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Welcome to EU-STRAT!

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter that informs you about the launch of EU-STRAT ('The EU and Eastern Partnership Countries: an Inside-Out Analysis and Strategic Assessment'); a three-year research project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

EU-STRAT's work builds on the observation that developments in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood are far from what the Union had hoped for when it launched the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2004 and its regional dimension - the Eastern Partnership (EaP) - in 2009. Both initiatives aimed at bringing stability and prosperity to the region. The war in Ukraine and rising tensions with Russia, coupled with a slow pace of reforms and political and economic tensions in EaP countries, however, have called the success of these initiatives into question.

Against this background, a reassessment of the ENP has become both more urgent and more challenging. Why has the European Union (EU) fallen short of creating peace, prosperity, and stability in its Eastern neighbourhood? And how can the EU support political and economic change in countries, such as Ukraine, Belarus or Moldova? EU-STRAT addresses these questions. Adopting an inside-out perspective on the challenges of transformation that the EaP countries and the EU face, EU-STRAT will

- develop a conceptual framework for the varieties of social orders in EaP countries to explain the propensity of domestic actors to engage in change;
- investigate how bilateral, regional, and global interdependencies shape the scope of action and the preferences of domestic actors in the EaP countries;
- de-centre the EU by studying the role of selected member states and other external actors active in the region;
- evaluate the effectiveness of the Association Agreements and alternative EU instruments, including scientific cooperation, in supporting change in the EaP countries, and
- analyse normative discourses used by the EU and Russia to enhance their influence over the shared neighbourhood.

We will work on these issues with a consortium of eleven partner institutions, organized in five thematic work packages and supported by two work packages that are responsible for EU-STRAT's management and dissemination activities.



Tanja A. Börzel

Antoaneta Dimitrova

Our consortium features six universities, three think-tanks, one civil society organization and one consultancy. It brings together various disciplinary perspectives and methodologies and strengthens links with academics and policy-makers across six EU member states, Switzerland and three EaP countries.

Our first newsletter informs you about our opening conference that took place in Berlin from June 8 to June 10, 2016. You will read about a roundtable on strategies for transforming the neighbourhood in light of the current challenges that preceded our two-day opening conference. The newsletter gives a brief overview of EU-STRAT's work packages and insights into some of the debates at the opening conference. This newsletter also features a policy comment on the Dutch referendum, which has cast its shadow on the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. Its last section informs you about other dissemination activities of EU-STRAT. Thereby we hope to continuously engage with all of you in a lively debate about EU-STRAT's work and the future of the EU's strategy towards its Eastern neighbourhood.

We wish you a pleasant reading and hope to stay in touch!

Best wishes,

Tanja A. Börzel
Project Coordinator

Antoaneta Dimitrova
Project Co-coordinator

EU-STRAT'S OPENING CONFERENCE

Public Roundtable: Looking Inside-Out – Strategies for Transforming the Neighbourhood

A public roundtable to discuss strategies for transforming the Eastern Neighbourhood started EU-STRAT's opening conference. The roundtable featured academics, practitioners, and civil society representatives as panellists who debated with an audience of more than 50 people at the premises of the Embassy of Lithuania in Berlin on June 8, 2016.

Tanja A. Börzel, EU-STRAT's coordinator and Director of the Centre for European Integration at Freie Universität Berlin, moderated the discussion. The panellists were Elena Belokurova, engaged in the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum, Antoaneta Dimitrova, EU-STRAT's co-coordinator and professor at Leiden University, Andrius Kubilius, former Prime Minister of Lithuania, Member of the Seimas, and Member of the International Advisory Panel on Ukraine, as well as Igor Munteanu, former Ambassador of Moldova to the US and Canada, and Director of the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives in Moldova. The panel was completed by Emma Udwin, Deputy Head of the Cabinet of the Commissioner for the European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

Tanja A. Börzel opened the panel discussion asking how effective neighbourhood strategies could be designed given that Eastern Partnership countries differed substantially from the previous Central and Eastern European accession states (CEECs) and seemingly lacked pro-reform elites to be empowered by the EU.

The panellists stressed that there was a lack of systematic research to identify important differences between CEECs and Eastern Partnership countries. The sheer lack of a membership perspective, however, seemed overrated to explain reform absenteeism, as there was a considerable amount of EU initiatives and EU member states' interest in the region. The current incentive structure of the EU, however, did not fit the undemocratic elites in EaP countries and created substantial normative dissonances.

One of the panellists argued that the EU's focus on support and incentives had to face the fact that "you cannot buy sustainable reforms". A coun-

try can formally adopt a large variety of changes, but in order to function properly, they must be in the country's interest in the first place; as seen in the case of anti-corruption reforms in Ukraine. Instead, coherent support to reformists within a country's political and administrative apparatus was key, also to allow elites to show themselves as being successful.



Tanja A. Börzel at the public roundtable

Another panellist added that the uniform EU toolbox was ill-equipped to address highly diverse countries, such as Moldova, Ukraine or Belarus and reminded that CEECs were a lot more similar to one another. EU strategies were likely to work differently in a country like Ukraine, in which the political process was shaped by oligarchs, as opposed to Belarus, where it was firmly controlled by the president.

Tanja A. Börzel also asked how the EU's pursuit of interests could be combined with its declared promotion of values in the region.

One panellist stressed that the EU would need to deviate from being concerned with governance issues only. It was franker to acknowledge that there were also other objectives at stake. This approach was also likely to make the ENP more effective, if it was possible to convey that the improvement of the rule of law was in the strategic interests of a country, for instance, to secure higher amounts of foreign direct investments.

Another panellist recommended that the EU re-

turned to its own origins by promoting functional cooperation. Infrastructure investments, for instance, in which EU money was visibly spent, might help in this regard.

The discussion was ensued by a Q&A section that especially centred on the question of whether there was not an irresolvable conflict between the promotion of stability and democratization in the

neighbourhood. It was pointed out that the EU has often privileged stability over democratization. In this regard, one of the panellists also noted that the refugee deal with Turkey and the associated promise of visa liberalization had the potential to undermine the credibility of the strict conditionality that the EU had tied to visa liberalization in the case of Eastern Partnership countries.

Work Package Sessions: Debating EU-STRAT's Research Agenda

The two subsequent days of the opening conference were devoted to sessions on EU-STRAT's specific research themes and activities. These themes are grouped into six work packages (WPs), each of which studies a different aspect that shapes social orders in EaP countries. EU-STRAT partners and the interested public discussed the detailed scope of the research activities of the individual work packages.

Work package 2: Unpacking social orders in the Eastern Partnership countries

WP leader: Tanja A. Börzel (FUB)

More than twenty years after the end of communism, the Eastern neighbours are dominated by patron-client networks grounded in personal relationships between elite leaders and their clients. The societies remain limited access orders (LAO), more often than not being dominated by elites who do not perceive the adaptation of their markets and political institutions to European standards as a benefit. At the same time, domestic demand for transition to open access orders (OAO) based on political and economic competition varies across the EaP countries.

Work package 2 provides the conceptual framework to EU-STRAT's inside-out-analysis of the Eastern neighbourhood in order to understand domestic incentive structures for stabilizing existing limited access orders or supporting the transition to open access orders. It develops an analytical grid to capture the varieties of social orders in post-Soviet states, as well as their dynamics and embeddedness in interdependencies with the EU, Russia, and other actors in the region. Its contribu-

tors assess different forms of social orders that are marked by a lack of political and economic competition in the post-Soviet space and set out to identify the drivers that encourage or impede transformations towards more open access orders.



During EU-STRAT's opening conference, the contributors to work package 2 presented a first proposal of how to grasp different varieties of social orders in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood. In order to develop a more fine-grained understanding of limited access orders in the post-Soviet space, they distinguish regime type and statehood as two major aspects of social orders that affect the performance of regimes, and hence, their stability and survival. The assumption is that the stability of LAOs is not exclusively based on repression and coercion. Depending on the degree of statehood and regime type, LAOs can develop forms of input and output legitimacy to generate social acceptance and voluntary compliance ensuring regime stability.

The subsequent discussion evolved around this tentative conceptual framework, especially the challenge of analysing informal institutions, and

integrating the concept of administrative efficiency into such a framework.

Work package 3: Interdependencies and regime (in)stability

WP leaders: Maxim Boroda/Ildar Gazizullin (UIPP)

A systematic and comparative analysis of interdependencies across various key sectors and countries over time is the overall objective of work package 3. Its contributors study the extent to which interdependencies affect the preferences, bargaining power, and strategies of key domestic actors in EaP countries, and thereby reinforce certain limited access orders or support transition to open access orders.

In the course of EU-STRAT, work package 3 investigates whether changes in the embeddedness of a particular LAO in regional or international interdependencies, for instance with regard to trade, are related to changes in political and economic competition. Contributors to WP3 also study whether interdependencies in one area (e.g. energy) affect interdependencies in another (e.g. security) and how such overlaps are managed.



In order to do so, the work package additionally analyses the nexus between interdependencies across issue areas. Of interest are interdependencies of a variety of EaP countries, such as Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, and South Caucasus countries, with various external actors, such as Russia, the EU, Turkey, and China.

During EU-STRAT's opening conference, EU-STRAT partners and conference participants discussed the conceptual tools that were needed for such an encompassing analysis. The notion of interdependence does not feature prominently in works dealing with limited and open access orders. Instead, the differentiation between sensitivity and

vulnerability interdependence as established in classic works on interdependence was suggested as a valuable conceptual starting point.

The discussion also underlined that the data collected in the course of this work package would need to enable its contributors to assess both the importance and extent of interdependencies in the region, as well as reasons for and the ways in which countries make costly changes to them. Panellists and the audience also debated how to analyse the way bilateral, regional and global regimes, such as WTO or regional trade agreements, shape the nature of interdependencies in the region.

Work package 4: Strategies of the EU compared to other external actors

WP leader: Ramūnas Vilpišauskas (VU)

Since the Ukrainian crisis, it has been clear to outside observers that the EU is no longer the only game in town in its Eastern neighbourhood. EU-STRAT's work package 4 addresses the fact that countries in the Eastern neighbourhood also interact with Russia, the USA, Turkey, China, and various international organizations, including NATO, the IMF, the World Bank, OSCE, Council of Europe, and the Eurasian Economic Union.

It investigates the opportunities and constraints that emerge for the ENP from the diversity of external actors, on the one hand, and the diversity of positions inside the EU, on the other. More specifically, this work package will analyse and compare the content, sources and consequences of external actors' approaches towards the Eastern Partnership itself and the partner countries.

In the session dealing with this work package at EU-STRAT's opening conference, its contributors first presented some of the main research questions they seek to answer, such as: What are the key differences in policy preferences, approaches and strategies of external actors with regard to energy, trade, security, and migration, for instance? How do the approaches and strategies of external actors relate to the EU's strategies and policies in the region? Do they countervail or complement the ENP? How effective are these policies? And to what extent do the policies of external actors create opportunities or constraints for various groups of domestic actors in EaP countries?

In the ensuing discussion, EU-STRAT partners

and conference participants exchanged thoughts on whether to treat external actors as 'black boxes' or to acknowledge analytically the internal diversity of each actor. Many argued that the EU should not be treated as a unitary actor and that it was valuable to look at different bilateral policies of the EU Member States with Eastern partners. The discussion will be followed by a workshop in Vilnius in July 2016. The workshop seeks to further develop the analytical framework employed to capture how external players affect the incentive structures of important domestic actors in EaP countries.

Work package 5: Soft power, discourses and their reception: the EU and Russia compared

WP leader: Antoaneta Dimitrova (UL)

EU-STRAT's work package 5 analyses the EU's soft power compared to Russia. It looks beyond generalisations about the rival narratives disseminated by the EU and Russia in the Eastern Partnership countries to analyse what messages both sides actually project, through which channels, and with what effect on various audiences in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova.

At the opening conference in Berlin, the diverse ideas about what the EU represents in terms of normative or soft power have been discussed. The rise of Russian soft power in this context and the broad debate about soft coercion and the weaponisation of culture were noted.

The work package will examine how values, norms and messages from the EU and Russia interact in practice, employing a variety of research methods to generate original data in cooperation with partner institutions in Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova.

Initially, the discourses that the EU and Russia seek to project in the region will be identified and the channels of communication that each actor employs will be mapped. Then the messages that are actually getting through to the general publics in Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova will be identified through media monitoring.

Using a variety of focus groups and survey experiments, work package 5 will investigate audience reception to the EU's and Russia's discourses. The culmination will be a policy paper with recommendations on how to enhance the EU's soft pow-

er in the region, taking Russian narratives into account.



The opening conference raised important issues for consideration and questions for further discussion. Amongst these were the lack of homogeneity in who formulates messages from either the EU or Russia, the variety of channels through which Russia disseminates its narratives, as well as the need to reflect the diversity of potential target audiences in the region.

Work package 6: The Association Agreements (AA) and other engagement strategies

WP leader: Rilka Dragneva (UoB)

Work package 6 analyses and evaluates the effectiveness of EU engagement strategies in the neighbourhood in terms of their development, scope and coherence. It focuses on the Association Agreements (AA) with Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, the most comprehensive, complex and ambitious agreements ever concluded by the EU with third countries. In addition, it studies the EU's alternative cooperation-oriented frameworks for engagement with Belarus, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, and complementary instruments and initiatives in region, such as the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), the Energy Union, and civil society initiatives.

Work package 6 specifically aims at analysing whether and to what extent the AA framework addresses the needs of the partner countries. It also seeks to evaluate the extent to which external factors and players, for instance Russia and the Eurasian Economic Union, affect the implementation of the AA and the impact of other engagement frameworks.



Discussing work package 6

During the opening conference it was stressed that the diversity of instruments that the EU employs remains a challenge for mapping them coherently. The conference participants and panellists stressed that the question of whether and how the AA impact social orders in the Eastern neighbourhood was crucial; especially against the background of potentially unrealistic expectations of the Agreements as representing ‘quick fixes’ for crisis-ridden neighbours.

Some participants, however, also questioned whether the EU had the necessary capacity to transform its Eastern neighbours into open access orders marked by political and economic competition in the first place.

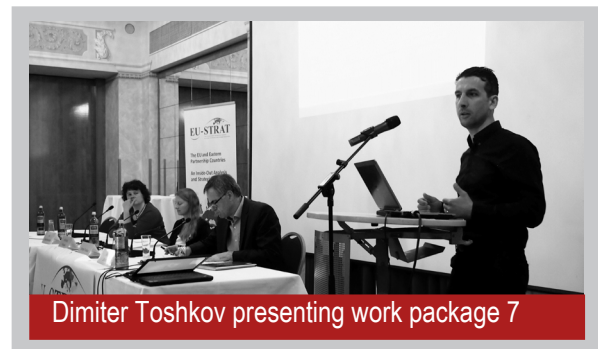
Work package 7: Scientific cooperation

WP leader: Ina Ramasheuskaya (SYMIPA)

Work package 7 is dedicated to the study of scientific cooperation between the EU and the EaP countries. Scientific cooperation, including the implementation of joint research projects and academic mobility programs, is an important part of the EU’s Neighbourhood Policy. Work package 7 will take stock of existing scientific cooperation programs between the EU and the EaP countries and evaluate their impact on the viability and productivity of scientific communities in individual countries.

Through the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, its contributors plan to explain differences in the content and volume of the EU-EaP scientific cooperation among individual EaP countries. They will also study the impact of scientific cooperation on EU Member States, and investigate other consequences of these programmes, such as scientific brain drain and changes in the domestic research agenda.

The more ambitious goal of work package 7 is to study the impact of scientific cooperation on the social orders prevailing in EaP countries, applying the conceptual framework developed in work package 2.



Dimitar Toshkov presenting work package 7

During the conference discussion, several important aspects that should be taken into account in this work package were pointed out. Among them was the need to select a valid starting point of the evaluation - one that allowed the study of societal impacts, and that was connected with changes in the EU policies towards the EaP countries.

Another commenter suggested selecting a set of countries for a comparison of the viability and productivity of scientific sectors. To this end, it was proposed to study new EU Member States before and after their accession.

After the Dutch ‘No’: Prospects for the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement

by Rafal Sadowski (OSW)

On July 1, 2016, the Association Agreements between the European Union and Georgia and between the EU and Moldova fully entered into force. Even though Ukraine had also signed and finished all procedures to implement the AA, the EU-Ukrainian agreement did not enter into force at the same time.

While 27 EU Member States had ratified the agreement, the Dutch government was forced to suspend its ratification as the result of a referendum on this question in the Netherlands on April 6, 2016. In contrast to the ‘Brexit’ referendum in the United Kingdom, this referendum was not a government initiative, but was held as the first application of a referendum law that made a public consultation obligatory after the collection of 300 thousand signatures over a period of six weeks. A coalition of Euro-sceptic groups had initiated the referendum, making it quite clear that they were less concerned about the AA with Ukraine than with the process of discussing a Dutch exit from the EU.

Meanwhile, as a result of the negative outcome of the referendum with a turnout just above the minimum threshold, the procedure of entering into force of the AA between the EU and Ukraine was held off. The agreement had been provisionally applied since November 2014 and its section on the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) since January 2016.

Ramifications of the Dutch referendum

The vote against the AA with Ukraine was above all the result of internal developments in the Netherlands, and Ukraine’s integration with the EU was not the only motive to vote against the agreement. First of all, it was an expression of a Eurosceptic mood in the Dutch society and a general protest against decision-making processes inside the EU. In addition, concerns that the AA could pave the way for Ukraine’s future membership in the EU crucially contributed to the rejection of the agreement.

After the ‘No’ vote, the Dutch government suspended the ratification process and started to dis-

cuss possible solutions with the EU institutions and EU Member States. At the same time, there was little political debate within the Netherlands on the consequences of the vote - an attempt to calm sentiments and provide time for reflection. The Dutch prime minister presented the outcome of the referendum during the European Council meeting on June 28 and 29. The Dutch government requested legally binding assurances to address its citizens’ concerns. However, the government has not yet defined what form such assurances should take, also because specific voter concerns remained unclear. Two issues figured prominently in the ‘No’-campaign: the lack of clarity with regard to Ukraine’s prospects for joining the EU, and visa liberalisation, which is not, in fact, handled in the agreement.

So, what are the available options in this situation? As the AA is a complex document and the product of more than six years of negotiation, its content is nearly impossible to re-negotiate. Not only Ukraine, but also other EU Member States and EU institutions oppose a renegotiation. The consequences of such a move would also be devastating for the EU’s relations with Ukraine, as well as for the European Neighbourhood Policy in general. Association Agreements are one of its fundamental instruments and the period of paralysis would be unacceptably long. A renegotiation would block the provisional implementation of the AA and thus mean the return to the status of 2007, when negotiations over the AA with Ukraine started. Hence, a renegotiation could derail the EU’s relations with one of its biggest direct neighbours and seriously undermine the EU’s credibility in the eyes of other partners in the region.

A formal solution that would not affect the substance of the agreement could be the adoption of a declaration by the EU that addresses the Dutch concerns. Such a declaration could include opt-out clauses for the Netherlands in the application of the political part of the AA. The Netherlands may also limit their participation in other areas of cooperation with Ukraine as defined in the AA. Its participation in the part of the AA on trade cooperation – the DCFTA –, however, is difficult

to change since it is a Community, not a Member State, competence. So far, the Dutch government has not suggested any concrete areas that might be considered in this regard, presumably as a result of the government's own ambivalence and reluctance to accept the vague message sent by the voters in the referendum.

The main contentious issue, however, would be related to Ukraine's potential membership. The Dutch might require a firm statement that this is not in the cards. Currently, however, it would not be advisable to refer to Ukraine's potential EU membership in such a declaration or any other EU document. Such a statement would only concern the AA with Ukraine, as the AAs with Moldova and Georgia have already been ratified and hence, cannot be changed. Depriving only Kyiv of the perspective of membership in the EU, however, is hard to justify.

Instead, the EU's current approach of neither promising nor ruling out the neighbours' prospective EU membership seems to be a reasonable compromise. If the EU definitely closed its doors to the partner states in the current situation, it would seriously reduce the EU's power of attraction and weaken its bargaining position. Partners would lose the stimulus to implement reforms included in the AA and the DCFTA. Besides, the AA do not mention a potential membership perspective, so there is no need to include statements referring to it now. In fact, the issue of further enlargements is likely to remain off the agenda for a longer period of time, at least until the EU has found a way to deal with the consequences of the 'Brexit' referendum.

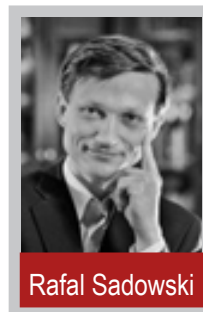
EU slows down the process of integration

The delay in ratifying the AA with Ukraine also sends a negative signal to the EU's other neighbours. The EU is criticized for not fulfilling its commitments, even though the neighbouring countries have done their job. The postponement of the visa liberalisation process with Georgia in June 2016 and the delay in the visa liberalisation process with Ukraine further strengthen this signal. Both countries fulfilled the conditions for abolishing short term visas at the end of 2015 and the European Commission requested to lift visa restrictions for these countries in spring this year. Germany and a few other states, however, appealed

to postpone this decision. This move was motivated primarily by domestic concerns, as parts of the German public critically eye visa free travel with the EU's Eastern neighbours.

Finally, the UK's decision in the referendum to leave the EU has triggered a heated debate about the EU's future shape. While it is too early to assess how and to what extent a potential 'Brexit' will impact the EU's relations with the Eastern Partnership countries, it is likely to make EU Member States focus on internal developments and to more cautiously approach the relations with Eastern neighbours.

All these events will have serious consequences for the process of moving Ukraine closer to the EU. The lack of significant progress in and concrete effects of integration with the EU raises disappointment among the general public in Ukraine. Recent polls, made by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, show a drop in support for integration with the EU from 55 percent in December 2015 to 46 percent in June 2016.



Rafal Sadowski

Rafal Sadowski is a Senior Fellow at OSW. He is also the leader of EU-STRAT's work package 8 on dissemination.

Stay Informed

You are now reading the first edition of EU-STRAT's biannual **newsletter**, which is just one of our various dissemination outputs. EU-STRAT's dissemination strategy comprises a number of activities that we would like to briefly outline.

First, if you are interested in receiving updates on our research activities and events, as well as future editions of this newsletter, we would be very happy to have you subscribe to EU-STRAT's mailing list. Just send an email to eustrat@zedat.fu-berlin.de.

Second, we warmly welcome you to visit us at <http://eu-strat.eu/>. This **website** keeps you posted on all developments surrounding EU-STRAT, its publications, and events. It features a news section, and further information on EU-STRAT's partners. EU-STRAT will also be active on Twitter and Facebook. We look forward to seeing you there!

Third, we regularly organize public **events** related to EU-STRAT's research themes: Our general conferences are open to the interested public and encourage a wider engagement of EU-STRAT partners with other researchers, policy-makers, journalists, businesspeople, and the civil society. The first general conference already took place in Berlin in June 2016, but EU-STRAT's mid-term conference is planned to take place in Vilnius - an opportunity to present and discuss some of EU-STRAT's preliminary findings. The final conference in The Hague will present the results of the entire project. In addition, we organize a series of expert events in the framework of our thematic work packages focusing on their specific research topics.

Three EaP capitals, Kyiv, Chişinău and Minsk, will also feature special policy briefings – usually comprising a panel discussion or a day-long event - which aim at delivering our research outcomes to the interested public, as well as to officials from EU delegations and EU member states' embassies, and the wider expert community in partner countries, since these play a crucial role in implementing the EU's strategy on the ground. EU-STRAT also aims at achieving an impact beyond the project's duration by shaping and informing policy choices of decision-makers in Brussels. In order to do so, we organize closed-door briefings for EU officials and experts that are based on EU-STRAT's research and resulting policy recommendations.

And finally, EU-STRAT's research findings and policy recommendations will be made accessible by various types of **publications**, for example in EU-STRAT's working paper and policy paper series, as well as in academic journals in the field.

With the help of these various dissemination activities, we plan to keep EU-STRAT's research process in a constant dialogue with academics, policy-makers and the interested public. In doing so, we hope to provide for academically sound and practically relevant research results that can help to better understand and design the strategies that are needed to foster sustainable political and economic change in the Eastern neighbourhood.

We would be happy to have you engage in this dialogue with us.

FACTS AND FIGURES

EU-STRAT at a Glance

EU-STRAT is an international research project that studies the relationship between the European Union and the countries of the EU's Eastern neighbourhood. It runs from May 2016 to April 2019 and is financed by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 693382.

EU-STRAT's consortium includes six universities, three think-tanks, one civil society organization and one consultancy firm. Its partners come from Germany, the Netherlands, France, Lithuania, Poland, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, as well as from Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova.



Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) is EU-STRAT's coordinating institution and Leiden University (UL) its co-coordinator.

Other EU-STRAT partners are:

- Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (FMSH), France
- Vilniaus Universitetas (VU), Lithuania
- Ukrainian Institute for Public Policy (UIPP), Ukraine
- Universität St. Gallen (SG), Switzerland
- Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich (Centre for Eastern Studies) (OSW), Poland
- Europos socialiniai, teisiniai ir ekonominiai projektai (ESTEP), Lithuania
- The School of Young Managers in Public Administration (SYMPA), Belarus
- Institutul pentru Dezvoltare si Initiative Sociale (IDIS) "Viitorul", Moldova
- University of Birmingham (UoB), United Kingdom