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European Union Development Policy:
from an Instrument to a Policy

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Introduction

Among all the “common policies” elaborated and implemented by the EU institutions, development policy occupies a specific though sometimes underrated place. This sphere of EU interests has rarely been paid much separate attention by scholars dealing with analysis of common European policies. It has always been seen either as a mere direction (or, as some scholars used to stress, an “instrument”) of common foreign and security policy or else it was examined from the perspective of the EU’s trade policy (Hadfield 2007; Olsen 2004). However, the importance of development policy should not be underestimated. As far back as in 1982, when no explicit common foreign and security policy existed, the Commission acknowledged that the development policy was a “cornerstone of European integration” thus emphasizing the contribution the development policy makes to deepening of internal integration. The uniqueness of this policy area is determined by the fact that it has just recently become the area of the competence of joint Community institutions though, paradoxically, it has always been the core of EU activity as a component of trade policy (Moravcsik, 2002). Development policy exists on two parallel levels: the Community level and at the level of 27 independent policies of the member states. Few policy areas, if any, can be compared to development policy in terms of such a parallelism. Moreover, scholars note this policy cannot be “reproached” for being one-sidedly developed with either clearly visible dominance of the Union or its absolutely weak position. Quite the contrary, both the Union and member states enjoy much independence in aid delivery and development promotion.

The paper attempts to follow the history and trajectory of the evolution of EU development policy with a particular emphasis on both external and internal factors which influenced its formation, path and present shape of policy. On the one hand, EU interference into the sphere of foreign aid is a consequence of member states’ willingness to accommodate their interests (with regards to ex colonies) within broader institutional framework, obviously, offering more benefits. This, in its turn, led to the dominance of certain member states in determining the scope and size of development assistance as well as its geographical location. Yet, with the demise of the system of colonialism member states did not refuse to provide development assistance. It’s argued that international discourse on development and, particularly, understanding of

development in economic and trade terms had a huge impact on why the EU did not leave this realm but, on the contrary, expanded its presence in the sphere of foreign aid. Emerging and widening EU trade policy became the basis to which development policy had been linked.

The paper seeks to follow the history of how development assistance was brought to the agenda by member states at the outset and how it later became linked and closely entwined with the common interests of the Community through trade policy. The scope of influence of international discourse on development and aid is also going to be examined as, despite its uniqueness, EU development policy was evolving along the lines of the discourse created and promoted by other international donors. This is especially important as one can track how EU development policy sequentially absorbed ideas that filled international discourse: development as economic growth, development as basic needs satisfaction, development as structural adjustment and, finally, development as democracy and civil society.

Moreover, such factors as impulses from recipient countries themselves also played an important role in shaping development policy. Changes in policy's form and mechanisms were recorded in basic treaties that regulated EU relations with developing countries. Not only have these treaties reflected varying understandings of development and aid within the EU but they have also appeared as a response to challenges brought about by recipients themselves. Thus, to make an analysis of the history of development policy a full evolution of the major provisions of treaties signed by the EU and recipient countries should be traced.

On the other hand, attention will be paid to problems of the afore-mentioned clear labour division with regards to competences in this area between member states and the Community. The history of the evolution of EU development policy demonstrates that member states retained much independence, thus leading to policy's formulation and implementation both at national and supranational levels. Again, due to the fact that development was seen internationally as closely connected with trade and the economic performance of recipient countries this policy area appeared as an "outsider" in the family of common policy areas as it was conceived as an integral part of EU trade policy. Since the EEC was already enjoying significant power in shaping trade policy this allowed member states to conduct their own development policies. Change of international discourse regarding development, politicisation of development issues and at the same time new attempts to advance towards political integration led to the

creation of a separate EU competence in this area. The paper will attempt to examine the gradual emergence of Community competence in the field of aid delivery with a particular emphasis on institutionalization of development policy. The question of exactly how much competence the Community acquired in the field of aid provision and how it was acquired is the question examined in this paper.

The paper proceeds as follows: successive sections are devoted to the analysis of three different periods in EU development policy evolution. These periods can be distinguished from one another as within each of them EU development assistance took different shapes (in terms of institutional setting, share of competence between member states and the Community etc.) and was filled with different rhetoric concerning goals and expected outcomes. The first one can be conceived as a continuation of the colonial vision of relations with developing countries whereby development assistance relations literally replaced old schemes of colony/metropolis links. Yet, at this initial stage one can see the first steps towards the appearance of independent Community competence in this sphere. The second period can be characterized as a “new” era in EU development policy when the EU, under the influence of both external and internal forces, declared a new “partnership” approach to development assistance. During this period, though, development policy was closely linked to EU trade policy and evolved across changes in trade policy. Finally, this period is characterized by a radical change in discourse and practice in the EU in relation to development policy which manifested itself through the introduction of political reasoning and conditionality into the sphere of aid provision as well as radical institutional reform of EU development assistance.

At the “dawn” of development policy: “new” relations between “old” friends

The involvement of European countries in what later became known as Community development policy, alongside their own, can be explained by several factors: from pure economic to explicitly political reasons. Scholars working in the economic tradition of development analysis mention that, apart from fast-growing ‘development fashion’ in the 1950-1960s, there were some consequences that at one point of time made development assistance an attractive means of fostering economic growth of newly-established European Economic Community (EEC). Agricultural policy is often perceived as one of the impulses of the EEC involvement in provision of development aid. Soon after agreement to conduct common agricultural policy it led to an overfilling of the European market with food which, in its turn, determined EEC involvement in food assistance to developing countries (Schrijver, 2009; Orbie and Versluys, 2008). Dealing with the complex problems associated with achieving the proclaimed goals of the common agricultural policy necessitated the Community’s involvement in “special relations” with developing countries - “surplus” production also affected developing countries that were involved in food trade with the EEC.

Trade policy appeared as another “engine” driving the EEC towards involvement in the provision of aid: the opening up of its own market and the markets of developing countries raised the question of how trade contributes to or, on the contrary, deters development. Since trade has always lied within Community competence, this inevitably led to Community involvement in reflecting on issues of development and the Community’s role in it. Trade preferences have always been exploited as the most widely used instrument of “promoting development” through trade and this has had a huge influence on the contents of initial EEC development documents (conventions and agreements) which mostly contain provisions and references to trade in terms of trade preferences and give-and-takes.

In other words, key aspects of the EEC economic presence that directly influenced the economic situations in developing countries required a range of policy responses from the EEC and the gradual involvement of the Community in development dialogue with its less developed partners. Developing countries and sectors of their

economies were of crucial importance for the growing European single market and the group of common “economic” policies. Having quickly realized “benefits” of the common economic policy such as surplus production were having a sometimes openly “bad” influence on developing countries, European countries had to initiate some policy action within the common decision-making structures to eliminate these consequences. In other words, the economic policy of the EEC was being questioned with respect to its correspondence to the popular idea of development that was being promoted by international institutions (Hoebink and Stokke, 2005).

Economic motives for establishing relations with developing countries were successfully supplemented with political ones. Although, at the time the EEC was founded, development policy was not part of this institution’s competence, one member state pursuing its goals gave way to an autonomous development policy in the future. At a late stage of negotiations over the Treaty of Rome, France brought to the table the question of the inclusion of its colonies into the system of preferential trade insisting that these privileged economic relations should be compatible with EEC law. This reveals one of the most important factors that has determined the formation of EEC development policy – colonial ties of EEC member states. Europe has always been a political and cultural metropolitan centre in the network of relations of dependency between North and South. Moreover, its “patron” image and relations of dependency came into being along with the emergence of the system of colonialism. This was destined to be one of the most crucial factors that determined the appearance of EEC development policy which, as some scholars note, is a mere reconfiguration of former colonial ties when assistance for development replaced old schemes of metropolis-colony assistance (Greenidge, 1996; Hurt, 2005). The history of colonialism has also noticeably shaped the main aspects of EEC development policy and predetermined its geographical focus as well as peculiarities of administration and, intrinsically, obstacles to its status as a “common” policy.

Thus, political factors encompassing aspirations of former colonies to keep their relations with their dependencies as well as a number of obvious economic reasons determined EEC steps in developing relations with third world countries in terms of assistance.

Scholars mention another factor that, undoubtedly, had (and is still having) a huge impact on the formation of EU development policy. Olsen notes that provision of development assistance has always been an important instrument for the promotion of

EU internal values (Olsen, 2004). Being an entity with no record or experience of imperialism the EU is, at the same time, a value-based community willing to promote these values to the outer world through conditions laid down for recipients. This argument has a very solid ground and though it requires some additional analysis there is much evidence as to its relevance as one can see many present-day EU attempts to create a certain image for itself. At the dawn of EEC development assistance this “value promotion” discourse did not play such an important role as to be considered as a driving force.¹

In fact, discourse around the provision of aid for development purposes was transforming along with the development of the EEC itself.

Three periods in the evolution of EU development policy can be distinguished. The first one can be called “**late colonial**” or “**post-colonial**”. This period can be characterized by the presence of a discourse of “associationism” which formed thanks to and under the impact of France (Arts and Dickson, 2004; Cossgrove-Sacks, 1998). As was mentioned above, the involvement of the EEC in “North-South” relations was developing due to a necessity to satisfy the post-colonial interests of EEC Member States. It was obvious that political and ideological interests and preferences of French officials would shape the approach of the whole Community to relations with developing countries since France, undoubtedly, was major an activist of integration at its early stage. It is interesting to note that France transformed its 19th century concept “EuroAfrica”, the main idea of which was the idea of close links between Europe and Africa, into the concept of “associationism”. The relevant provisions of this approach were set out in Articles 131-136 of the Treaty of Rome which provided French colonies with the status of “associated territories” outlining that the purpose of association “shall be to promote the economic and social development of the countries and territories and to establish close economic relations between them and the Community as a whole” (Treaty of Rome....). EEC actions during this period can be characterized as treating developing countries as a geographical continuation of the EEC territory with an emphasis on the economic components of relations. Nonetheless, one can not speak about “development policy” yet when referring to this period. Nowhere in EEC documents can the term “development policy” be found neither was “development

¹ This motivation Olsen, for example, calls a set of “psychological” factors which, apart from willingness to promote values, include moral obligations of European countries that appeared again as a result of colonial past (Olsen, 2004)

assistance” proclaimed as an area of EEC competence though, in fact, this area of EEC action was gradually becoming more institutionalised.

Apart from an institutional outlining of EEC development policy in such documents as the Treaty of Rome, the EEC introduced another important instrument. To achieve goals laid down in the Treaty, EEC member states agreed to establish the European Development Fund (EDF) – the source of financial assistance distributed among the recipients. Basically, this was the first institution supporting development policy at the time when no particular structures were in charge of it. The fund was replenished by member states individually rather than through the Community Budget and was of five years’ duration. Contributions by member states have been the subject of often difficult negotiations due to different levels of member states’ commitment to development policy. However, the creation of the EDF can be seen as the first step in granting competence to the Community: the fund and, thus, the Community institutions obtained substantial resources at their disposal which allowed them to play a more prominent role in shaping development policy (Orbie and Versulys, 2008; Hilpold, 2002).

As one can also see, economic reasons for entering into the sphere of development cooperation were prevailing: the Treaty opened up EEC member’s markets for goods from associated territories and presumed that all six members would share the burden of assistance to these territories. This privileged access put overseas territories above other developing countries and, as some scholars argue, contributed to the construction of a particular political identity of those countries (Dimier, 2006; Arts and Dickson, 2004). The discriminative system which was also doubtful in the light of GATT negotiations was the result of the first period. Moreover, the system of relations amongst EEC-developing countries during five years of regulation by the Treaty of Rome can not be considered as a system of “cooperation” due to the fact that it was just unilateral aid with no trace of true cooperation.

The French influence has remained dominant for many years despite the severe resistance of Germany and the Netherlands that stood for a more global approach to “North-South” relations and was weakened only by ensuing enlargements. However, the discourse of “associationism” was not the only display of France’s deep influence on EU development policy. For a long time France was unofficially in charge of development policy which manifested itself in its constant attempts to attach more importance to this policy area by means of various initiatives. It was France that insisted on further institutionalisation of relations amongst EU-developing countries and it was France that

later brought conditionality onto the agenda of EU development policy (Cosgrove-Sacks, 1998).²

Later this approach was supplemented by two agreements signed in Yaounde³: Yaounde 1 (in force from 1965 to 1970) and Yaounde II (in force from 1970 to 1975). These agreements revolved around this main idea: aid in exchange for reciprocal preferential trade. By and large, there were few innovations in those agreements. Though both agreements were formally signed between independent partners, in fact, they were extremely asymmetrical and preserved the idea of the preferential economic position of a certain number of developing countries⁴ (Hilpold, 2002; Hoebink and Olsen, 2005). Common institutions (Parliamentary Assembly and Council of Association) were created to promote equal dialogue between the sides. The agreements supported selectivity and discriminated in favor of former French colonies and French enterprises doing business there and can not be perceived as genuine instruments of development.

One important consequence of the first period of EEC development policy is geographical: development policy has become geographically narrowed down to particular countries from one particular region (Olsen, 2005; Holden, 2008). It so happened that other countries (Asian and Latin American, for example) that became the centre of attention for such donors as the World Bank were ignored by the EEC. This indicates that during the first decades European integration development policy (apart from being loosely formulated and defined) was an undisguised low profile area (Holland, 2002). Despite the existence of aid provision the EEC was not rushing to become a donor in the full sense. Moreover, a shift of attention to other countries and regions was taking place together with progression of the integration process.

The first period of EEC development policy evolution clearly blueprinted the contours and silhouettes of the future trajectories of policy. It outlined the group of recipients which were chosen on the grounds of the colonial pasts of EEC Member States. Later on, when the UK, Spain and Portugal joined EEC this logic of “assistance to former colonies” manifested itself as the dominant criterion for the recipient’s group

² An interesting fact: French tradition of development cooperation was so strong that for a long time the EEC’s efforts in the sphere of development aid provision were unofficially considered as the French domain. It was not until 1985 that the first Commissioner for Development became a non-French person. The active French position was determined by country’s colonial past as well as the continuity of internal development policy which resulted from this colonial past. This continuity has never been interrupted regardless of the political priorities of every new government and president or other internal political factors (Rajoharison, 1998)

³ Both agreements were signed between 6 EEC members and 18 African countries and Madagascar in the capital of Cameroun- Yaounde.

⁴ It was a relationship of almost total economic dependence since 80% of associated countries’ trade went to the EEC despite the fact that both agreements contained provisions about mutual trade preferences and, practically, assumed the creation of a free trade zone (Handfield, 2007)

enlargement. Thus, from the very beginning EU development policy followed the policies and aspirations of member states with relatively little competence transferred to the Community which determined policy's long period of being in shade compared to other areas.

It was also the first period when the EEC defined the main instruments of development cooperation. Almost all these instruments were closely related and connected with trade and during the following periods the EEC made use of them in a more complex way. Taking into account the unquestionable economic and trade superiority of the EEC, development policy appeared as a policy based on such a huge asymmetry and dependence that it reminded one more of a reshaped form of colonialism and was quite far from policy aimed at fostering economic, political and social development in recipient countries.

This period in the evolution of EEC development policy followed the progression of international development discourse. 1950-s and 1960-s were years of “development euphoria”. Not only was assistance accompanied by “post-colonialism” justifications but mostly by economic ones. Recipient countries demonstrated economic growth which, in turn, resulted in rising content and a firmer conviction amongst international donors in the justness and accuracy of the action undertaken.

In the light of the economic basis of development assistance, EEC efforts in linking development and trade as appeared to mostly correspond to the promotion of internationally set goals.

Revision of development policy: fair trade, partnership and first signs of conditionality in Lome Conventions

The second period, though left without any title, was a period when the policy of “associationism” was reexamined and challenged by recipient countries themselves. The beginning of the 1970-s was marked by the rise of post-decolonisation, anti-imperialist movements in developing countries which were active proponents of reevaluation of relations with the EEC and of putting all the developing countries on an equal footing (Hilpold, 2002; Brown, 2004; Holland, 2002). Similarly, they advocated removing all colonial connotations in their relations with the EEC and started quite successful bargaining processes with the EEC. The terms “cooperation” and “participation” became the buzzwords of negotiations over the revision of relations amongst EEC-developing countries. The new agreement was expected to have no “colonial” nature and to be protected against any kind of criticism.

Moreover, as Yaounde was about to be terminated and the first enlargement was about to occur none of the EEC member states was willing or prepared to finance the existing practice of selectivity whereby the ex colonies of a particular Member State are given priority. The admission of the UK in 1973 was, obviously, one of the main reasons for the reexamination of the Yaounde agreements. Since the UK was also burdened by the legacy of its colonial past, French colonies could no longer be given exceptional attention: special relations needed to be applied on far a larger scale. The position of such an influential colonial power as the UK and its desire to give special status to its colonies could not be ignored.

The beneficiaries themselves vigorously upheld the principle of equality and only with regard to relations with EEC⁵. Their call for a “New Economic World Order” could not be left without any response on the part of the developed countries, taking into account that the development assistance that was evolving around principle of the “old” economic order did not result in any development progress in those countries.

It should also be mentioned that it was the 1970-s when the “fight for developing countries” between participants of the Cold War reached its peak. In the light of a sharp

⁵ The so-called “group 77” was especially active in defending the principle of just and free international trade as the basis for more just North-South relations.

drop in development assistance due to the world economic crisis, developing countries could easily profit by playing on superpowers' aspirations to expand their zones of influence. At the same time issues of their sovereignty not being undermined remained pivotal for them as well as the discourse of "cooperation", "partnership" and "dialogue" (Hilpold, 2002; Holland, 2002).

The EEC itself came to an understanding and revision of the policy it had been conducting with more emphasis on: balance of trade preferences with its "partners" and their influence on proclaimed goals of development; the "development" component of "development" aid; and the coherence of policy, i.e. to think of its actions in a more systematic way. Not only was a new agreement needed for the afore-mentioned reasons but it could also provide an opportunity to fill development policy with more "developmental" content. Europe was breaking with its colonial past and, moreover, not without the participation of other international institutions, development discourse was moving from "assistance for growth" to "assistance for development"⁶.

The Lome Conventions (named after the capital of Togo where they were signed) were shaping EEC development policy from 1975 until 1995. There were five Lome Conventions as all of them were signed and revised every five years. EU development policy was expanding and acquiring the distinguishing features of a separate policy area. The recipient countries were represented in the form of a new entity called "The African, Pacific and Caribbean Group of States" (the ACP) that was constituted as a formal entity in 1975 with the signing of a special agreement. From 1975 the EU dealt with the ACP as the main recipients of its aid. Construction of this separate group of countries influenced EU development policy in a unique way both from the perspective of policy content and institutionalisation.

For a long time EU development policy was considered as a set of actions aimed at the provision of assistance to this particular group of countries only. Moreover, "special relations" with these countries reduced policy to the transfer of financial flows to governments of developing countries. Being such a "simple" sphere of action development policy did not require great institutional capacity from the EEC. Strictly speaking, all policy drafting and implementation was being done by DG Development

⁶ This is also a part of an interesting history of development of "aid discourse" which underwent several changes. The 1970-s are characterized by a significant change in the developmental discourse. This period is often described as the "discovery of poverty" since the rhetoric of poverty reduction appears on the agenda of donors. The main argument was that plain growth (which was previously the main objective of assistance) does not lead to the elimination of poverty and that this problem should be tackled separately. In other words, donors accentuated that development is no longer understood in terms of economic growth only and that financial interventions should go further achieving good economic indicators.

which was a small department within DG Trade. However, the new agreement introduced a little complexity into the process of administration (Dearden, 2009; Dearden, 2004; Santiso, 2002).

The first Lome Convention was signed between nine EEC members and 46 ACP countries and contained several important provisions. First and foremost, the accent was put on equal partnership with the EEC playing just a supportive role and ACP countries being entrusted with the leading role in managing aid resources. Second, the Lome Convention stated that ACP countries would be provided with predictable aid flows and non-reciprocal trade preferences. This put an end to dependency and began to be reminiscent of cooperation with the purpose of development since EEC countries were deprived of their privileged access to ACP markets which, it was believed, would stimulate the development of ACP countries' economies. Third, the Convention introduced many other mechanisms and instruments which were thought to foster development: protocols, tariff reductions, price stabilisation programs and the establishment of common institutions. These measures were believed to enhance the partnership component of changing relations as they meant quite a lot politically. Protocols that were supposed to be signed to ameliorate price fluctuations and protect "sensitive" products of ACP countries opened up considerable space for political dialogue and interaction as they facilitated discussions between the Commission and particular ACP countries.

EEC-ACP cooperation entered the phase of institutionalisation. According to the Convention joint institutions were created: The Council of Ministers, The Committee of Ambassadors and the Joint Assembly. The beginning of political dialogue with ACP countries signified the transformation of development assistance into an activity not based on economic rationales only but demonstrating signs of politicisation (Hewitt and Whiteman, 2004). The Lome Convention closely integrated elements of trade, development and political dialogue into one whole. Analysis of how the contents and accents of subsequent Lome Conventions changed clearly demonstrates an increase of the political element in EEC-ACP cooperation. EEC development policy was going through a significant transformative period acquiring new features and becoming more complicated.

Meanwhile, some events that took place in some African countries (Uganda, first of all) and were accompanied by violations of human rights can be seen as evidence that the EEC was on the threshold of a new era in its relations with developing countries.

They also demonstrated that the EEC was in a difficult position. Being true to the principle of predictable aid flows, the EEC was well equipped to deal with situations of human rights violations in terms of how it should react to these situations (Hilpold, 2002; Holland, 2002). For the first time the EEC was put in a position when it was not simply an aid provider but a bearer of a set of values which required an adequate response from it. Furthermore, development policy (namely, the issue of suspension of aid) appeared as an instrument and provided the EEC with an opportunity to make a step in the direction of becoming more than a “financial bureau”. Negotiations on the second Lome Convention allowed for re-editing previous agreements and taking into account situations threatening the reputation of EEC. The issue of aid conditionality was emerging on the horizon of EEC-ACP relations, though for many reasons issues of human rights were not included in the text of new agreement. The EEC did not press hard on this issue firstly, since it, met huge resistance from ACP countries; secondly because it would have far-reaching implications for the EEC itself since it would likely provoke reaction from the other ideological camp; and thirdly, because development was considered as value per se and over-loading development agreements with issues of human rights was thought to be a distortion of this approach (Hadfield, 2007). Moreover, development policy, in spite of emerging signs of a gradual “separation” from trade policy, was not an area with clear-cut “borders” and much competence left for the Union. An appeal to such “political” issues would have been viewed suspiciously by member states that considered links between development and politics from the perspective that political dimensions of development were areas of their competence, not of the EEC.

Nevertheless, the discussion about human rights was to stay within the EEC institutions (in the Parliament, first of all) which finally made it unavoidable to refer to human rights in the third Lome Convention. References to human rights were included in the text of the Convention though, as some scholars note, it was done in a timid and prudent way and often without any explicitness (Hilpold, 2002). However, Lome III was just the beginning of the development of a human rights discourse in EU development policy. The next Lome IV made human rights the central point and the achievement of human rights standards was seen as an autonomous goal and an element of development itself (ACP-EEC Convention, 1975). The EEC reserved the right to take “appropriate steps including, where necessary, the partial or full suspension of application of this Convention to the Party concerned” (ACP-EEC Convention, 1975) itself which indicated a shift to conditionality in development policy. More than that,

Article 5 of the Convention was devoted to issues of human rights. The fact that the Article was included in the Convention despite the resistance of ACP countries reflects the fact that the overall context of cooperation has drastically changed: ACP countries appeared to be very weak in a new negotiating climate whereas the EEC demonstrated gradually growing power and ability to impose conditions on the recipients.

It was also clear that the emphasis in the new Convention shifted from economic cooperation to political aspects of EEC-ACP relations. The economic content of the document also reflects the gradual politicization of allegedly non-political development assistance. The Convention included one important provision regarding the purpose of money use: the ACP countries were provided with funds for structural adjustment. The attitude of the EEC to structural adjustment was quite critical in the 1980-s. This kind of liberal economic policy where developing countries are given financial assistance to conduct structural reforms in their economies which are finally meant to function according to free market principles, privatisation and deregulation was rejected by the EEC though actively supported by international donors. The EEC, being responsive to criticisms of such a system, was for a long time strongly opposed to this conditionality since it considered it as a retreat from principles of impartiality and neutrality. However, Lome IV finally introduced economic conditionality which had a strong political connotation along with other “innovative” requirements to developing countries such as, for example, gender equality. In other words, EEC development policy could not stand aside from trends in international discourse on development and had to incorporate references to structural adjustment reforms in exchange for money which became the guiding principle of development industry in the late 1970-1980-s.

Finally, Lome IV-bis signed in 1995 broke new ground on conditionality by incorporating such concepts as “good governance” and “rule of law”. The relations between EU and ACP countries have entered a purely political phase with the EU insisting on the adherence of ACP countries to principles of democracy, human rights, respect and good governance. It should also be mentioned that the history of the Lome Conventions is a history of a constantly growing number of countries joining the group of the ACP. By the time Lome IV-bis was signed the number of this group’s participants had grown from 46 to 70, thus forming a large group of countries affected by the EU development policy. As the EEC expanded absorbing new members, some of which had a “colonial past”, development policy was spreading to new countries.

The mid-review of Lome IV also resulted in some “innovations” in money distribution mechanisms. The well-known two-tranche system of grant payments was introduced as the principle of EDF funds distribution- 70% of the funding is delivered initially and the remaining 30% is conditional upon the progress made by a recipient country. Although this provision was also strongly resisted by developing countries they failed to champion their interests in negotiations with the EEC.

However, the situation with “new” countries receiving some portion of EEC attention was not quite clear during the second period though no one can deny that the EEC had not changed its approach to other regions. As development policy was acquiring some complexity, the EEC outlook was also becoming more complex. The Mediterranean was in the focus of EEC development programs from the 1960-s though the volume of aid provided can not be compared to that transferred to the ACP countries. Moreover, scholars note that aid to this region was of a more “accidental” nature without such explicitly expressed goals as in the case of the ACP. Some Asian countries like India and Bangladesh (thanks to the UK’s position), occupied top places in the list of aid recipients up until the 1980-s. The accession of Spain and Portugal raised the question of the inclusion of Latin American countries in the sphere of EEC development assistance. Being ex-metropolises, Spain and Portugal tried to play on their colonial past as did France several decades ago. This approach did not find any support within the Community at that time but was backed decades later. However, none of these cases was anywhere near to the degree of attention paid to the ACP. As scholars claim, the only thing all of the aforementioned countries could count on was a “slightly sympathetic position” (Schrijver, 1999; Cosgrove-Sacks, 1998).

In their evaluations of the Lome system both practitioners and scholars concur that basically it was a continuation of the “associationism” with long-enduring mechanisms: financial assistance, trade preferences and a “special” partnership (Radtko, 1998). Despite this kind of close connectivity of the EEC to developing countries, development policy, nevertheless, was more connected to trade and “partnership” not going further than trade negotiations and arrangements. The EEC’s role and participation in elaborating strategies for the development of ACP partners was merely invisible: development strategies were the responsibility of ACP countries’ governments. This makes it quite difficult to speak about “development policy” but makes it very tempting to characterise EEC-ACP relations under the Lome simply as expanded trade relations with substantial financial assistance.

Evaluations of how the Lome system contributed to the development of ACP countries (if development is understood widely as not only economic but social, environmental etc.) show that in most cases the fundamental aim of assisting development has not been realised. Having enjoyed up to 40 years of “special” relations with the EEC, ACP countries remained some of the poorest in the world by the end of the 1990-s. This put on the agenda the question of a new revision of the EEC development policy which was being carried out.

At the same time the Lome conventions all reflected changes in the international discourse on development. At the turn of this decade international donors became, on the one hand, “disappointed” with development for economic growth as the economic performance of the developing nations did not always satisfy all the aspirations. Thus, political issues gradually penetrated donors’ actions and rhetoric. By the time the fourth Lome Convention was signed the imbalance between the declared “nonpolitical attitudes” towards development in the EEC and the real state of affairs expanded which, along with other factors, required enhanced coordination of the EEC’s development actions. The gradual “politicisation” marked a threshold in the evolution of development policy when it could no longer be seen as a continuation of trade policy. This, in turn, posed the question of how the EEC will respond to this challenge.

The second period in the evolution of EU development policy can be characterised by both signs of innovation in policy implementation and the influence of old practices. On the one hand, the EEC made an attempt to move away from pure “associationism” as both recipient countries insisted on treating them as equal partners and international discourse profoundly changed. The EEC responded with a cardinal revision of the treaty base that regulated its relations with developing countries. The Lome system declared “partnership” to be the major principle of developmental assistance and proclaimed that principles of aid delivery would be changed so as to enhance the effect of financial interventions.

Another EEC response to the changing context was further institutionalisation of policy with the creation of special structures within EEC institutions responsible for the implementation of ever more complex development assistance. The second period is the period when the foundations of the present institutional structure and decision-making apparatus with regards to development policy were laid. This indicates a complication of development policy and its gradual isolation from other policy areas along with the acquisition of more or less clear-cut competence by the Community.

At the same time, in essence, development policy has not changed significantly. New member states (Spain, Portugal, the UK) continued the pattern of development policy's being directed to countries of particular interest for them, thus contributing to the geographical seclusion of development policy. Neither were the proclaimed slogans of partnership fully realised: development assistance was still closely linked to trade and, basically, was implemented through trade mechanisms only (preferences, protocols etc.). The EEC lacked diversity in the mechanisms of aid delivery utilised. Development policy as such remained just an integral part of trade policy though it began to experience more influence from international discourse.

The latter was evident in attempts to link aid with the state of political development in recipient countries. Attempts to introduce "political clauses" in subsequent Lome Conventions indicate that signals of the politicisation of development discourse were received in the EEC.

EU development policy in the late 1990-s – 2000-s: breaking with the past

By the end of the 1990-s the conditions under which development policy was carried out profoundly changed. The Lome system was heavily criticized. It was a time of disillusionment with development policy, strong criticism and also of strong disagreements among EU member states regarding the scope of policy and volume of aid. Internal evaluations carried out for the first time ever brought to light several serious problems in development policy framed and shaped by Lome conventions. No positive results or shifts in developing countries were recorded: neither political nor economic. On the contrary, the situation in many recipient countries deteriorated and was reminiscent of chaos with no sign of aid leading to any improvements. The institutional mechanism of aid provision was not working properly, resulting in half of money built into the aid budget by Lome IV remaining unspent. The EU development policy implementation procedures were found to be slow and bureaucratized as well as lacking coordination with national policies and bilateral aid programs of member states (Dearden, 2004, 2009; Bigsten, 2009; Santiso, 2009). European officials underlined that EU development policy was far from having any coherence and could hardly be called a “common policy” as different member states were taking different views with regard to aid flows, the amount of money spent and the geographical locus of any EU effort. Against this background the policy itself was undergoing a deep transformation.

Important internal shifts in the process of integration radically affected development policy. First of all, the EEC turned into the European Union and declared future enlargement. The second significant step was made when development policy was first mentioned as an autonomous sphere and officially recognized in major treaties. Article 130 of the renewed EC Treaty refers to development policy “**as a ‘community policy’ under the purview of the EC and the responsibility of the Commission**”. It also “**shall be complimentary to the policies pursued by the Member States**”, “**The Community and the Member States shall coordinate their policies on development cooperation and shall consult each other on their aid programmes**” (Treaty on the European Union, 1993). Importantly, development policy has been given the status of “community policy” though it took the Community almost 40 years to recognise this.

Likewise, these paragraphs witness another important change apart from introducing a new policy area: an enhancement of the status of the Commission in relation to the status of the Council. The system generated by the Lome Conventions whereby the Commission was not an independent actor in decision-making in the sphere of development policy but acted and negotiated on the grounds of a mandate from the Council of Ministers (in the form of the Directives agreed beforehand) was eliminated and all the power was transferred to the Commission (Dearden, 2008; Hewitt and Whiteman, 2004). The era of member states' independence in shaping development policy labeled as "common policy" but never being truly "common" and truly "policy" ended.

References to the Commission's role in pursuing development policy sought to enhance the EU leadership in this sphere. Development cooperation has always been far from being a matter of common consent in the EU: almost all the member-states have always had their own visions and opinions with regard to the trajectory of development policy. In this respect, the renewed Treaty represents a real example of member states' willingness to see this area as an area of common action. In other words, a specific competence for development cooperation has been introduced. That was done, though, not by means of depriving member states of any tools to conduct development policy or taking away their competences. On the contrary, member states kept at their disposal all the mechanisms and instruments of aid provision in terms of both decision-making and implementation. Instead, the Commission was granted competence in addition to member states "abilities" (Hewitt and Whiteman, 2004; Dimier, 2006; Holden, 2008). This may explain why development policy, despite its potential status as a very sensitive area, due to its relatedness to distribution of money and to the issue of the extent of individual member states' sovereignty to carry out independent policy, remains an area of cooperation characterised by relatively little conflict. As Orbie and Versluys mention, the Maastricht Treaty created a unique situation for the EC since Community competence tends to be wider with regard to regulatory policies than with regard to distributive ones (Orbie and Versluys, 2008). In reality, member states agreed to grant a large proportion of competences to the Commission in conducting development policy which is distributive in its nature. To avoid the duplication of effort (as the EU was given the right to act as the *implementer* of development policy) it was emphasized that the "second role" of the EU was to *coordinate* member states' policies.

The issue of coherence and complementarity of development policy was a subject for wide discussions by the time the EU announced its plans to reform the policy. Development policy is intrinsically a unique policy area as it has always evolved around a consensus that the policy is comprised of the bilateral policies of member states plus the collective policy of the Community. However, this balance accepted by all was hardly kept as there have always been huge debates among member states some of which (the UK, France) were taking the view that the policy should be more regionally oriented, based on a sort of “discriminating approach” of assistance to countries that have historically been in the focus of Europe’s attention while the others (Germany, Netherlands, Austria) appealed for a more global approach. Moreover, the absence of a consensus regarding the geographical scope of development policy was complemented by a variety of visions and focuses of policy that member states emphasised and stood up for. The “poverty” focus lobbied for by the UK and Scandinavian countries was compromised by “historical” considerations and the “cultural ties” approach promoted by France, Spain and Portugal, who were making accents on their cultural affinity with countries of “Francophonie” and Latin America, and “security” focus vindicated by Italy and Greece, who were suffering from flows of illegal immigration from the African continent. These differences took the shape of slow bargaining within the EU institutions which resulted in often watered down solutions reached at a great expense to effective policy. The situation deteriorated by the end of the 1990-s as one could hardly speak about any coordination between Community policy and the policies carried out by Member States. The tension reached its peak in 2000 when the Council tried to answer the question “one or many development policies?” in the “Statement on Development Policy” in which the issue of coordination and complementarity was emphasised (Farrel, 2008; Dearden, 2008, 2009).

Moreover, the internal management of development policy was a source of constant criticism of the policy’s implementation. First of all, EU institutions were criticised for little internal coordination. Apart from funding provided through the European Development Fund, ACP aid programs were intensively supported with the money derived from the EU general budget. In reality, the control over this spending lay within a separate EDF Committee with almost no coordination with other institutions which were crucial players in the decision-making process (Council). The chaos of coordination was obvious: the Commission was making proposals with regards to flows of money almost independently from the Council. This inevitably provoked resentment

on the part of some member states that were deprived of any control over development policy budgets. The Commission was also blamed for lack of transparency, preoccupation with administrative procedures rather than results and little effective monitoring of its aid programs (Dearden, 2008). One of the most serious “accusations” touched upon the way development aid programs were elaborated. Critics pointed out that the role of ACP governments themselves is very small: the Commission itself initiated all the projects leaving even the EDF Committee, let alone ACP governments, at the end of a preparation stage. Consequently, this all led to little sustainability of the projects, low transparency and even less effectiveness. Similarly, the policy management suffered from the absence of any system of standardised monitoring even when EC external Delegations played little role in evaluating projects implemented in ACP countries. As a result, the delivery of aid was an ineffective, slow and unsustainable process which was also addressed in the “The European Consensus on Development: Joint Statement” (European Commission, 2005). The problem of management reform was put on the agenda and marked as “urgent” in another document complementing the “Consensus” – “Communication on the Reform of the Management of External Assistance” – and was also addressed in a new Agreement between the EU and ACP (European Commission, 2000).

Apart from the “domestic” transformations that took place in the EU, international factors can be considered as the most significant ones that influenced the contents of development policy. The Cold War ended with the profound transformation of development cooperation itself. On the one hand, development aid lost political and ideological grounding when rival camps lost interest in increasing their influence in certain regions. The end of the Cold War and the ensuing events both in Europe and abroad made keeping a high profile on aid to third world countries less politically and ideologically grounded.⁷ This “vacuum” gave developing countries many reasons for concern and anxiety since almost all the donors were either in a state of revision of their effort or, like the EU in case of East European countries, switched their attention to other objects with the reduction of financial flows as a by-product (Holland, 2002)⁸. The volume of aid to ACP countries dropped sharply due to EU concerns about assistance to its closest neighbors in Eastern Europe, Northern Africa and Middle East. Instead, the EU

⁷ Here conflicts in Europe are believed to have played a significant role in the revision of foreign policy by the EU.

⁸ Two major drops in EU development aid can be found in the 90-s: in 1995 and 2000 (shortly before the new Cotonou agreement). East European countries were given primary attention while aid to ACP countries reached its minimum level in 1996 according to OECD statistics.

came to an understanding of the importance of becoming a global actor. As Sorensen notes the EU discovered “European interests” in pursuit of development policy as opposed to both narrowly defined national interests and bureaucratic policy-making which always reflected the narrow interests of the elites involved in development policy (Olsen, 2005). This wish manifested itself in the “opening” of EU development to the rest of the world. The ACP suddenly lost its privileged position in the EU’s foreign policy and became just one of many areas of EU focus and interest.

On the other hand, political conditionality replaced ideological grounding along with economic conditions. Development aid became value-oriented and conditioned by the ability of recipients to demonstrate adherence to good governance, democracy and the rule of law. In the case of EU development policy these changes were officially given priority. Signs of the general orientation of development policy towards the promotion of democracy and rule of law as well as the overall “politicisation” of development cooperation can be seen in the amended Treaty of the EU. The EC Treaty states that **“the Community policy in this area shall contribute to the general objective of developing and consolidating democracy and the rule of law, and to that of respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms”** (emphasis added) (Treaty on the European Union, 1993). The end of the Cold War resulted in the global climate becoming more open to discussions of issues of human rights and democracy. Accordingly, the EU made these issues important determinants of its external activities. However, if the Lome conventions contained references to human rights, a new Agreement signed to replace the old Lome system addressed the issue of good governance.

In 2000 EU development policy entered its third period which began with the revision of the old documentary basis of cooperation with the ACP. The new Cotonou agreement was signed in 2000. The Agreement is an example of an attempt to create a broad basis for EU-ACP relations which does not have trade preferences as the most accentuated principle. The Agreement continued the “partnership” ethos of its “predecessors” and also introduced a number of radical changes. First of all, the overall goal of development policy was clearly indicated in the Agreement: the eradication of poverty. This on the one hand was supposed to put an end to the competition of approaches advocated by some member states which brought elements of inconsistency and insufficient coordination into policy elaboration and realisation. Other goals of the agreement include: the promotion of economic, cultural and social

development of the ACP; the gradual integration of the ACP into the world economy; support for individual rights; the promotion of regional integration and the bolstering of civil society and gender issues (ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, 2000).

Article 2 refers to fundamental principles of the Agreement and another explicit “innovation”; these principles are the equality of the partners, ownership of the projects by the actors concerned and the definition by the ACP of their development strategies, the participation of non-state actors and the pivotal role of dialogue and differentiation and regionalisation (Dearden, 2008, 2005). Focus on participation of “civil society in all its forms” appears as the second distinctive feature of the Agreement. In other words, the Cotonou Agreement stressed the importance of the “involvement” of different actors in the realisation of measures supported by the EU. The range of actors is wide enough: governments themselves, local and regional actors and, as was mentioned above, non-state actors.⁹ An emphasis on the inclusion of non-state actors indicates that the EU was making attempts to go along with general trends in the world of development activities and initiatives taken by other donors. For the first time in almost half a century the EU official accepted that EU development policy was rarely carried out in accordance with other international initiatives. Although EU officials had some regrets that the Community frequently passed the initiative to the US and, thus failed to shape international development policy, the EU was making its development policy in tune with well-know schemes elaborated by international donors.

It goes without saying that issues of trade still occupy an important space in the Agreement which makes EU development policy still closely related to its trade policy. The “innovations” in this realm brought up by the Agreement are significant. Firstly, the EU chose an approach of “full conformity with the WTO rules” (Hadfield, 2007; Hilpold, 207). Secondly, the Agreement introduced some diversification in dealing with recipient countries; henceforth the EU initiated “positive” discrimination towards recipients. Recipient countries were divided into groups of “Less Developed Countries” and the “Least Developed Countries”, which should receive different treatment in terms of trade preferences and other benefits (like duty free access for almost all products from this group of countries). Moreover, according to new rules Economic Partnership Agreements are to be negotiated between the EU and groups of countries. This went

⁹ The fact that the EU stressed the importance of non-state actors’ participation can not be seen as a characteristic of the “unique” EU approach. International donors turned to civil society and NGOs as vehicles of aid delivery when it became obvious that governments of recipient countries neglected the interests of their populations when dealing with aid distribution. The “Rediscovery” of NGOs as more reliable channels of aid delivery occurred in the course of a search for alternative, more efficient ways of aid provision.

along with claims in EU Agreements about regionalisation, as those groups of countries are supposed to be from the same region. To conclude, one can see an important transformation of Lome approaches to development cooperation with the ACP: old methods of treating recipients equally proved to be ineffective as almost none of them demonstrated any visible success in terms of development.

At the same time trade and economic cooperation are not the only items in the Agreement and are supplemented by issues of social dialogue, migration, environment and, what is the distinctive feature of the Agreement, political issues. The famous Article 9 identifies issues of primary concern for the EU - human rights, democracy and the rule of law – and invites ACP countries to participate in dialogue on these issues.

However, the Agreement indicates that EU development policy underwent another important change: “securitisation”. By the time the EU modified its development policy with regard to issues of security, international donors had already been developing a sort of holistic approach to aid, linking good governance, security and economic development for over a decade (Raffer, 1999; Arts and Dickson, 2004; Hurt, 2005; Brown, 204).¹⁰ A security dimension was added to traditional concepts of economic growth and good governance and became a long and short-run perspective goal. Development became linked to the extent of political stability because developing countries demonstrated an absolute incapability to maintain their states which led to the appearance of “failed states” threatening security on a global scale. In this respect, underdevelopment became the root and cause of insecurity and uncertainty with which each member of the international community is supposed to cope.

References to security are made through several provisions in the Cotonou Agreement and were directly linked to the conditions of aid provision. The Agreement contains provisions about the so-called “political dialogue” and consultations (neither of these mechanisms was mentioned in any of the Lome Conventions). According to Article 8, **“the Parties shall regularly engage in a comprehensive, balanced and deep political dialogue leading to commitments on both sides”** (ACP-EC Partnership

¹⁰ One root of “securitisation” can be found in a new understanding and vision of poverty. Poverty and its eradication has become a core issue in development in the 1970-s, as was mentioned above. The 1990-s flag up important changes in poverty discourse development. The whole industry of development has moved from understanding poverty and, consequently, development from the perspective of the basic needs to be satisfied, to seeing poverty as casually linked to security. The interpretation of poverty was broadened and began to encompass not only the lack of financial resources or income but also social inclusion, lack of information, exclusion from political and economical participation, no access to education, health etc. Moreover, poverty was linked to security by stating that it creates conflicts and is the main root of conflicts. This provided a direct link between development and security: by providing assistance for development donors contribute to peace and security. The EU document **“The European Community’s Development Policy: Statement by the Council and the Commission”** is the best example of the incorporation of this approach.

Agreement, 2000). The Agreement states that “political dialogue’ between the EU and the ACP should, **“contribute to peace, security and stability and promote a stable and democratic political environment”** (ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, 2000). Failure of the recipient countries to advance in either dialogue or consultations or failure to make sure no violations of human rights are taking place may lead to the full suspension of aid. Thus, the Agreement clearly states that, first, aid depends on recipient countries’ performance from the perspective of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and, second, that it is linked to security and stability.

Another reference to security can be found in Article 11 which mentions that **“peace-building policies, conflict prevention and resolution”** are important aspects of EU-ACP relations (ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, 2000). This field of EU concern was afforded considerable attention and “direct and indirect” initiatives were introduced to cope with conflicts and threats to security in recipient countries. These measures indicate that EU development policy was going through significant expansion. Direct initiatives include, first of all, humanitarian aid and measures aimed at conflict resolution. The accent on humanitarian assistance as an essential component of EU development policy was so clear and strong that in 2004 the European Community Humanitarian Office was granted the status of an independent Directorate General within the Commission. Direct initiatives also include various early warning and action measures with the Commission involved in close constant monitoring of situations in recipient countries. Indirect initiatives, in their turn, include further accent of conflict prevention objectives in other programs dealing with development. They focus on the acknowledgement that development programs should integrate security concerns and be designed so that they promote security not undermine it.

Thus, development policy was given several new dimensions; its ultimate goals now comprise not only economic growth but also the promotion of peace, stability and security. The Cotonou Agreement shows that in the post-Cold War period EU interests in the ACP are to an increasing extent tied to different security concerns since recipient countries are seen as a potential security threat to the EU. As Hadfield and Olsen note, this involvement of the EU in the sphere of security confirms that the EU can no longer be seen as a donor only but rather, the term “actor” is the most appropriate when describing the EU’s activity in this sphere (Hanfield, 2007; Olsen, 2005).

Another essential innovation of the Agreement, which is directly related to how principles of conditionality are going to be applied, is the renewed principle of aid

management or, in other words, the technical mechanism of aid provision. The Agreement introduces a new system wherein EU funds are not allocated automatically but through the assessment of the beneficiaries' performance. The main principle is that the beneficiaries, jointly with the EU, elaborate a set of performance indicators used to assess what amount of aid the EU should and will (or will not, in the case of poor performance or violation of the agreed principles) provide. These indicators along with risks and other relevant factors are set out in the so-called Country Strategy Papers¹¹, the main documents prepared jointly by recipient countries and the EU and aimed at the determination of aid volume. That EU development policy was severely "securitised" proves the fact that a set of indicators defining "risks to security" occupy an important part of Country Strategy Papers. In other words, the Agreement introduces a quality management system where aid is tied to the overall performance of beneficiaries.

As goals of the Agreement assume, the EU underlined the importance of recipient countries' participation both in defining the priorities of aid and ways of its application, besides delivering aid in accordance with Country Strategy Papers elaborated together with recipient governments. In other words, the EU declared it would depart from the practice when the Commission itself decides to whom to give, what to give and how much to give. There was a clear attempt to include recipient countries in the process of aid calculation and the determination of priorities.

The EU also enhanced the effectiveness of management by means of a series of institutional reforms aimed at aid management improvement. First of all, the Commission transferred considerable power to its Delegations in recipient countries which was a decision aimed at decentralisation and, thus, enhancement of effectiveness. Secondly, to secure the effectiveness of aid management in terms of implementing development programs, a special, independent executing agency was created - EuropeAid. This agency was supposed to become the single body for policy implementation and management of development programs. Other institutional "reshuffles" included successful attempts to separate trade and development when trade-related issues of EU-ACP relations were transferred to DG Trade and a final split in obligations and authority between DG RELEX and DG Development. These changes along with a general strengthening of the role of the Commission in terms of increased competence brought more coherence and resulted in the enhancement of the

¹¹ Each Country Strategy Paper (CSP) is drafted during negotiations between the European Commission and the concerned country's government and thereafter signed by both parties. It provides a framework for European Commission assistance programs under the Cotonou Agreement for periods of five years.

Community as a coordinator of development policy and were aimed, as some scholars note, at more clearly defined common European interests in this realm (Orbie and Versulys, 2008).

Within a short period, EU development policy changed a lot. Firstly, development policy acquired the status of an independent policy field within the competence of the Union and the issue in which the EU exclusively specialises. The Union was given authority to coordinate member states' policies with regard to aid delivery which was aimed at putting the end to the imbalance and poor coherence of developmental effort across the EU.

The reform initiated at the end of the 1990-s, on the other hand, strengthened EU development policy in terms of internal management and administration, having added new instruments of aid delivery and decentralised development policy by means of involving recipient governments and Delegations of the EU in aid management.

In addition, policy went through new rhetoric change and began to embrace issues of conflict prevention, security and democracy building as its essential components. Such an expansion is, on the one hand, a consequence of changes in the international understanding of development which is often described by the term "politicisation". Yet, on the other hand, scholars note that this indicates an EU desire to act more as a global actor. The latter is confirmed by the geographical expansion of EU development policy as the Union breaks with the past when only a tiny group of countries were the privileged recipients of EU aid.

Conclusions

The EU is pleased to report that its development aid accounts for 55% of all official development aid provided by all the donors. This makes the EU the largest donor in the world contributing the most to fostering development in developing countries. Indeed, the second half of the 20th century shows how quickly Europe turned from the biggest recipient after World War II into the most generous giver and, what is more important, into a successful promoter and modifier of development discourse. Although some critics note that the peak of interest in development discourse was reached during the Cold War when the developing world was a “hostage” in the hands of warring parties, in fact, one can also clearly see an increase of attention towards development assistance in the EU over the last decade. This is directly related to the creation of special “EU competence” and the EU’s attempts to position itself as an important international actor. Development policy, in the final sense, seems to be one of the most important and effective instruments for the achievement of this goal. Not only did EU development policy undergo a significant transformation from a mere “instrument” of trade and foreign policy to an independent “policy” but also, as some scholars note, it has become a means of EU identity construction on the international arena (Hadfield, 2008). However, it took the EU almost 50 years to traverse this path, during which development policy experienced a great impact from ideological perspectives, ideas and historical events.

Just as it is impossible to describe the process of European integration in terms of a single and linear dynamic, the process of the evolution of development policy has been multi-faceted, multi-speed and multi-dimensional. Different factors have been influential in both the emergence of EU development policy and its transformation and reorganisation. It emerged as the result of member states’ willingness to retain their control and influence over their former colonies and, at the same time, its emergence was conditioned by the purely economic incentives of EEC countries. The latter determined its close connectedness with EEC trade policy which for a long time was a locus both for development action and rhetoric about it.

Focus on trade and its relation with development constituted part of the international discourse around development which emphasized that development assistance is supposed to lead to improved economic performance in underdeveloped countries. Such a discourse, emerged, to some extent, thanks to the range of arguments

produced by the theory of modernisation, occupied almost of all the effort undertaken by the EEC and found its place in the main agreements that regulated EEC-developing countries relations. For quite a long time this made any attempts or discussions about delegating to the Community a separate authority in the field of development pointless. As a result, development policy was evolving along the lines that it was mostly seen as an integral part of trade policy with member states retaining quite significant power and independence in defining other goals of development assistance.

However, the state of affairs has never been static and step by step development policy acquired features of an independent policy area. International discourse about development as well as internal developments within the Community in the form of deepening integration and the coordination of national policies along with institutional developments in this sphere contributed to an expansion of development policy both in terms of geographical location and declared goals. By the late 1970-s, when the economic picture of development was “corrected” by such “amendments” as poverty reduction, gender, human rights and democracy (though pure economic goals, such as structural adjustment still remained among the most dominating ones) EEC development policy also went through some changes of its content and fundamentals though. Nevertheless, this occurred without any major changes in its status as a policy area or any modifications to its implementation.

Without a doubt the 1990-s are considered as the period when the EU added development policy competence to its portfolio, reserving for the Union the right to carry out independent development policy as well as to coordinate member states’ policies. The addition of the clause indicating that development policy is “community policy” was the first step in EU attempts to make itself recognised as an important actor in the field of development. Later it was supplemented by several important initiatives in the sphere of aid management, a renewed agreement basis of EU-developing countries relations and attempts to occupy a more significant place equally with other international donors. The scope of development policy was expanded geographically just as was the grounding for an active role of the EU in development assistance which began to embrace new arguments and justifications.

Yet, despite all the advancements in the field of policy coordination, complementarity and coherence and despite the EU’s increasing role as policy initiator, policy setter and regulator, it is still a question whether its role as provider of aid is becoming more significant.

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