

# Principled Pragmatism in Practice

*The EU's Policy towards Russia after Crimea*

*Edited by*

Fabienne Bossuyt and Peter Van Elsuwege



BRILL  
NIJHOFF

LEIDEN | BOSTON

# Contents

Preface IX  
List of Abbreviations XII  
List of Figures and Tables XVII  
Notes on Contributors XVIII

## General Introduction

*From Strategic Partner to Strategic Challenge: In Search of an EU Policy towards Russia* 1

*Peter Van Elsuwege and Fabienne Bossuyt*

## PART I

### *The Minsk Agreements and the Sanctions Regime in EU-Russia Relations*

- 1 The Minsk Agreements  
*Has the Glimmer of Hope Faded?* 17  
*Sebastiaan Van Severen*
- 2 The Role of EU Member States and the Future of EU-Russia Relations  
*Disentangling the Role of Germany and the Netherlands in EU Decision-Making on Relations with Russia since the Ukraine Crisis* 40  
*Tony van der Togt*
- 3 Two Monologues Don't Make a Dialogue  
*The EU's and Russia's Strategic Narratives about the Minsk Agreements and Sanctions Regime* 62  
*Irina Petrova*
- 4 The Punitive Effect of the EU's Restrictive Measures against Russia  
*A Help or a Hindrance for Principled Pragmatism?* 86  
*Alexandra Hofer*
- 5 The EU-Russia Sanctions Regime before the Court of Justice of the EU 104  
*Kirill Entin*

- 6 The Impact of the Adjudication of Sanctions against Russia before the Court of Justice of the EU 125  
*Celia Challet*

## PART 2

### *EU-Russia Relations and the Shared Neighbourhood*

- 7 Armenia  
*A Precarious Navigation between Eurasian Integration and the European Union* 143  
*Laure Delcour and Narine Ghazaryan*
- 8 The EU and the *De Facto* States of the East European Periphery  
*Constraints in International and European Law* 163  
*Benedikt Harzl*
- 9 The EU's and Russia's Visa Diplomacy in a Contested Neighbourhood 180  
*Igor Merheim-Eyre*

## PART 3

### *EU Resilience to Russian Threats*

- 10 The EU's Concept of Resilience in the Context of EU-Russia Relations 201  
*Elena Pavlova and Tatiana Romanova*
- 11 The EU's Energy Relationship with Russia  
*Between Resilience and Engagement* 216  
*Marco Siddi*
- 12 Addressing Cyber Security Threats from Russia in the EU 234  
*Andreas Marazis*

**PART 4*****Selective Engagement with Russia***

- 13 Countering Transnational Security Threats  
*Prospects for EU-Russia Cooperation in an Era of Sanctions* 257  
*Olga Potemkina*
- 14 Conditions for Effective Selective Engagement  
*Greening Russia's Energy Sector* 277  
*Niels Smeets*
- 15 The Arctic as a Micro-Cosmos for Selective Engagement between the EU  
and Russia? 290  
*Thomas Kruessmann*

**PART 5*****Supporting Russian Civil Society and People-to-People Contacts***

- 16 Principled Pragmatism and Civil Society in the EU Policies towards  
Russia 313  
*Elena Belokurova and Andrey Demidov*
- 17 A Crisis or a Turning Point? EU Cultural Relations with Russia after  
Crimea 332  
*Domenico Valenza*
- 18 The Integration of Russia in the European Higher Education Area  
*Challenges and Opportunities* 352  
*Natalia Leskina*

## General Conclusion

*The Five Guiding Principles for the EU's Relations with Russia: In Need of  
Revision?* 370

*Fabienne Bossuyt and Peter Van Elsuwege*

Studies in EU External Relations 383

Index 385

# The EU's Concept of Resilience in the Context of EU-Russia Relations

*Elena Pavlova and Tatiana Romanova*

## 1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The concept of *resilience* initially appeared in the EU's development policy and the Commission first clarified its meaning in 2012, using food crises as a case.<sup>2</sup> In 2015–2016, the EU further developed the concept of resilience with the view toward applying it to the relations with all its partners, including Russia. Today, the concept is omnipresent in various documents on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and development activities, as well as in the five guiding principles on the relations with Russia.<sup>3</sup> Most importantly, it dominates the 2016 EU's Global Strategy,<sup>4</sup> in which it is mentioned over 40 times. This policy document describes the present and future of EU external relations with various partners around the world, including Russia. However, the meaning, significance and applicability of the resilience concept remain a matter of contention in both political and academic circles.<sup>5</sup> Although many in Brussels would argue that it is just a buzzword, the reality is that resilience

1 This work was supported by the grant of the Russian Science Foundation (Project No. 17-18-01110).

2 European Commission, 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The EU Approach to Resilience: Learning from Food Security Crises', COM(2012) 586 final, 3 October 2012, available at: <<http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/reg-doc/rep/1/2012/EN/1-2012-586-EN-F1-1.Pdf>> (accessed 12 February 2019).

3 F. Mogherini, 'Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the Press Conference following the Foreign Affairs Council', Brussels, 14 March 2016, available at: <[https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/5490/remarks-by-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-at-the-press-conference-following-the-foreign-affairs-council\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/5490/remarks-by-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-at-the-press-conference-following-the-foreign-affairs-council_en)> (accessed 12 February 2019).

4 European Union, 'Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy', Brussels, June 2016, available at: <[https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs\\_review\\_web.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs_review_web.pdf)> (accessed 12 February 2019).

5 See, for example, W. Wagner and R. Anholt, 'Resilience as the EU Global Strategy's New Leitmotif: Pragmatic, Problematic or Promising?', *Contemporary Security Policy* 37 (3), 2016, 414–430.

dominates many EU documents (including a special communication and texts on the relations with Russia). Therefore, it deserves closer examination.

*Crimean events*, defined as annexation in the EU and in the West at large and as reunification in Russia, brought dramatic changes in the EU-Russian relationship. However, the preconditions for these changes existed long before. EU-Russian relations had worsened already since 2004, following the EU's big bang enlargement. Vladimir Putin's infamous Munich speech<sup>6</sup> sent a powerful signal of this change as it clarified that Russia was not happy with the place that the EU and the United States accorded to it. More specifically, the President of Russia stressed that the place of Russia in world politics allows it to demand equality whereas this is not granted in reality, and many important decisions are still made without Russia's participation or without its opinion being properly taken into account. The Munich speech had a rather negative effect on most Western politicians and analysts; they interpreted it as being too aggressive and, hence, adopted a more cautious wait-and-see attitude towards Russia.

The 2008 events in South Ossetia and Abkhazia (where Russia supported the authorities of these break-away entities) deepened the divide. Negotiations on a new agreement to substitute the outdated 1994 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) stalled because the views of the EU and Russia were so different – Russia wished to just reiterate the World Trade Organisation (WTO) provisions whereas the EU insisted on deeper liberalisation. The Partnership for Modernisation failed to stand up to the expectations of both sides: the EU looked first and foremost for liberal reforms, while Russia mostly searched for innovations and legitimation of its own policy course.<sup>7</sup> Initiatives, such as visa-free travel or a comprehensive free trade area, were less and less realistic. Analysts on both sides emphasised growing alienation of the EU and Russia.<sup>8</sup>

In sum, by 2013, EU-Russian relations were already frosty. The 2014 Ukrainian events resulted in the imposition of sanctions against Russia, which included the suspension of many activities and diplomatic initiatives that had stalled before. The year 2014 thus signified a new stage in EU-Russia relations when

6 V. Putin, 'Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy', 10 February 2007, available at: <<http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>> (accessed 12 February 2019).

7 T. Romanova and E. Pavlova, 'What Modernisation? The Case of Russian Partnerships for Modernisation with the European Union and Its Member States', *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 22 (4), 2014, 499–517.

8 O. Potiomkina and N. Kaveshnikov, 'Russia and EU: "Cold Summer" of 2007', *Contemporary Europe [Sovremennaya Evropa]*, 3, 2007, 24–39; T. Casier and J. DeBardeleben (eds.), *EU-Russia Relations in Crisis: Understanding Diverging Perceptions* (Routledge 2018).

the logics of confrontation and competition nearly completely supplemented notions of partnership and cooperation. This new logic of EU-Russia relations was one of the reasons (together with various other crises that the EU faced) for the concepts of principled pragmatism and resilience to be introduced in the EU's Global Strategy. However, resilience rather than principled pragmatism became the focus of the EU's Global Strategy. Being referred to only a few times, principled pragmatism ultimately became a justification for resilience because the latter is built on the basis of the EU's principles (norms and values) and the past experience of their promotion.

This chapter aims at identifying the specificity of the EU's policy towards Russia today as it comes out in Brussels's interpretation of resilience. To achieve this goal, this chapter uses contemporary academic debates on the concept of resilience and on pragmatism. The chapter then identifies with the help of critical discourse analysis<sup>9</sup> the most important connotations of the resilience concept in EU foreign policy documents as well as in the commentaries which clarify how these documents were developed. The section that follows is devoted to the normative dimension of the EU's concept of resilience while the third section describes Russian activities in the international arena as a threat to the EU's resilience and looks at how this conceptualisation of resilience leads to the perpetuation of geopolitical competition in the shared neighbourhood. The chapter concludes by reflecting on how future EU-Russia relations might develop on the basis of the concept of resilience.

## 2 The Concept of Resilience in the EU's Official Discourse: A Defensive Normative Power Europe?

'Resilience' is not a new word in either political or academic discourse. It is mentioned in numerous documents on natural disasters, humanitarian crises and development, developed by the UN and its bodies,<sup>10</sup> as well as in various discussions of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)<sup>11</sup> and some other international organisations. Resilience is also part

9 N. Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis* (Addison Wesley 1995).

10 'Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015', available at: <[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E)> (accessed 12 February 2019).

11 'OECD 2014. Guidelines for Resilience Systems Analysis, OECD Publishing', 15 December 2014, available at: <<https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragilityresilience/Resilience%20Systems%20Analysis%20FINAL.pdf>> (accessed 12 February 2019).

and parcel of the security concept (including prevention of terrorist activities) in some states, the UK being the most evident and widely cited example. The EU's initial application of the term *resilience* was consistent with the general academic and political discussion on this topic. However, the preparation of the Global Strategy brought a serious change in the EU's understanding and articulation of the concept of resilience. In fact, the Strategy signified that resilience became a new norm of European integration.

The origin of the contemporary academic concept of *resilience* is usually traced to the 1973 article by Crawford Holling, who defined it as 'a measure of the persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change and disturbance and still maintain the same relationships between populations or state variables'.<sup>12</sup> The first important conclusion from this definition is that resilience is a systemic feature which allows the system to survive. Resilience is therefore immanent and does not need any additional articulation or formulation; it allows any system to survive. The *system* – when researching political international phenomena – can be understood as a community, a state or the world in its entirety. In this particular case, this is the international neoliberal system of governance. Yet resilience is the quality of any system.

Second, the key elements of resilience are (1) resources, which are in direct relations with (2) the challenges and threats to the system; both are internal to the system. As David Chandler argues, 'The dichotomy between the subject and the object is disappearing here'.<sup>13</sup> This feature represents the key difference between the concept of resilience and the theory of securitisation. The latter is focused on the study of how the threat to a reference object is articulated whereas the concept of resilience studies grass-rooted practices of a system, which can be transformed into resources to counter challenges or threats.

Third, and logically resulting from the previous point, because both threats/challenges and resources are internal to the system, efforts to bring resilience from outside have been criticised on many occasions.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, ethical connotations are not important in the academic concept of resilience. Resilience is a norm of the system but not a moral societal norm. Resilience becomes a positive feature if the system, which has it, is worth

12 C.S. Holling, 'Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems', *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 4 (1), 1973, 14.

13 D. Chandler, *Resilience: The Governance of Complexity* (Routledge 2014), 8.

14 P. Rogers, 'The Etymology and Genealogy of a Contested Concept', in: D. Chandler, J. Coaffee (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of International Resilience* (Routledge 2017), 13–25; S. Bracke, 'Is the Subaltern Resilient? Notes on Agency and Neoliberal Subjects', *Cultural Studies* 30 (5), 2016, 839–855.



existing, and negative if the system in question should not exist or is harmful in its present form. For example, resilience of an authoritarian system is viewed in a negative way, whereas resilience of a democratic system is welcomed. But by itself, resilience is neither good nor bad.

The EU's academic, bureaucratic and political elites departed from the above-described aspects of the resilience concept in several ways. First, having proclaimed resilience a new normative trend of European integration, and having focused on its achievement, Brussels declared its readiness to support both its own resilience and that of the neighbouring countries as well as of neighbours of the neighbours, all the way to Central Asia and Central Africa. Second, while resilience presupposes that both a threat/challenge and relevant resources make up the same system (i.e., the multilateral system in this case),<sup>15</sup> the EU's Global Strategy stresses external threats to its *resilience* and defines the latter as 'the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises'.<sup>16</sup>

Third, unlike in the academic discussion, distinctive ethical connotations emerge in the EU's discussion of resilience. The EU articulates resilience in a normative way and the very discussion on enhancing resilience is transformed from an operational and analytical level to the ideological level. The EU's concept of resilience is therefore linked to the values that the EU has been promoting since the 1970s and that led to the EU being conceptualised as a normative power Europe.<sup>17</sup> However, the articulation of the EU's concept of resilience is different from the previous debates about European (and, hence, global) norms. Values like democracy or human rights have been debated for centuries, whereas resilience is imported in the EU's discourse mostly from the academic debates (and before that from technical and environmental disciplines) with no societal discussion.

The EU only states that a 'resilient state is a secure state, and security is key for prosperity and democracy',<sup>18</sup> declaring that democracy is resilient by definition. At the same time, the EU specifies that a 'resilient society featuring democracy, trust in institutions, and sustainable development lies at the heart of a resilient state',<sup>19</sup> thus concluding that resilience leads to democracy.

15 N. Tocci, 'Resilience and the Role of the European Union in the World', *Contemporary Security Policy*, 2019, 41 (2), 2020, 176–194.

16 European Union, *op. cit.* note 4.

17 I. Manners, 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (2), 2002, 235–258.

18 European Union, *op. cit.* note 4.

19 *Ibid.*

Hence, the EU brings in a normative trend, which on the one hand is new compared to the previously promoted values, and on the other hand will be instrumental to reinforce the already articulated values. As a result, from the theoretical point of view, resilience transforms the normative power Europe concept from the mechanism to promote the norms and their dissemination to an instrument of their protection. The resulting mechanism can be called a 'defensive normative power Europe'.

This evolution is important in relation to Russia because its international agenda is sometimes implicitly,<sup>20</sup> and sometimes explicitly,<sup>21</sup> referred to as an external challenge. Hence, resilience as a norm has to protect the EU and its neighbours (particularly in the East) from Russia. This articulation means that the EU can use resilience in a wider way compared to the academic reading of the concept. It becomes an instrument for a new stage of Russia's exclusion as the Other in the context of the idea about European identity. As a result, the EU acquires a possibility to strengthen its internal policies and cohesion through the construction of a new external policy towards Russia, similar to previously established patterns, as thoroughly analysed by Iver Neumann.<sup>22</sup> In the context of the overall EU crisis, resilience as an essential feature of the European integration allows the EU to reassess the image of the Other in its identification discourse and to strengthen the European unity in the face of an external threat. Russia in this EU articulation stays outside of any potential solution, and outside of the discussion on any potential reconciliation.

These conditions leave all the Russian elite – those who are pro-Kremlin, those maintaining neutrality or those who are liberal – perplexed. For example, Andrey Kortunov writes that 'both Russian and foreign Western-oriented scholars make some believe that Russia could simply return to the European world and order that existed 15, 20 or even 30 years ago. That European world, which existed twenty or thirty years ago, does not exist any longer'.<sup>23</sup> Hence, the problem of 'Russia's return to Europe' remains open and the target is

---

20 *Ibid.*

21 Mogherini, *op. cit.* note 3; European Commission and European External Action Service, 'Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action', JOIN(2017) 21 final, 7 June 2017, available at: <[https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/join\\_2017\\_21\\_fi\\_communication\\_from\\_commission\\_to\\_inst\\_en\\_v7\\_p1\\_916039.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/join_2017_21_fi_communication_from_commission_to_inst_en_v7_p1_916039.pdf)> (accessed 12 February 2019).

22 I.B. Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe: A Study in Identity and International Relations* (Routledge 2017).

23 A. Kortunov, 'Will Russia Return to Europe?', 17 August 2018, available at: <<http://russian-council.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/vernetsya-li-rossiya-v-evropu/>> (accessed 12 February 2019).

vague. The question of further cooperation between the EU and Russia also remains unanswered. Evgeny Gontmakher, a Russian public figure and scholar, stresses that the classical question of 'what to do' remained unanswered by his European colleagues, the only exception being Russia's implementation of the Minsk agreements.<sup>24</sup> In other words, what politics has to follow after this implementation is not clear even for Russian liberals. Our interviews in various EU bodies, conducted in 2017 and 2018, also demonstrate that the question about the long-term future of EU-Russian relations remains an enigma for EU politicians and bureaucrats.<sup>25</sup>

This situation complicates the position of the Russian political elite, which is used to following the course of the European Union. Most structures, documents and instruments that exist in EU-Russian relations have been put forward by Brussels. This is not to say that the Kremlin ever ignored its own interests but rather to describe the pattern that was formed in EU-Russian relations already in the early 1990s. Today, when Russia is openly and officially announced as the Other, Russian pro-Western elites are in dismay. On the one hand, they believe that Russia has to make the first move to demonstrate its good intentions. On the other hand, it is obvious that the EU does not trust Russia and rejects most of its initiatives (be it trade or investments, cooperation on terrorism, Syria or cyber security). It looks like an initiative for any selective engagement should come from the EU to be accepted for the latter. And Russian diplomats confirm this, repeating on various occasions that they are ready to engage on any issue which the EU will be ready to engage.

The Global Strategy further deteriorates this situation because it draws a clear line between the EU's resilience, other countries which either have or can develop resilience and the Other (in this case, official Russia and its foreign policy) which is perceived to be the challenge to this resilience and from which the EU and its partners have to defend themselves. Normative power Europe focused on the promotion of neoliberal norms and a priori presupposed the inclusion of new members that have recognised these values as agents of these norms.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, Russia had a chance to be included in these discussions on norms (maybe not as an equal player but at least as a significant one, with a place at the table). Now, the EU discourse locates Russia either outside of

---

24 E. Gontmakher, 'How to Overcome Alienation from Europe', 22 October 2018, available at: <<https://snob.ru/entry/167148>> (accessed 12 February 2019).

25 For more details, see T. Romanova, 'The Concept of 'Resilience' in EU External Relations: A Critical Assessment', *European Foreign Affairs Review* 24 (3), 2019, 349–366.

26 E. Pavlova and T. Romanova, 'Normative Power: Some Theory Aspects and Contemporary Practice of Russia and the EU' [in Russian], *Polis. Political Studies* 1, 2017, 162–176.

this system or alternatively as a follower of the EU, as a recipient of what it will suggest if Moscow chooses to harness its ambitions.

In sum, the EU's political and bureaucratic elites, on the one hand, make active use of the term *resilience* in the official discourse. On the other hand, key theoretical studies on resilience are ignored. Resilience comes out in the EU's discourse as an empty signifier that is linked to the evolution of the EU's mechanisms of normative influence. This approach has so far brought more problems than solutions, including in the EU's relations with Russia which are at a dead end.

The call to increase resilience of both the EU and its partner countries is linked to threats, many of which (energy supply, strategic communication, cyber security) are linked to Russia. As a result, the logics of confrontation with the Kremlin as the normative Other emerges. Among other things, it manifests itself in the confrontation over the post-Soviet space (or shared/contested neighbourhood). This logics of confrontation is examined in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

### 3 Russia as a Source of Threat to the Resilience of the EU and Its Neighbours and the Logic of Confrontation in the EU's External Activities

The most important element of the Global Strategy is the readiness of the EU to support the resilience of the Union and to promote the resilience externally. The Strategy openly declared that the EU 'will therefore promote resilience in its surrounding regions',<sup>27</sup> first and foremost in the ENP countries, Turkey and the Western Balkans. Moreover, the EU states the interests of EU citizens 'to invest in the resilience of states and societies to the east stretching into Central Asia, and to the south down to Central Africa'.<sup>28</sup> In fact, the EU openly declares its intention to actively participate in the internal affairs of other countries to achieve democratic resilience, as well as the resilience of human rights and of the rule of law.

Consequently, not only do norms make up the object that the EU's concept of resilience defends but resilience is also meant to preserve the EU's position of the normative leader. The Global Strategy is not explicit about it. Yet, its main author, Nathalie Tocci, in a 2016 article discusses the 'deepest existential

---

<sup>27</sup> European Union, *op. cit.* note 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

crisis' and the wish of the Europeans 'to see a stronger EU role in the world'.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, she refers to the concept of soft power.<sup>30</sup> The Global Strategy also mentions it, saying that the EU 'has always prided itself on its soft power – and it will keep doing so, because we are the best in this field'.<sup>31</sup> The text is ambiguous because on the one hand it implies that the concept is irrelevant now, yet on the other hand it remains a valid instrument for the EU to enhance its influence in international relations through being attractive to the others. In particular, the Global Strategy argues that today's politics has to be more realistic but should not depart from the norms and principles that were its foundation in the years before.

The logical connection between principled pragmatism and resilience was made before the Global Strategy. Jessica Schmidt, referring to the work of John Dewey, underlined that being less ideologised, principled pragmatism explains existing practices of resilience better than neoliberalism. Its key element is the process of constant self-learning, which is based on one's own experience. This approach allows for focusing on consequences rather than reasons for actions.<sup>32</sup> In this case, the EU revises the logics of its foreign policy, focusing not so much on the reasons but rather on the consequences of its potential activities.

The concept of principled pragmatism introduced by John Ruggie, on the other hand, emphasises norms. According to him, *principled pragmatism* is defined as 'an unflinching commitment to the principle of strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights as it relates to businesses, coupled with a pragmatic attachment to what works best in creating change where it matters most – in the daily lives of people'.<sup>33</sup>

The principled pragmatism of the Global Strategy is a symbiosis of both approaches. On the one hand, principles are declared as stemming 'as much from a realistic assessment of the strategic environment as from an idealistic aspiration to advance a better world'.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, following the

29 N. Tocci, 'The Making of the EU Global Strategy', *Contemporary Security Policy* 37 (3), 2016, 462.

30 *Ibid.*

31 European Union, *op. cit.* note 4.

32 J. Schmidt, 'Intuitively Neoliberal? Towards a Critical Understanding of Resilience Governance', *European Journal of International Relations* 21 (2) 2015, 402–426.

33 J. Ruggie, 'Principled Pragmatism – The Way Forward for Business and Human Rights', United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2010, available at: <<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/PrincipledpragmatismBusinessHR.aspx>> (accessed 12 February 2019).

34 European Union, *op. cit.* note 4.

theoretical discussion of pragmatism, the Global Strategy stresses the importance of the past experience as a source for the future course. *Pragmatism* in the promotion of norms here refers to the reassessment of the role of the EU where normative power Europe led to the decline of the EU's influence as a result of the gradual inclusion of other players in the discussion on norms.

Pragmatism, according to Richard Rorty can be understood only 'within a certain kind of polity with a certain kind of history'.<sup>35</sup> At first sight, Tocci fully embraces this point of view. She argues that

the pragmatism comes in the diagnosis of the geopolitical predicament the EU finds itself in. It echoes a rediscovery of pragmatism philosophy that entails a rejection of universal truths, an emphasis on the practical consequences of acts, and a focus on local practices and dynamics.<sup>36</sup>

Yet in the following paragraph she writes that

while different pathways, recipes and models are to be embraced, international law and its underlying norms should be the benchmark of what is acceptable for the EU and what is not.<sup>37</sup>

In other words, the universality of norms, undermined in the preceding paragraph, disappears, while the idea of the EU's leadership is maintained. The EU's experience (as a coalition of European states) in the norms' promotion comes out as the maintenance of its leadership in the formation of global normative trends. This leadership is no less significant than the promotion of norms *per se*.

This aspect became so clear-cut as a result of both the EU's internal developments and the Russian activities in Ukraine; it also defined a new EU agenda in its policy towards Russia. This new logics of the EU towards Russia was formulated in several EU texts. The first one is the speech of Federica Mogherini, devoted to the five guiding principles of the relations with Russia as developed by the EU.<sup>38</sup> When it comes to resilience, it says the EU will strengthen its internal resilience 'in particular on energy security, hybrid threats and strategic

---

35 R. Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers* (Cambridge University Press 1991), 76.

36 N. Tocci, *Framing the EU Global Strategy: A Stronger Europe in a Fragile World* (Palgrave Macmillan 2017), 64.

37 *Ibid.* 65.

38 Mogherini, *op. cit.* note 3.

communication'.<sup>39</sup> The EU's dependence on the import of Russian oil and natural gas is not new but the EU visibly tones down the rhetoric about market integration and interdependence and emphasises the EU's vulnerability. Strategic communication and cyber threats are relatively new. They form the part of the so-called 'hybrid threats', which the EU defines as follows:

The concept aims to capture the mixture of coercive and subversive activity, conventional and unconventional methods (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, technological), which can be used in a coordinated manner by state or non-state actors to achieve specific objectives while remaining below the threshold of formally declared warfare.<sup>40</sup>

The Global Strategy embraces these concerns while putting them into a global perspective. Russia and its present foreign policy is portrayed as a strategic challenge to the EU because of its 'illegal annexation of Crimea' and 'destabilisation of eastern Ukraine'.<sup>41</sup> Although the Global Strategy does not link Russia with threats to the resilience of the EU and its neighbours, today's Brussels firmly associates the threats in question with Russia. Moreover, while the five principles include the development of the relations with the Eastern neighbours, the Global Strategy already talks about enhancing their resilience – hence, extending the EU's concept to them. The third document, which is relevant in this case, is the 2017 Communication on resilience, which explicitly makes a link between the resilience of the EU and its neighbours, and threats coming from Russia. Moreover, the document says that resilience is essential for their security, in particular in countering these threats.<sup>42</sup>

For both long-known (energy) and new (hybrid) threats, the EU first and foremost mobilises its internal resources. For example, in the case of energy supply these are crisis stocks, development of internal resources (e.g. renewables), energy efficiency and decreased consumption as well as creation of alternative transportation routes.<sup>43</sup> In the case of fake news and strategic

39 European Commission and European External Action Service, *op. cit.* note 21.

40 European Commission and European External Action Service, 'Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council. Joint Framework on Countering Hybrid Threats a European Union Response', Brussels, 6 April, JOIN(2016) 18 final, available at: <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52016JC0018>> (accessed 12 February 2019). See also the contribution by A. Marazis (chapter 12) in this volume.

41 European Union, *op. cit.* note 4.

42 European Commission and European External Action Service, *op. cit.* note 21.

43 European Commission, 'Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the

communication, the EU promotes fact-checking groups and disinformation codes but also education of citizens.<sup>44</sup> The EU also plans to develop various schemes and minimum security rules and codes of conduct for cyber space.<sup>45</sup>

As a result, the EU tries with these activities to change grass-rooted practices and to include the maximum number of its residents to the conscious resilience against Russia-related threats. Moreover, the EU also passes to citizens a responsibility for their security. All these aspects are in line with the academic concept of resilience. At the same time, the attention of citizens is focused on threats coming from Russia, which reinforces the EU's and Russia's drift away from each other.

According to the EU's documents, Russia-related threats are directed not only against the EU but also against neighbouring countries; and the EU has to assist them through the promotion of their resilience and through the export of its practices. At first sight, the notion of resilience, which is focused on internal resources and grass-rooted practices, gives the EU an excellent chance to avoid accusations in neocolonialism. However, as Ana Juncos points out, Brussels cannot dodge these accusations because the EU shifts the responsibility on the civil society of the countries only where it promotes resilience.<sup>46</sup> Such EU promotion of resilience, as indicated above, is not in line with the contemporary discussion on resilience.

A shared definition of Russia-related threats becomes an important resource for the cooperation between the EU and neighbouring countries.<sup>47</sup> The resulting export of Brussels' understanding of resilience creates one more field of

---

European Investment Bank: A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-looking Climate Change Policy', COM(2015) 80 final, 25 May 2015, available at: <[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:1bd46c90-bdd4-11e4-bbe1-01aa75ed71a1.0001.03/DOC\\_1&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:1bd46c90-bdd4-11e4-bbe1-01aa75ed71a1.0001.03/DOC_1&format=PDF)> (accessed 12 February 2019).

44 High Level Expert Group, 'A Multi-dimensional Approach to Disinformation: Report of the Independent High Level Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation', 12 March 2018, available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/final-report-high-level-expert-group-fake-news-and-online-disinformation>> (accessed 12 February 2019).

45 'Resilience, Deterrence and Defence: Building Strong Cybersecurity for the EU', 11 December 2018, available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/resilience-deterrence-and-defence-building-strong-cybersecurity-europe>> (accessed 12 February 2019); European Commission and European External Action Service, 'Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Resilience, Deterrence and Defence: Building Strong Cybersecurity for the EU', JOIN(2017) 450 final, 13 September 2017. See also the contribution by A. Marazis (chapter 12) in this volume.

46 A.E. Juncos, 'Resilience as the New EU Foreign Policy Paradigm: A Pragmatist Turn?', *European Security* 26 (1), 2016, 1–18.

47 Interview, EEAS official, 22 October 2018, Brussels.



confrontation between Moscow and Brussels. This is a new confrontation for normative influence, or a new turn in this spiral.

In sum, the EU applies its resilience concept to Russia with a good deal of ambiguity. It formulates resilience as a norm and draws a line between Europe (which potentially includes neighbouring countries) and Russia. This articulation of external policy through Othering leads to the construction of a new external relations' logics; that of confrontation over normative influence. On the other hand, resilience is represented as a potentially universal norm because it is linked to democracy, rule of law and good governance. Hence, Russia is excluded as a potential agent of normative discussions but remains a potential recipient of the results of these discussions. Similarly, the EU reserves the right to define which practices constitute a (universal) threat to resilience (in this case, those coming from Russia), which stresses the existence of a shared security system in wider Europe – the system in which Russia is an integral part. This EU agenda corresponds to the logic of the theory of resilience, which is rooted in the idea of systemic origin of threats. Defining Russian foreign policy as a threat, Brussels includes Russia in the same system.

#### 4 Conclusion: The EU's Discourse on Resilience and the Future of EU-Russian Relations

The EU's Global Strategy mentions Russia only a few times, mostly negatively. Probably, the only positive thing is the phrase that 'the EU and Russia are interdependent'. However, even in this context, the document adds that the EU 'will therefore engage Russia to discuss disagreements and cooperate if and when our interests overlap'.<sup>48</sup> This wording stresses that there are no overlaps today and that they are possible only in the future. This situation is extremely dangerous for both the EU and Russia. The reasons for the frosty relations are serious but the problem is that both parties are adopting a wait-and-see attitude and neither is looking for a solution.

The EU's resilience concept provokes more questions than answers. The peculiar use of the academic concept of resilience complicates the analysis of the EU's new foreign policy course. Resilience as a new norm of European integration remains difficult for any day-to-day decision-making. The case of Russia is not exceptional but rather vividly illustrates this feature of the EU's resilience concept.

---

<sup>48</sup> European Union, *op. cit.* note 4.

First and foremost, the concept of resilience allows the EU to bring its policy and norms in opposition to those of Russia. As a result, a new cycle of Otherness emerges in the identification discourse of the EU. From a potential partner Russia turns into an Other, whose behaviour leads the EU to emphasise the norms that are core in the articulation of the European identity. Moreover, the EU formulates a new normative trend, that of resilience, which is closely linked to the set of previous values and allows for drawing a border between the EU and its members on the one hand, and Russia, which challenges the norms, on the other hand. From the theoretical point of view, a defensive normative power emerges because resilience is targeted at defending the norms that form the core of the EU identity (rather than promoting them as in previous years). The EU's internal resilience should be therefore strengthened. Russia, for its part, turns into a non-democratic state with which a productive dialogue is highly unlikely but yet it preserves the status of a potential recipient of the norms.

Second, the problem is exacerbated by the fact that Russia recognises the EU's authority (as a successor of European states) and still expects the EU to show the initiative towards reconciliation.

Third, the EU either consciously or not reinforces its own authority as the agent of norms through resilience. In doing so, it draws on pragmatism and its experience in promotion of values in previous years. It is in this light that one has to interpret principled pragmatism. Brussels counters any threat from Russia with the help of historical practice of creating a new norm.

Fourth, the EU describes with the concept of resilience its internal achievements. However, the key problem of this tactic is its artificiality: while the norms of democracy or human rights took ages to form through endless discussions, resilience is only borrowed from academic studies and filled with normative content. As a result, the number of articles which question the way the EU's resilience can be implemented constantly grows.<sup>49</sup> This fuzziness, however, does not do any good for Russia or its relations with Brussels because the concept just reinforces the opposition between the EU and Russia, with the latter being the threat to the resilience of the former and their neighbours.

Fifth, the concept of resilience becomes an instrument of the EU's competition with Russia in the post-Soviet space. Declaring a common for democracies' understanding of resilience and a shared set of threats coming from Russia, the EU declares its readiness to support the resilience of neighbouring

---

49 E. Korosteleva, 'Paradigmatic or Critical? Resilience as a New Turn in EU Governance for the Neighbourhood', *Journal of International Relations and Development* 23 (3), 2018, 682–700.

countries, extrapolating its practices to this region. Hence, the EU stresses its commonality with post-Soviet states through opposition to Russia. Moscow takes this agenda as a serious challenge, which it has difficulty in accepting.

Therefore, the articulation of Russian foreign policy as a threat, the articulation of the EU's external strategy through the opposition of the EU and Russia, leaves Moscow at a dead end. Being used to following Brussels' initiatives, Moscow is not ready to demonstrate any new type of behaviour or suggest a solution. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the EU is ready to accept any initiative coming from the Kremlin. As a result, the only way that Russia can change the existing EU-Russian relationship is to reverse its present foreign policy course. This change is difficult to envisage for the time being. Moreover, Russian political, bureaucratic and academic elites (both conservative and Western oriented) have no clue as to what pattern of relations the EU can offer if that change in the Russian foreign policy course happens.