

Vera Axyonova

The European Union's Democratization Policy for Central Asia

Failed in Success or Succeeded in Failure?

**AN INTERDISCIPLINARY SERIES
OF THE CENTRE FOR INTERCULTURAL AND EUROPEAN STUDIES**

**INTERDISZIPLINÄRE SCHRIFTENREIHE
DES CENTRUMS FÜR INTERKULTURELLE UND EUROPÄISCHE STUDIEN**

CINTEUS ▪ Fulda University of Applied Sciences ▪ Hochschule Fulda

ISSN 1865-2255

- 7 *Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk / Hanna Pułaczewska (Eds. / Hrsg.)*
Intercultural Europe
Arenas of Difference, Communication and Mediation
ISBN 978-3-8382-0198-6
- 8 *Janina Henning*
In Dubio Pro Europa?
An Analysis of the European External Action Structures
after the Treaty of Lisbon
ISBN 978-3-8382-0298-1
- 9 *Claas Oehlmann*
Europa auf dem Weg zur Recycling-Gesellschaft?
Die EU-Rohstoffinitiative im Kontext der Strategie Europa 2020
ISBN 978-3-8382-0401-7
- 10 *Volker Hinnenkamp / Hans-Wolfgang Platzer (Eds. / Hrsg.)*
Interkulturalität und Europäische Integration
ISBN 978-3-8382-0573-1
- 11 *Vera Axyonova*
The European Union's Democratization Policy for Central Asia
Failed in Success or Succeeded in Failure?
ISBN 978-3-8382-0614-1

Series Editors

Gudrun Hentges
Volker Hinnenkamp
Anne Honer †
Hans-Wolfgang Platzer

Fachbereich Sozial- und Kulturwissenschaften
Hochschule Fulda University of Applied Sciences
Marquardstraße 35
D-36039 Fulda
cinteus@sk.hs-fulda.de
www.cinteus.eu

Vera Axyonova

THE EUROPEAN UNION'S DEMOCRATIZATION POLICY FOR CENTRAL ASIA

Failed in Success or Succeeded in Failure?

ibidem-Verlag
Stuttgart

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

Zugl. Dissertation an der Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences.
Datum der Verteidigung: 17. Dezember 2013

∞

Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem, säurefreiem Papier
Printed on acid-free paper

ISSN: 1865-2255

ISBN-13: 978-3-8382-0614-1

© *ibidem*-Verlag
Stuttgart 2014

Alle Rechte vorbehalten

Das Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt. Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlages unzulässig und strafbar. Dies gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und elektronische Speicherformen sowie die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronical, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the publisher. Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

Printed in Germany

For Ludmila, Viktor and Björn

Editorial

This series is intended as a publication panel of the Centre of Intercultural and European Studies (CINTEUS) at Fulda University of Applied Sciences. The series aims at making research results, anthologies, conference readers, study books and selected qualification theses accessible to the general public. It comprises of scientific and interdisciplinary works on inter- and transculturality; the European Union from an interior and a global perspective; and problems of social welfare and social law in Europe. Each of these are fields of research and teaching in the Social- and Cultural Studies Faculty at Fulda University of Applied Sciences and its Centre for Intercultural and European Studies. We also invite contributions from outside the faculty that share and enrich our research.

Gudrun Hentges, Volker Hinnenkamp, Anne Honer & Hans-Wolfgang Platzer

Editorial

Die Buchreihe versteht sich als Publikationsforum des Centrums für interkulturelle und europäische Studien (CINTEUS) der Hochschule Fulda. Ziel der CINTEUS-Reihe ist es, Forschungsergebnisse, Anthologien, Kongressreader, Studienbücher und ausgewählte Qualifikationsarbeiten einer interessierten Öffentlichkeit zugänglich zu machen. Die Reihe umfasst fachwissenschaftliche und interdisziplinäre Arbeiten aus den Bereichen Inter- und Transkulturalität, Europäische Union aus Binnen- und globaler Perspektive sowie wohlfahrtsstaatliche und sozialrechtliche Probleme Europas. All dies sind Fachgebiete, die im Fachbereich Sozial- und Kulturwissenschaften der Hochschule Fulda University of Applied Sciences und dem angegliederten Centrum für interkulturelle und Europastudien gelehrt und erforscht werden. Ausdrücklich eingeladen an der Publikationsreihe mitzuwirken sind auch solche Studien, die nicht 'im Hause' entstanden sind, aber CINTEUS-Schwerpunkte berühren und bereichern.

Gudrun Hentges, Volker Hinnenkamp, Anne Honer & Hans-Wolfgang Platzer

Foreword

Over the last decade, the role of the European Union as an external democracy promoter has attracted an increased scholarly attention. The major part of the literature has so far centred on democratization effects of the EU enlargement processes and the EU's political engagement in the European neighbourhood. Fewer authors have looked at the EU's democracy and human rights promotion in regions beyond its immediate sphere of influence. Vera Axyonova's study of the European Union's democratization policy for Central Asia is a rare example of a systematic and very detailed investigation of the EU's attempts to advance its normative agenda in this post-soviet region.

This book, based on Axyonova's PhD dissertation, presents the results of a thorough years-long research. Being aware of external and domestic constraints for the EU's democratization policy in Central Asia, the author focuses on scrutinizing micro-level effects of the EU engagement and explaining conditions and reasons for varying outcomes of the EU efforts. To this end, she provides an in-depth analysis of specific EU democratization instruments in two Central Asian countries featuring different degrees of autocratization. Axyonova particularly traces the application of EU sanctions against Uzbekistan, examines the EU's bilateral human rights dialogues with Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and analyses the implementation of European civil society support programmes in the two countries.

The author uncovers crucial information through her recurrent field research and multiple expert interviews conducted in Europe and Central Asia. A reader is puzzled by peculiar facts about the role of Germany in the process of sanctions enforcement, low expectations of EU officials concerning the human rights dialogues, and negotiations about financial support between the European Commission and the Uzbek government. These insights, diligent investigation, and well-structured argumentation linking the study of EU democratization instruments and their effects to the research of the substance of external democracy promotion constitute the main added value of Axyonova's study.

Prof. Dr. Hans-Wolfgang Platzer

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to use this opportunity to thank my PhD supervisors Prof. Dr. Matthijs Bogaards, Prof. em. Dr. Dr. h. c. Beate Kohler and Prof. Dr. Marlene Laruelle for their advice, encouragement and patience. Their guidance throughout the whole process was essential to the successful completion of this research. I am also very grateful to the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences for providing an excellent academic environment and financial support for pursuing my PhD research. It was equally a privilege and a challenge to be part of the programme with such a high density of outstanding young scholars.

Further, I wish to express my gratitude to the Centre for European Policy Studies, and specifically to Dr. Michael Emerson, whose comments and advice have been an incredible source of inspiration. My research stay at CEPS was an extremely enriching experience and an exceptional opportunity to conduct field work in Brussels.

A special note of thanks is devoted to the Centre for Intercultural and European Studies at Fulda University of Applied Sciences, and particularly to Prof. Dr. Hans-Wolfgang Platzer for his support and making this publication possible.

I also would like to express my great appreciation to everyone who provided valuable feedback on various aspects and at different stages of my research. To Prof. Dr. Ulrike Liebert, PD Dr. Heiko Pleines, Dr. Janna Wolff, Dr. Arndt Wonka, Dr. Herwig Reiter, Prof. Dr. Rainer Baumann, Dr. Nate Breznau, special thanks to my colleagues from Europe-Central Asia Monitoring programme Jos Boonstra and Tika Tsertsvadze, and all those, whom I cannot mention here by name for space reasons. I am equally grateful to all my interview partners from various organizations and institutions in Europe and Central Asia. Without their insights and expertise this research would not have been possible.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their unconditional support and encouragement. As a sign of my appreciation, this book is dedicated to my parents Ludmila and Viktor and my husband Björn.

Vera Axyonova
January 2014

Contents

Foreword	IX
1. Introduction	1
2. European Union as an External Democracy Promoter: Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations.....	11
2.1 Conceptualizing the EU as a Normative Actor.....	11
2.1.1 EU-Level Normative Commitments.....	11
2.1.2 The EU Conception of External Democracy Promotion.....	13
2.2 In Search for an Appropriate Theoretical Framework: Explaining External Factors of Democratization.....	19
2.3 Towards a Comprehensive Typology of EU Democracy Promotion Tools.....	25
2.3.1 Categorizing Democratization Tools: An Overview of Existing Typologies	25
2.3.2 Building-up a Distinct Typology.....	28
3. Evaluation of EU Democracy Promotion: A Framework for Analysis	31
3.1 Evaluating Successes and Failures of External Democracy Promotion.....	32
3.1.1 Existing Approaches.....	32
3.1.2 Methodological Challenges in the Context of the Current Study	36
3.1.3 Opting for a Distinct Research Strategy.....	38
3.2 Explaining Successes and Failures of External Democracy Promotion.....	42
3.2.1 What Factors Matter?.....	42
3.2.2 The EU Engagement in Central Asia: Main Assumptions.....	45
3.3 Further Methodological Considerations	58
4. The EU Sanctions Against Uzbekistan.....	63
4.1 Tracing Implementation of the Sanctions	63
4.1.1 The EU Sanctions and Conditions for Their Withdrawal.....	65
4.1.2 The EU Sanctions at Work.....	66
4.1.3 Summary of the Results.....	74

4.2 Explaining the Outcomes of EU Sanctions	75
4.2.1 Lack of Credibility as an Explanation for Failure	76
4.2.2 Substance of the EU Demands and Their Implications as Explanatory Factors	80
4.2.3 Possible Interfering Effects.....	87
4.3 Concluding Remarks	88
5. Structured Human Rights Dialogues.....	91
5.1 Tracing Implementation of the Dialogues	92
5.1.1 The Issues in Focus of the HRDs	93
5.1.2 Evaluating the Results: What Has (Not) Been Achieved	96
5.2 Explaining the Outcomes: Multiple Causes of Failure	101
5.2.1 Process-related Factors	102
5.2.2 Substance of the Promoted Norms	105
5.3 Concluding Remarks	108
6. The Institution Building and Partnership Programme and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights	111
6.1 Tracing Implementation of the Programmes.....	111
6.1.1 The IBPP at Work.....	112
6.1.2 The EIDHR at Work.....	117
6.1.3 Summary of the Results.....	122
6.2 Explaining the Outcomes of the IBPP and EIDHR Application	123
6.2.1 Assistance Transparency and Ownership.....	124
6.2.2 Substance of the Promoted Norms	125
6.3 Concluding Remarks	130
7. Conclusion.....	133
References	141
Annex I: List of Expert Interviews	169
Annex II: IBPP Projects implemented in Kyrgyzstan in 2002–2009	172
Annex III: IBPP Projects implemented in Uzbekistan in 2003–2010	175
Annex IV: EIDHR Regional Projects implemented in Central Asia in 2003-2010.....	179
Annex V: EIDHR Macro- and Micro-Projects (CBSS) implemented in Kyrgyzstan in 2004-2010	181

Abbreviations

AAP	Annual Action Programme
AF	Action Fiche
AIDCO	EuropeAid Co-operation Office
CBSS	Country-Based Support Schemes
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSO	Civil society organization
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General Development and Cooperation— EuropeAid
DG RELEX	Directorate-General for External Relations
EC	European Community
EEAS	European External Action Service
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
EUSR	European Union Special Representative
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenar- beit
GONGO	Government-organized non-governmental organization
HR	Human rights
HRD	Human rights dialogue
IBPP	Institution Building and Partnership Programme
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IP	Indicative Programme
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
MEDA	Mésures d'Accompagnement Financières et Techniques
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSA/LA	Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies

RoLI	Rule of Law Initiative
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TACIS	Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

1. Introduction

Over the last decades, the European Union (EU) established itself as an actor in external democracy and human rights promotion. Historically, the EU's democratization policy¹ mainly focused on states in its immediate neighbourhood, especially those with the prospects of integration into the Union. The commitment to democracy has become an indispensable part of EU accession criteria. It also guides the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) towards adjoining states without EU membership perspective. With the Maastricht Treaty, the Union declared consolidation of democracy, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights to its foreign policy objective, also vis-à-vis more distant regions (cf. European Union 1992: Art. J.1/2 and Art. G.130u).

To pursue this objective, the EU developed a set of tools, ranging from assistance programmes (such as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights) and dialogue platforms (e.g. human rights dialogues and international civil society forums) to political conditionality tools that involve linking of certain incentives (such as development aid and closer economic and political cooperation) or sanctions (limiting of previously offered benefits) to compliance with human rights and democratic standards by target states (cf. European Council, Political and Security Committee 2006: 4; European Commission 2007e: 9). While the EU intends to use these tools to promote democratic political practices worldwide (cf. European Commission 2001a; Council of the European Union 2009a; Council of the European Union 2012), it is expected to have significantly better prospects for democracy promotion in states that are striving for accession, have established close political and economic ties to the Union, and are already in the process of political liberalization (cf. Pravda 2001; Schimmelfennig and Scholtz 2008; Schimmelfennig 2009a; Freyburg and Richter 2009; Youngs 2010). In this regard, serious doubts remain concerning the effectiveness of using EU tools to foster democratization in authoritarian states that do not have EU membership perspective and are not part of closer political and economic cooperation through the ENP.

¹ Here, '*democracy promotion*' and '*democratization policy*' are used interchangeably for the sake of better readability. The working definitions of these terms are further elaborated in chapter 2. The study uses Oxford English Dictionary spelling.

This research deliberately focuses on EU engagement with such states, as they pose a challenging test for the promotion of democracy and human rights by the European Union. The study particularly scrutinizes possibilities and constraints for EU democratization policy in post-soviet Central Asia, a region comprising Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. These states are commonly viewed by scholars as a difficult environment for external democracy promotion (e.g. Warkotsch 2006b; Bossuyt and Kubicek 2011; Boonstra 2012), which is confounded by growing authoritarian tendencies across all Central Asian countries between the mid-1990s and 2010 (cf. Freedom House n/a). In these countries the European Union cannot apply its strongest instrument to foster democratization in offering the potential for membership, nor does it extend closer cooperation links under the European Neighbourhood Policy. The EU is thus confronted with extremely unfavourable domestic and external conditions for democracy promotion in Central Asia.

Nevertheless, the European Union pursues a democratization agenda in the region. It has included a 'democracy and human rights clause' into the bilateral Partnership and Cooperation Agreements signed with each of the Central Asian states (e.g. European Communities, their Member States and Republic of Uzbekistan 1999: Art. 2). Moreover, the Union's political strategy for the region—'*The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership*'—adopted in 2007 states that the promotion of human rights, good governance, the rule of law and democratization is one of the EU's key priorities in the region (Council of the European Union 2007c).

In this context, the question arises whether EU democracy promotion efforts have been at least partly successful so far and, if so, to what extent. While trying to answer this question, the present study does not intend to evaluate success of EU democracy promotion at the polity level. In view of the unfavourable domestic and external conditions, the EU can hardly be expected to quickly liberalize Central Asian regimes (cf. Warkotsch 2009). Instead, this study looks at the effects of EU democratization policy at a micro-level, tracing concrete norms and changes that could (or could not) be successfully endorsed through the application of EU instruments in Central Asia. The evaluation of successes and failures poses another question that needs to be answered, namely what factors make EU democracy promotion more (or less) successful in a challenging for democratization environment, i.e. what accounts for the variation in the outcomes of EU democracy pro-

motion efforts. This is the second question that guides the present research.

With these questions in mind, the current work stands at the intersection of three major clusters of scholarship—EU studies, Central Asian studies and democratization research. Over the last decade, the latter cluster of literature has been increasingly engaging with the European Union as an external promoter of democratic norms and human rights standards (Schimmelfennig et al. 2002; Fierro 2003; Kubicek 2003; Börzel and Risse 2004; Vachudova 2005; Jünemann and Knodt 2007; Freyburg et. al. 2009, to name just a few). Yet, scholars have largely focussed on EU democracy promotion in the accession candidates or the immediate EU neighbourhood (e.g. Schimmelfennig 2005; Vachudova 2005; Kelley 2006; Wichmann 2007; Freyburg et al. 2009; Freyburg and Richter 2009;).

The EU political engagement in Central Asia, including democracy and human rights promotion, has attracted attention of scholars only recently. The research has largely focused on the supply side of external democratization, including the motives behind EU actions, EU strategies and instruments applied.

Thus, Urdze (2010) elaborates a new approach towards analysing EU democratization policy and instruments based on a content analysis of EU documents. She further investigates the EU's interests that determine the choice of specific tools applied in the example of the Central Asian states. The conclusions drawn by Urdze suggest that EU policy is often guided by European economic interests and security related motives of Member States.

Similar conclusions (although based on different methodological approaches) are made separately by Crawford (2008) and Cooley (2008). Comparing the EU's stated democratization objectives with the practice of EU engagements on the ground, Crawford reveals a gap between the lofty European rhetoric and the actual policy implementations in Central Asia. He explains this gap through the trade-offs between the EU's value-driven agenda and the realist aims to maintain security, energy supplies and political stability (Crawford 2008: 186-188). Cooley (2008), who investigates the EU and U.S. military cooperation with the Central Asian states and the European energy related interests, also sees them in contradiction with the transatlantic normative commitments. Both authors thus provide interest-based explanations for the limited scope of the EU democratization efforts.

Bossuyt and Kubicek (2011) go beyond the above research agenda by focussing on the substance of EU democratization policies in Central Asia. The authors argue that the variance in the substance of what is promoted in different Central Asian states is explained not only by EU self-interest but also by intentional adaptations to the respective target states. Where target states are more politically open and are expected to resonate better with normative substance, the EU is more active, and in states more closed it is narrower in its policies. In explaining the limits of EU engagement, Bossuyt and Kubicek thus account for the domestic context in the Central Asian countries.

Hoffmann (2010) examines obstacles and prospects for good governance promotion in Central Asia with a specific focus on recent developments following the 2007 *'EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership'*. Among the main obstacles, she identifies the EU's prioritization of interest-based policy objectives over the advancement of European values and the nature of political regimes in Central Asia. Hoffmann thus takes account of both external and domestic factors that limit the EU's prospects for successful good governance promotion in the region.

Finally, in his numerous studies on the subject, Warkotsch (2006b; 2007; 2008b; 2009; 2011) also concentrates on the prospects for and impediments to the EU democracy and human rights promotion in Central Asia. He reviews various democratization tools available to the Union and discusses their aptness for the region. Drawing on the rationalist-constructivist theoretical debate on which mechanisms lie behind external democratization efforts, Warkotsch distinguishes between tools that try to manipulate a target government's *'strategic calculation'* of costs and benefits of norm compliance, guided by the logic of consequence, and *'normative suasion'* tools relying on the power of normative argument, guided by the logic of appropriateness (Warkotsch 2008b and 2009). In view of local realities and inconsistencies in EU policies, the author concludes similarly to Hoffmann that the European Union has only limited prospects for successful democracy and human rights promotion in Central Asia. At the same time, Warkotsch does not exclude the possibility of minor improvements in the long run, so long as the EU is able to adapt its policy to the situation in each country and time-period (Warkotsch 2008b).

The scholarship of EU political engagement in Central Asia has thus mainly focussed on the EU's motives behind the narrow scope of activities and in-

sufficient efforts affected by the prevalence of realist interests over normative commitments and domestic constraints in the target countries. While the authors generally maintain that the EU has done little to foster a transition to democracy in the Central Asian states, there has been no systematic evaluation of the effectiveness or impact of EU engagement in the region. This study seeks to fill this gap by assessing successes and failures of EU democratization policy for Central Asia with the focus on micro-level changes that could or could not be achieved as the result of the application of EU democratization instruments. It is thus assumed here that the EU is severely constrained in exerting a direct liberalizing influence on political regimes in Central Asia but nonetheless may have succeeded in endorsing certain norms and changes that could be associated with the broader democratization process.

In explaining the outcomes of EU efforts, this study takes account of the previous findings concerning the unfavourable domestic and external conditions for democratization in Central Asia. At the same time, the analysis goes one step further. Drawing on a proposition by Warkotsch that the EU might have better prospects for promoting '*certain human rights dimensions*' rather than '*democracy in the narrower sense*' (Warkotsch 2008b: 69),² this study suggests that the substance of what is promoted matters for the success of EU efforts in difficult environments. This assumption together with the differentiation between '*politically sensitive*' and '*politically neutral*' reforms proposed by Golovko (2010) provides a foundation for the key hypothesis to be tested in the current study. Namely, that in an environment challenging for democratization the EU is more likely to be successful, if its instruments promote less politically sensitive norms and changes (see discussion in chapter 3).

Using the works of the above scholars as a point of departure, the research also draws on broader secondary and primary sources. After specifying the EU's conceptualization of democracy promotion based on scrutiny of EU documents, chapter 2 reviews various theoretical approaches in explaining external factors of democratization (e.g. Whitehead 2001; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005; Levitsky and Way 2010), in order to identify an appropriate theoretical framework for the current analysis. An approach combining rationalist and constructivist insights from the studies of international

² While Warkotsch (2008b and 2009) suggested this as a policy recommendation, he has never formulated a testable hypothesis concerning possible effects of the substance on the outcomes of the EU democratization efforts.

socialization (cf. Kelley 2004; Checkel 2005; Warkotsch 2009) is assumed to be most appropriate for the purposes of this research. The chapter then examines the tools available to the European Union for democracy promotion and the existing typologies used to characterize these tools proposed by other scholars (e.g. Carothers 1999; Diamond 1999; Youngs 2001; Börzel and Risse 2004; Jünemann and Knodt 2007; Burnell 2008; Reiber 2009). The existing approaches differentiate various categories of tools, but most commonly these are based on contents (e.g. democratic assistance vs. political conditionality) or character (e.g. positive vs. negative tools).

This work offers a different approach towards categorizing the available EU instruments based on their underlying logic of functioning (mechanisms behind) and the (micro-level) changes that the tools are expected to trigger. Three main groups of EU instruments are identified: (1) conditionality-based (drawing on strategic calculation of costs and benefits, i.e. functioning through incentives and sanctions that are expected to trigger the targets' compliance with externally promoted norms), (2) dialogue-based (relying on normative suasion by the logic of appropriateness that would lead to the internalization of promoted values by the targets in the long run), and (3) democratic empowerment (assistance programmes aiming at increasing democratic capacities of the targets). In comparison to the other typologies, this approach allows a clearer empirical differentiation between various types of tools and can be used for the evaluation of successes and failures of these tools at the micro-level.

Chapter 3 provides the analytical framework for the current study. It first reviews existing methodologies for evaluating effectiveness and impacts deriving from theoretically oriented and empirically grounded research (cf. Underdal 1992; European Commission 1999; Helm and Sprinz 2000; Hege- mann, Heller and Kahl 2013). Taking account of the strengths and limits of these approaches, the chapter develops a research strategy that allows a systematic evaluation of EU democracy promotion efforts in such regions as Central Asia. The approach suggests assessing successes and failures of the EU with reference to the above instrument typology, based on the achievement of micro-level changes that its democratization tools are expected to trigger. Finally, the chapter incorporates literature engaging the factors that potentially affect the outcomes of external democratization (e.g. Smith 1997; Kubicek 2003; Schimmelfennig 2003; Checkel 2005; Reiber 2009; Warkotsch 2009), and elaborates a list of favourable factors (or scope conditions) for successful democracy and human rights promotion.

The chapter arrives at the overall assumptions and the key hypothesis guiding this study.

The subsequent empirical part comprising chapters 4 to 6 presents three case studies of the EU's usage of democratization instruments in Central Asia that are exemplary for the three aforementioned types of tools: sanctions imposed on Uzbekistan between 2005 and 2009, bilateral Human Rights Dialogues established by the 2007 'Strategy for a New Partnership', and the EU's civil society support programmes—the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Institution Building and Partnership Programme (IBPP). The chapters trace and evaluate the application of these tools and discuss possible explanations of the outcomes of the EU engagement in accordance with the assumptions stated in chapter 3. The study employs process-tracing combined with elements of the congruence method (George and Bennett 2005), spanning the years 1991-2010 (i.e. starting with the independence of the states concerned) with a particular focus on the 2000s when the relevant EU democratization tools were introduced.

While all five Central Asian republics share crucial similarities in terms of their soviet legacies, socio-cultural idiosyncrasies and political traditions of authoritarian rule (Eschment 2000: 2; Warkotsch 2006a: 7-8), their transition processes after the break-up of the Soviet Union differed to a certain extent. This resulted in varying degrees of political liberalization (or autocratization). Thus, observers conventionally divide the region into a more democracy oriented '*semi-authoritarian north-eastern tier*', including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and '*an authoritarian or even dictatorial governed south-western tier*', consisting of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan (Warkotsch 2008b: 62; cf. Zhovtis 2008: 26). In the course of the 1990s, particularly Kyrgyzstan was regarded as a Central Asian '*island of democracy*' (Gumpfenberg and Steinbach 2004: 156), as the only state in the region, where free elections, functional opposition, relatively independent press, and active state-independent civil society organizations existed. Although later political developments demonstrated that the initial democratic course of the country was not stable (International Crisis Group 2001), after an uprising in April 2010 and a subsequent referendum in June 2010 Kyrgyzstan has become the first republic in the region with a parliamentary

system of government.³ On the opposite side of the regime spectrum among the Central Asian states are Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, with totalitarian features in the former and strong consolidated authoritarian rule in the latter (cf. Zhovtis 2008: 26; Warkotsch 2009: 249-250). The differences in the countries' political development and functioning suggest that the outcomes of EU democratization efforts in the two tiers should also differ to a certain extent.

The current analysis focuses on two countries—Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan—representing the two groups of states in the region. Testing the hypothesis on the entire range of the Central Asian states is economized because the selected country-cases maximize variation on the possible outcomes of EU democratization efforts—with Kyrgyzstan being a state where European engagement is most likely to be successful and Uzbekistan entertaining the opposite expectations.

While among Central Asian republics Kyrgyzstan clearly presents the most-likely case for success, the choice of Uzbekistan over Turkmenistan for failure is less obvious. Turkmenistan is commonly regarded as one of the most authoritarian and closed regimes in the world (Freedom House n/a) and hence would seemingly provide a 'more suitable' least-likely case for the present study. However, EU engagement with this country has been minimal, mainly because the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Turkmenistan still needs to be ratified by the European Parliament and thus has not yet entered into force. Hence, the EU could not use some of its democratization tools in the country (e.g. conditionality linked to the 'democracy clause' in the PCA, certain forms of political dialogue, and civil society support programmes) that are generally available for other parts of Central Asia. An analysis of the Turkmenistan case could thus provide only very limited insights with regard to the research questions of this study. In addition, Uzbekistan is preferred here because it has been the only Central Asian state to experience EU democratization and human rights related sanctions, which makes it crucial for an investigation of successes and failures of EU conditionality. The empirical chapters (4 to 6) thus evaluate and

³ One could argue that contemporary Kyrgyzstan presents a case of a hybrid regime with some features of electoral democracy, while other Central Asian states could be regarded as authoritarian with varying degrees of power concentration. On different approaches towards defining hybrid regimes see e.g. Bogaards (2009) and Diamond (2002).

explain the outcomes of EU democratization policy in Central Asia with the examples of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Finally, the conclusion of the study summarizes the evaluation results, highlighting few successes of the EU, and emphasizes the relevance of the substance of the promoted norms and changes for the outcomes of EU efforts. It further discusses implications of the key findings for external democracy and human rights promotion in the broader region.

This work complements existing scholarship of EU political engagement in Central Asia and advances the democratization research agenda by linking the study of substance to the study of instruments and their effects. It thus responds to the reflections by Frank Schimmelfennig (2011) on the academic merits of examining the substance of EU democratization policy.