 I recognizing the debate concerning the ability of the EU to “speak with a single voice” in international affairs, but will not attempt to contribute to it in this paper (c.f. Rosecrance 1998; Smith 1998).
the notion of “the West”. Many of the old norms were discredited by the break up of Yugoslavia and Macedonia can be considered receptive to new norms. There is a willingness to adopt the norms that are regarded as the core norms of the EU. There is also a possibility to construct a normative fit with the remains of the pre-existing normative structure. However, the normative influence of the EU and the international community has aroused certain nationalist sentiments (Poulton 1995; Williams 2000; Lund 2000; interview Kristjan Shambar 040115). Hence, it may be possible to detect resistance and resentment against the normative changes promoted by among others the EU.

The Western Balkans has been a testing ground for international diplomacy and a symbol of the lack of success of the CFSP (c.f. Gow 1997). For example, the EC/EU tested their conflict prevention tools, such as negotiations, mediation, fact-finding missions, preventive recognition, their crisis management skills, such as the deployment of civilian and military observers, and eventually the European states deployed peacekeepers (although not under EU command). More recently, the EU has deployed its first policing mission (EUPU) to Bosnia Herzegovina taking over from the UN international Police task force (IPTF). The EU, via the ESDP, also has the ambition to take over from the 10,000 troops strong NATO force in Bosnia Herzegovina by the end of 2004 (Allen and Smith 2003, Lyrwall 2004).

Macedonia has been a security concern to the international community since the first deployment of UNPROFOR’s Macedonia Command in 1993 (later UNPREDEP) at the request of the Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov. As the UN mission was prematurely terminated due to a Chinese veto in the UN Security Council, Macedonia was left in a security vacuum where inter-ethnic tensions soared (Björkdahl 1999). In early 2001 these tensions escalated and brought Macedonia to the brink of civil war (Sida, conflict analysis). Requested by the Macedonian President Boris Trajkovskij continued international intervention by NATO and later on by the EU has succeeded in containing the violent conflict, which claimed fewer than 250 victims. In March 2003, NATO’s Amber Fox operation in Macedonia was replaced with the EU mission Concordia (Allen and Smith 2003; Council Joint Action 2003/92/CFSP). In December 2003, after nine month, the Concordia operation was

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11 Operation Amber Fox was initiated on the request of President Trajkovski of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The mission officially started on 27 September 2001 with an initial three-month mandate, which was subsequently extended until 15 December 2002. Operation Amber Fox was mandated to contribute to the protection of international monitors from the European Union and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, who are overseeing the implementation of the peace plan in Macedonia. The operation consisted of
terminated and Proxima – an EU policing mission – was launched (Council Joint Action 2003/681/CFSP). Concordia and Proxima can be viewed as part of the EU’s overall commitment in assisting the efforts of the government of Macedonia to move closer towards EU integration. It represents tangible evidence of the development of the CFSP and the ESDP and of the EU’s contribution to promote stability and security in its near abroad (Lyrwall 2004).

Under the leadership of the EU and NATO, a framework for limiting the conflict was negotiated between the ethnic Macedonian and the ethnic Albanians. The Ohrid framework agreement, signed in Ohrid on 13 August 2001, contains numerous provisions on the equal status of both ethnic groups. The EU Special Representative along side the EU military and police presence has played and still play a significant role in the process of implementing the Ohrid agreement since there is a constant need for active mediation between the two ethnic groups (ESI report of 20 February 2002).

The EU has through its external development cooperation policy and humanitarian aid assisted the new states of the Western Balkans in their efforts to reconstruct their war-torn societies. Since 1991 and including 2001, through its various aid programs, the European Union has provided more than € 6.1 billion to reconstruction process (http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/index.htm; Allen and Smith 2003). In addition to these programs the countries of the Western Balkans also benefit from advantageous trade preferences. The European Commission has taken a leading role in helping Macedonia to overcome the interethnic tensions that in combination with other factors brought about crisis of 2001. It has specifically designed a set of exceptional assistance programs that are at work along side CARDS and Phare. In this crisis the EU also operationalized the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM) for the first time. This mechanism supplies the EC with a quick budget procedure without a cumbersome decision-making process to provide funding for urgent preventive efforts such as fact-finding missions and for initiating assistance programs (Björkdahl 2002). The long-term objectives and priority fields of action for the provision of CARDS assistance are set out in the EC Country Strategy Paper for Macedonia 2002-2006. Macedonia alone received € 41.50 million in 2002 through the approximately 700 troops from NATO member countries, which reinforced some 300 troops already based in the country.

12 Since 1996 Macedonia has been eligible for funding under the Phare program, and since 2001 for the CARDS program.
CARDS program with a financial perspective 2002-2004 of € 80 million ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/fyrom/index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/fyrom/index.htm#5)).

Such deep involvement, over a long period of time, using a range of different means have provided opportunities to exert a normative influence on Macedonia’s internal affairs and change the normative convictions of the elite. Through its presence on the ground, and through its Special Representative to Macedonia\(^\text{13}\), and its massive financial support the EU has had an ability to diffuse its norms pertaining to Human and Minority rights, peaceful conflict resolution, rule of law, liberal democracy and good governance. In the words of Robert Cooper, Director General, Political and Military Affairs, EU Council of Ministers the EU is persuasive by “speaking softly while carrying a big carrot”.

**Enlargement and membership aspirations**

Historically, European models of polity and society have spread throughout the globe. Sometimes the strategies of diffusion have taken the form of “colonialization, coercion and imposition” (Olsen 2002: 937, 938). European norms have penetrated and replaced the normative structures of other states. As the major European states have lost their world hegemony coercive strategies to change the normative conviction of others are currently less likely, and as previously discussed also less efficient (ibid 2002: 938). Today the spread of the European model is more often taken a voluntary form of imitation and borrowing. Many countries want to join or be linked to the EU (Rosecrance 1998: 16). The import of EU norms by the candidate countries can be considered as a process of socialization into the norm community of the EU. It has meant an intentional copying of the norms guiding the interaction of the EU member states and attempts to match them with pre-existing normative structures.

The geographical expansion of the EU has been the most extensive and comprehensive strategy for exporting its norms. According to Fierke and Wiener (2001: 122), “enlargement

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\(^{13}\) Søren Jessen-Petersen was appointed EU Special Representative in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on 26 January 2004 (Joint Action 2004/86/CFSP. He replaced Alexis Brouhns, who was appointed EU Special Representative in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on 30 September 2002 (Joint Action 2001/760/CFSP.) François Léotard was appointed EU Special Representative in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on 29 June 2001 (Joint Action 2001/492/CFSP, Alain Le Roy was appointed EU Special Representative in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on 29 October 2001 (Joint Action 2001/760/CFSP, The Special Representative’s mandate has been to establish and maintain close contact with the government of FYROM and with the parties involved in the political process and to offer the EU’s advice and facilitation in the political process.
has been at the heart of the European Community’s identity from the start”, and the EU has defined itself as an expansive organization committed to incorporate any democratic European state.\textsuperscript{14} There has been a range of accession to the EU since it first six members in 1957. However, the current eastward enlargement to the fragile democracies in the East is the largest, and it is likely to transform the EU. On May 1, 2004 the EU will accept ten new members (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) that are deemed to meet the criteria for membership outlined in Copenhagen (Smith 2003: 117). This means that the ten also to some extent have normatively converged with the EU and have come to accept the collectively held core norms of the Union. The entry of Slovenia, a former Yugoslav Republic brings attention to the rest of the Western Balkan countries and their possibilities for a future membership in the Union.

The EU’s fundamental aim for the Western Balkans is to create a situation where military conflict is unthinkable by expanding to the region the area of peace, stability, prosperity and freedom established by the EU and its member states. At the European Council in Feira in June 2000, the objective of integrating the countries of Western Balkans into the political mainstream of Europe was stressed and the countries were recognized as potential candidates for EU membership (COM (2003) 285). The Copenhagen European Council in December 2002 reaffirmed these commitments and it underlined the EU’s determination to continue to support the Western Balkan countries’ European membership aspirations. Furthermore, the Brussels European Council in March 2003 stated the following: “the future of the Western Balkans is within the EU” (Council Conclusion, March 2003). The framework for the EU’s approach to the Western Balkans – the so-called Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) is designed to favor the gradual integration of the countries of Western Balkans into the structures of the European Union. Central to this strategy are the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA). These agreements are intended to encourage and support the domestic reform processes that these countries have embarked upon. It is a step-by-step approach based on aid, trade preferences, dialogue, technical advice and, ultimately, contractual relations. In the long term, the SAP offers these countries the prospect of full integration into EU structures. A formal contractual relationship with the EU, the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) has been signed by Croatia and Macedonia.

\textsuperscript{14} The Amsterdam Treaty clearly states the intention of enlargement by stipulating that “Any European state which respect the principles set out in Article 6(1) may apply to become a member of the Union (TEU 49).
Macedonia was the first of the Western Balkan states to sign a SAA with the EU in April 2001.\textsuperscript{15} The SAA sets the agenda of the relationship between the EU and Macedonia for the years to come (\url{http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/fyrom/csp/index.htm}). As a signatory the country will gradually take on board the obligations of membership, adopt and institutionalize the core norms of the EU, start aligning its legal and economic framework with that of the EU, strengthen co-operation with its neighbors and co-operate with the EU on a number of issues.

To strengthen its chances of becoming a candidate country Macedonia has attempted to depict itself as an island of inter-ethnic peace and coexistence in the Balkans. The norms pertaining to peaceful conflict resolution has a strong position, strengthened by the policy of active neutrality which contributed to a peaceful separation and the smooth withdrawal of the Yugoslav national army at the time of independence (Björkdahl 1999; Lund 2000). Although Macedonia received its independence peacefully in 1991, the new born state had some characteristic weaknesses such as underdeveloped institutions, lack of full control over the territory, poor economic conditions, limited respect for human and minority rights and as a consequence, interethnic tensions.

The Macedonian government has managed to restrain Macedonian-Albanian relations from deteriorating by sharing political power. Executive and legislative power-sharing was required as early as the 1990 election (Lund 2000). The norm of liberal democracy has been imported and institutionalized into the official normative structure and formalized in the constitution. According to Lund (2000: 182) the government, because it is multietnic, “has been inclined to relatively even-handed policies”. Yet, many ethnic Albanians feel that they are systematically discriminated against and not until 2001 were ethnic Albanians made equal partners in the project of constructing the Macedonian state (Ohrid Framework Agreement).

Although Macedonian official rhetoric is clearly supportive of Human Rights in order to show a normative cohesion with the EU and one of its core norms, but practice leaves room for improvements. Particularly in crisis situations, such as the 2001 conflict between the NLA (National Liberation Army) and governmental forces, human rights are systematically abused (Human Right Watch 2001).

\textsuperscript{15} An Interim Agreement covering the trade and trade-related aspects of the SAA is in force since June 2001 and provides near-total free access to the EU-market.
Through the process of implementing the Ohrid Framework Agreement Macedonia hopes to over-come its ethnic problems, move closer to the Copenhagen criteria and strengthen its aspirations on membership. The Ohrid Framework can be regarded to be built around the norms that are considered the core norms of the EU. If implemented the Ohrid Agreement of 2001 will bring considerable change to Macedonia. The reforms required by the agreement are extensive and the reform process is slowly moving forward. So far, it has managed to move Macedonia in a positive direction. The parliament have adopted a set of reforms pertaining to minority rights, recognizing Albanian as an official language, guaranteeing proportional access for ethnic minorities to public sector job and giving ethnic Albanians and other minorities the right to use their own language in state institutions. The agreement also provide for far-reaching decentralization, where local governments have gained significantly more competencies. This reform can be view to strengthen democracy and an effort to implement good governance structures. As regarding the cessation of hostilities, the framework provides for demobilization and decommissioning supervised by NATO, which can be regarded as strengthening the norm pertaining to peaceful conflict resolution. Security based on the effective rule of law in all parts of the country is one of the prerequisite of Macedonia’s integration into the EU.

Implementing the various provisions of the Ohrid agreement is currently meeting opposition, mainly from the ethnic Macedonians. The agreement has provoked various resentment among ethnic Macedonians, since it deals with symbolic issues, national identity and minority rights (Brunnbauer 2002).

The entire process of negotiating and implementing the Ohrid agreement proves that external mediation, negotiation, monitoring, support and occasionally intervention is crucial for transforming Macedonia into a viable, peaceful and democratic state, eventually fulfilling the EU demands on normative convergence and shared liberal democratic European identity. In March 2004, Macedonia submitted its application for EU membership (Lyrwall 2004). Candidacy enhancement will depend on the state’s stead process of complying with the core norms of the EU. This should give the European Union considerable leverage over the government to ensure norm cohesion.
Concluding remarks

This paper should be regarded as an attempt to discuss some of the necessary building blocks of a theoretical framework for analyzing norm export and import. I believe that the contribution of this theoretical framework is in the balance it strikes between norms and actors and between the norm exporter and the norm importer. It pays attention to norms, their functions and their influence. To further the theoretical discussion on norms constituting identity and interest, it attempts to show how norms may congregate. It discusses the convergence of normative understanding and the construction of a common identity, which contributes to creating a norm community. It also attempts to identify the mechanisms behind norm export and analyze the conditions conducive to norm import. Normative influence is difficult to empirically assess, yet I believe that thorough and detailed process-tracing can assist in providing the necessary empirical material for further developing the theoretical framework on norm export and import. An in-depth empirical analysis of EU-Macedonian relations could contribute to developing the theoretical framework and to better link the various theoretical building blocks that constitute the framework.

The empirical analysis challenges the conventional wisdom by concluding that the EU can be viewed as having a shared collective identity constituted by the intersubjective understandings of the core norms of the EU. Furthermore, it also demonstrates that the EU can be analyzed as a norm community and as such it has the will and the means to exert a normative influence in its near abroad. In this sense, the EU can be considered special on the international scene.

The preliminary analysis finds that the states of the Western Balkans are receptive to EU norm export. These states have in a relatively short period gone through large transformations from communism to some type of democracy, from war to peace, from republics of the Yugoslavian state to independent statehood leaving them in search for appropriate norms and a new state identity. Most of them are still in the process of constructing their state identity, and are therefore more receptive to normative influence. Since their independence they have been the focal point of international efforts and influence, including EU’s ambitions to promote peace, security, democracy, stability, economic prosperity, regional integration e t c. A number of strategies have been deployed in order to achieve these objectives, and the EU has been the actor with the most extensive “tool box”. As these states aspire on membership in the EU (Croatia and Macedonia have already applied for membership) they are very receptive to the influence of the EU. This in turn gives the EU leverage to export its core
norms. However, a more thorough analysis of the tools and methods used by the EU to exert its normative power is needed in order to provide a real empirical contribution to the study of the EU as an actor in world politics.

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