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**THREE-TIER INTEGRATION AS AN OPTION
FOR FURTHER EU ENLARGEMENT:
THE CASE OF THE UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN**

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The article examines the opportunities for future EU enlargement through new formats based on the concept developed in the first half of the 1990s, which, however, acquires fresh spotlight under circumstances of crisis-plagued world and upheaval of Euro-skepticism. The study is focused on institutional evolution of the Barcelona Initiative leading to the gradual construction of the nowadays Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), a noticeable segment of the EU Neighborhood Policy. Modeled coeval to the Eastern Partnership (EaP), the UfM, providing room for acute cultural differences between members and thus being very different from the EaP, leaving out the Maastricht criterion, has accomplished some of the basic institutional tasks of integration in trade and civic society aspects. It seems that even within such an emulative framework the organization has evidenced similar effects to ordinary accession-driven processes.

Keywords: EU, integration, Union for the Mediterranean, UfM, three-tier integration, two-speed Europe, Barcelona Initiative, human development, spillover effect.

**ТРЕХСТУПЕНЧАТАЯ ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ КАК ВАРИАНТ
ДАЛЬНЕЙШЕГО РАСШИРЕНИЯ ЕС:
ПРИМЕР СОЮЗА ДЛЯ СРЕДИЗЕМНОМОРЬЯ**

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В статье исследуются возможности дальнейшего расширения Европейского Союза на основе концепции многоскоростной интеграции, разработанной в первой половине 1990-х гг. и вновь актуализированной в период глобальных кризисов, приведших к волне скептицизма в отношении перспектив ЕС. Основное внимание уделено так называемой Инициативе

Барселоны, инициировавшей институциональное строительство Союза для Средиземноморья, типологически схожего с Восточным Партнерством ЕС. Несмотря на очевидные и глубокие культурные различия между членами организации, а также её несопоставимость с Восточным Партнерством по глубине вовлечения в ЕС, даже оставляя за скобками Маастрихтские критерии, Союз для Средиземноморья продолжает выполнять основные институциональные функции интеграции в таких сферах, как развитие торговли и гражданского общества. Похоже, что даже в пределах такой эскизной конструкции, эта организация испытывает эффекты, напоминающие стандартные для европейской интеграции социально-политические явления.

Ключевые слова: ЕС, Союз для Средиземноморья, трёхступенчатая интеграция, Европа двух скоростей, инициатива Барселоны, человеческое развитие, эффект перелива.

Amidst widespread mores of Euro-scepticism and global pandemic paralysis it might still be worthy to look at how the European project transforms itself or plans its own redesign in the near future. Whatever might be the true reason for particularly France's sclerotic disenchantment with the enlargement eastwards, the spillover expansion continues to intensify through well-functioning bureaucratic mechanisms resourced by momentum and shared practical understanding of survival in the same boat. In this paper we intend to study how the notorious revived concept of EU two-tier integration evolves into three-tier integration. We will focus though upon the lesser-known platform, the *Union for the Mediterranean* (UfM), building upon the *Euro-Mediterranean Partnership* (Euromed), rather than outwards and in-built EU-centred organizations such as EaP, Nordic Council or the Three Seas Initiative, while all of them have received some acceleration recently.

The purpose of our study is to demonstrate UfM flexibility as an effective feature of possible new structures to arise upon such broad platforms and to grasp the current limits of the EU regional and global reach. The above discussion proposal

might also serve as an argument in favour of the embryonic three-tier integration at least for countries eligible to join EU under Article 49 of the Treaty of Maastricht.

In fact, the two-tier integration or two-speed Europe is a fairly old idea.

In 1994 – still at a time of the EU12 – the German Christian Democrats Wolfgang Schäuble and Karl Lamers published a document in which they called for a Kerneuropa (core Europe). This idea envisaged that “core Europe” would have a “centripetal effect”, a magnetic attraction for the rest of Europe [7]. A precursor to that concept had been a proposal by two advisors to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Michael Mertes and Norbert J. Prill, published as early as July 1989. Mertes and Prill called for a concentric circles Europe, built around a federal core consisting of the EU6 and like-minded EU member states. In 1994 they partly revoked their original idea, arguing that the post-Cold War EU would rather look like a “Europe of Olympic rings” than a “Europe of concentric circles” [8]. In late 2010s the understanding of the Union further development, notably with concern to the enlargement, has started to change again.

Two-speed Europe is the idea that different parts of the European Union should integrate at different levels and pace depending on the political situation in each individual country. Indeed, multi-speed Europe is currently a reality, with only a subset of EU countries being members of the euro zone and of the Schengen area. Like other forms of differentiated integration the idea arguably aims to salvage the “widening and deepening of the European Union” in the face of stark political opposition.

Despite the credible France-provoked flop (or, conceivably, a stretch) with the accession of North Macedonia and Albania, the two or more tiers (i.e. multitier) integration, specifically with regard to enlargement can prove optimal. The apparent partial success, despite external political impediments, of the EaP as a Brussels-centred outward branch of quasi-enlargement at least with concern to Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova (with continued Transatlantic support for NATO entry in the first two country cases) invites query for other examples of what can be called ‘three-tier’ integration. One of them is the UfM, also known as Euromed or Barcelona

Process. The attention to the UfM is being drawn due to its survival both through the Arab Spring and its consequences and the Euro-sceptic tidal wave in the EU itself.

Let us therefore look closer at the UfM retrospective development.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, also known as the Barcelona Process, was created in 1995 as a result of the Conference of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November under the Spanish presidency of the EU. The founding act of the Partnership in 1995 and Final Declaration of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference is called the Barcelona Declaration [1], which is often used to refer to the Process itself. The Partnership culminated in a series of attempts by European countries to articulate their relations with their North African and Middle Eastern neighbours': the global Mediterranean policy (1972-1992) and the renovated Mediterranean policy (1992-1995). It is notable, that Javier Solana opened the historic conference by saying that they were brought together to straighten out the "clash of civilizations" [2, p. 207] (a theory introduced by Samuel Huntington in 1993) and misunderstandings that there had been between them, and that it was auspicious that they had convened on the 900th anniversary of the First Crusade. He described the conference as a process to foster cultural and economic unity in the Mediterranean region. The Barcelona Treaty was drawn up by the 27 countries in attendance, and Solana, who represented Spain as its foreign minister during the country's turn at the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, was credited with the diplomatic accomplishment.

According to the 1995 Barcelona Declaration, the aim of the initiative was summed up as: "turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity" [1]. The Declaration established the three main objectives of the Partnership, called "baskets" (i.e., strands or facets). Symptomatically, these baskets remind of both pillars of EU common policies and the areas of cooperation within association agreements of the future EaP.

The first aim is the definition of a common area of peace and stability through the reinforcement of political and security dialogue (or Political and Security Basket).

The second aim is the construction of a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free-trade area (or Economic and Financial Basket).

And the third aim is rapprochement between peoples through a social, cultural and human partnership aimed at encouraging understanding between cultures [10] and exchanges between civil societies (or Social, Cultural and Human Basket, almost complete analogue of People-to-People track within Neighbourhood Policy and later, the EaP).

Also, the distant economic goal of Euromed/Barcelona Process was the Euro-Mediterranean free trade area (EU-MEFTA) is based on the Barcelona Process and European Neighbourhood Policy. The Agadir Agreement of 2004 is seen as its first building block – and we will come back to that document later in our paper. Much of the same worked for three countries of the EaP, which succeeded in concluding Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area treaties with the European Union.

Since 2004 the Mediterranean Partners are also included in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and since 2007 are funded via the ENPI, the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument. The multilateral dimension supports and complements the bilateral actions and dialogue taking place under the Association Agreements which should be looked at as a key junction between the UfM and the EU while countries operating such agreements play the dispatchers' roles.

Over years the process has been often declared ineffective. The stalling of the Middle East Peace Process [9] is having an impact on the Barcelona Process and is hindering progress especially in the first basket. However, the economic basket can be considered a success, and there have been more projects for the exchange on a cultural level and between the peoples in the riparian states. Other criticism is mainly based on the predominant role the European Union is playing. Normally it is the EU, that is assessing the state of affairs, which leads to the impression that the North is dictating the South what to do. The question of an enhanced co-ownership of the process has repeatedly been brought up over the last years.

Bishara Khader argues that this ambitious European project towards its Mediterranean neighbours has to be understood in a context of optimism. On the one hand, the European Community was undergoing important changes due to the reunification of Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the beginning of the accession negotiations of Eastern and Central European countries. On the other, the Arab-Israeli conflict appeared to be getting closer to achieving peace after the Madrid Conference (1991) and the Oslo Accords (1992). As well, Khader states that the Gulf War of 1991, the Algerian crisis (from 1992 onwards) and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism throughout the Arab world are also important factors in Europe's new relations with the Mediterranean countries based on security concerns [3, p. 23-24].

Given these circumstances, even politicians that had been engaged with the Barcelona Process since its very beginnings, like the Spanish politician Josep Borrell, who is now leading the EU foreign and security policy, expressed their disappointment about the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and its incapacity to deliver results. Eloquenty, critiques from Southern Mediterranean countries blamed the Partnership's failure on Europe's lack of interest towards the Mediterranean in favour of its Eastern neighbourhood, whereas experts from the North accused Southern countries of only being interested on "their own bi-lateral relationship with the EU" while downplaying multilateral policies. However, many European Union diplomats have defended the validity of the Barcelona Process' framework by arguing that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was the only forum that gathered Israelis and Arabs on equal footing, and identifying as successes the Association Agreements, the Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism and the establishment of the *Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures*.

There has been a fairly long period in which France tried to play the leading role in this project and not unsuccessfully. The very proposal to establish a "Mediterranean Union", which would consist principally of Mediterranean states, was part of the election campaign of Nicolas Sarkozy, who saw the Mediterranean Union as modelled on the European Union with a shared judicial area and common

institutions. Sarkozy saw Turkish membership of the Mediterranean Union as an alternative to membership of the European Union, which he opposes [4], and as a forum for dialogue between Israel and its Arab Neighbours. Turkey, in its turn, has strongly opposed the idea and originally refused to attend the Paris conference until it was assured that membership of the Mediterranean Union was not being proposed as an alternative to membership of the EU. At the end of February of 2008, France's then minister for European affairs, Jean-Pierre Jouyet, stated that "there is no Mediterranean Union" but rather a "Union for the Mediterranean", that would only be "completing and enriching" to existing EU structures and policy in the region. At the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Affairs held in Marseilles in November 2008, the Ministers decided to shorten the initiative's name to simply the "Union for the Mediterranean".

Among the UfM most effective projects is its alternative energy track, or the *Mediterranean Solar Plan*. The goal of this project is to promote the production and use of renewable energies. More specifically, it aims at turning the Mediterranean partner countries into producers of solar energy and then circulating the resulting electricity through the Euro-Mediterranean region. Another effective cooperation line is higher education and research, primarily the Euro-Mediterranean University. In June 2008 the Euro-Mediterranean University of Slovenia was inaugurated in Piran (Slovenia), which offers graduate studies programs. The Foreign Ministers gathered at Marseilles in 2008 also called for the creation of another Euro-Mediterranean University in Fes, Morocco. One could evaluate the above development as a reflection of a so-called spillover effect, which we will address later in this work, as being crucial development tool employed particularly within European integration process and especially as a component of enlargement.

Having been slowed down by the financial and political situation in 2009, the UfM was given a decisive push in March 2010 with the conclusion of the negotiations on the set-up of its General Secretariat and the official inauguration of the same on 4 March 2010 in Barcelona, in the specially refurbished Palau de Pedralbes.

On 22 June 2011 the UfM labelled its first project, the creation of a seawater desalination plant in Gaza. In 2012 the UfM had a total of 13 projects labelled by the 43 countries in the sectorial areas of transport, education, water and development companies. In 2013, the Union for the Mediterranean launches its first projects [13]. Also, between 2013 and 2018, thirteen sectorial ministerial meetings took place in presence of the ministers of the UfM Member States.

In 2015 the UfM had a total of 37 labelled projects, 19 of which were in the implementation phase (AP2). On 18 November 2015, the review of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), published by the European External Action Service and the Commission and confirmed by the European Council ON 14 December, positions the UfM as a driving force for integration and regional cooperation.

On 14 December 2015 the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution A/70/124 granting observer status to the Union for the Mediterranean [11].

In February 2016, the UfM-labeled project “Skills for Success” successfully ended its training activities in Jordan and Morocco with high percentages of job placements. The job placement percentage among the total number of job seekers in Jordan and Morocco (115 graduates) is estimated at 49% and 6% of the participants were placed in internships.

On 18-19 July 2016 the UfM actively participated to the MedCOP Climate 2016, as institutional partner of the Tangier region. MedCOP Climate 2016 provided a forum to present various initiatives and projects supported by the UfM that are helping to formulate a Mediterranean climate agenda, such as the creation of a Mediterranean network of young people working on climate issues; the Regional Committee for Cooperation on Climate Finance, to make funding for climate projects in the region more efficient; and the launch of the UfM Energy University by Schneider Electric.

On 10-11 October 2016 the UfM Secretariat organized in Barcelona the Third High-Level Conference on Women Empowerment, which followed the 2014 and 2015 editions and in preparation of the Fourth UfM Ministerial Conference on

Strengthening the Role of Women in Society, due to take place late 2017. The Conference provided a regional dialogue forum where the 250 participants from more than 30 countries stressed the need to invest in the essential contribution of women as a response to the current Mediterranean challenges. A report was prepared following the request formulated by the *UfM Paris Ministerial declaration on strengthening the role of women in society*. The request was “to establish an effective follow-up mechanism as a Euro-Mediterranean forum and to ensure an effective dialogue on women-related policies, legislation and implementation” [14].

On 1 November 2016 the UfM officially launched the “Integrated programme for the protection of Lake Bizerte against pollution” in Bizerte, Tunisia. The event was held in the presence of Youssef Chahed – Head of Tunisia Government, Federica Mogherini – High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, and Fathallah Sijilmassi – Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean. With a total budget of more than €90 million over a 5-year period, the program should contribute towards cleaning up Lake Bizerte in northern Tunisia, improving the living conditions of the surrounding populations and reducing the main sources of pollution impacting the entire Mediterranean Sea. The project is supported by international financing institutions, such as the European Investment Bank and the European Commission, as well as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. On 22 February 2017 the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) signed a €6.5 million multi annual financial agreement to support UfM activities in favour of a more sustainable and inclusive development in the region.

In 2017, 51 regional cooperation projects, worth over €5.3 billion, have been accorded the UfM label, through the unanimous support of the 43 Member States. Implementation of the projects is accelerating and is producing positive results on the ground.

On 29 November 2017, the UfM Regional Stakeholder Conference on the Blue Economy, brought together over 400 key stakeholders dealing with marine and

maritime issues from the entire region, including government representatives, regional and local authorities, international organizations, academia, the private sector and civil society.

The third Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Regional Forum was held in Barcelona on 8 October 2018 under the title “10 years: Building together the future of regional cooperation” [12]. Consolidated as the annual gathering of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of UfM Member States, the Forum provided the occasion to draw up a state-of-play of regional cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean area and its prospects, as well as to spotlight where the UfM needs to redouble its efforts to meet current and future challenges. Ministers took stock of the implementation of the UfM Roadmap endorsed a year ago and committed to amplifying the impetus given to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. This third edition of the Regional Forum was chaired by the UfM Co-Presidency, assumed by Federica Mogherini – EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, and Ayman Safadi – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jordan, and hosted by Josep Borrell – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain and Nasser Kamel – the UfM Secretary General.

The main added value of the UfM lies in the interrelation created between the policy dimension and its operational translation into concrete projects on the ground, which in return nourishes the definition of relevant policies through a multi-stakeholder approach. The adoption of projects on the ground follows the principle of “variable geometry”, providing a degree of flexibility by which a smaller number of countries may decide, with the approval of all, to cooperate and participate in projects of common interest.

With the purpose of guaranteeing the co-ownership of the Union for the Mediterranean, the Heads of State and Government decided in Paris that two countries, one from the EU and one from the Mediterranean partner countries, will jointly preside the Union for the Mediterranean. The 27 agreed that the EU co-presidency had to be compatible with the external representation of the European

Union in accordance with the Treaty provisions in force. The Mediterranean partner countries decided to choose by consensus and among them a country to hold the co-presidency for a non-renewable period of two years. In June 2018 Egyptian Ambassador Nasser Kamel took office as Secretary General of the UfM, bringing more, than three decades of experience in Euro-Mediterranean relations to the role. In 2017 the secretariat of the UfM has a staff of 60 persons from more than 20 nationalities, including the permanent presence of senior officials seconded from the European Commission, the EIB and CDC.

Another instrument of UfM activities is the *Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures*, with headquarters in Alexandria, Egypt, which has been established in April 2005. It is a network for the civil society organizations of the Euro-Mediterranean countries, aiming at the promotion of intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. At the Paris Summit it was agreed that the *Anna Lindh Foundation*, along with the UN Alliance of Civilizations will be in charge of the cultural dimension of the Union for the Mediterranean [6].

The Paris Declaration states that contributions for the Union for the Mediterranean will have to develop the capacity to attract funding from the private sector participation; contributions from the EU budget and all partners; contributions from other countries, international financial institutions and regional entities; the Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership Facility (FEMIP); the ENPI”, among other possible instruments . The European Commission contributes to the Union for the Mediterranean through the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI). In July 2009 the ENPI allocated €72 million for the following Union for the Mediterranean projects during 2009-2010: de-pollution of the Mediterranean (€22 million); maritime and land highways (€7.5 million); the Mediterranean Solar Plan (€5 million); and the Euro-Mediterranean University of Slovenia (€1 million).

Afterwards, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) came into force in 2014. It is the financial arm of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU's foreign policy towards its neighbours to the East and to the South. It has a budget of €15.4 billion and will provide the bulk of funding through a number of programmes. The

ENI, effective from 2014 to 2020, replaces the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument – known as the ENPI.

The European Investment Bank contributes to the Union for the Mediterranean through its Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP). Specifically, the FEMIP was mandated by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Finance in 2008 to support three of the six concrete projects: the de-pollution of the Mediterranean; alternative energies; and maritime and land highways. Following the June 2012 meeting the EIB announced it would give €500 million to support projects for the UfM.

The *InfraMed Infrastructure Fund* was established in June 2010 by five financial entities: the French “Caisse des Dépôts”, the Moroccan “Caisse de Dépôts et de Gestion”, the Egyptian “EFG Hermes”, the Italian “Cassa Depositi e Prestiti” and the European Investment Bank. On an initial phase, the Fund will contribute €385 million to the Secretariat’s projects on infrastructure. The World Bank has allocated \$750 million for the renewable energy project through the *Clean Technology Fund*. Such a conglomerate effectively provides for the development of the spillover effect.

In economics a spillover is an economic event in one context that occurs because of something else in a seemingly unrelated context [5]. For example, externalities of economic activity are non-monetary spillover effects upon non-participants. Odors from a rendering plant are negative spillover effects upon its neighbours; the beauty of a homeowner's flower garden is a positive spillover effect upon neighbours. That has apparently worked for EaP EU-neighbouring areas for Ukraine and Moldova and provides hope of benefits for UfM countries, engaged into interaction with the EU.

In the same way, the economic gains of increased trade are the spillover effects anticipated in the formation of multilateral alliances of many of the regional nation states: e.g. SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation), ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations).

In an economy in which some markets fail to clear, such failure can influence the demand or supply behaviour of affected participants in other markets, causing

their effective demand or effective supply to differ from their notional (unconstrained) demand or supply.

Another kind of spillover is generated by information. For example, when more information about someone generates more information about people related to her, and that information helps to eliminate asymmetries in information, then the spillover effects are positive (this issue has been found constantly in the economics and finance literature, see for instance the case of local banking markets).

Knowledge spillover is an exchange of ideas among individuals. In knowledge management economics, knowledge spillovers are non-rival knowledge market costs incurred by a party not agreeing to assume the costs that has a spillover effect of stimulating technological improvements in a neighbour through one's own innovation. Such innovations often come from specialization within an industry.

It seems like both types of the spillover effect are at least emulated within the UfM institutional evolution framework, updated to withstand cooperation challenges of today.

That's why at this point we return to the discussion of the Agadir Agreement (AA) as a demonstration of a working spillover effect within the UfM project through the multitier integration and despite current global crisis. The Agreement was signed in the city of Rabat on 25 February, 2004 between Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. The agreement entered into force on the 6th of July 2006 after completing the ratification requirements. The implementation became possible since March 2007, after the publishing of customs circulars of the four member countries.

This is a market of more than 120 million people with a combined domestic product of nearly € 200 billion, which has established a free trade area in accordance with the provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade of 1994 (GATT). The Agadir Agreement coordinates overall and sectorial economic policies in the Member Countries, in particular foreign trade, agriculture, industry, the tax regime, finance, services and customs (this sector is under development and has to be in accordance with the provisions of the WTO), to ensure conditions for objective competition between members. The AA is in harmony with Arab league charter in

supporting mutual Arab cooperation and moving in implementing Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) and contributing to the objectives of Barcelona Process envisioning the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area [15].

In accordance with the principles and requirements of the world trade organization (WTO) in which the four countries are members. Partially like in the EaP, the AA opened for Arab Mediterranean Countries accession under two conditions, this being the Association Agreement with EU and the membership in the Arab League. Extraordinarily, the AA has manifested the ability to expand its membership in troubled spring of 2020. On March 4, 2020 the meeting, which the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates called for, was devoted to signing the documents related to the accession of the Lebanese Republic and the State of Palestine to the Agadir Agreement. This event marks the culmination of the strong political commitment of the Agadir Member States, the Agadir Technical Unit and the European Union to expand the Agadir Agreement geographically. It also represents an important step towards the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area, which is associated with the Barcelona Declaration. This accession will enable the Republic of Lebanon and the State of Palestine to benefit from the competitive advantages offered by the Agadir Agreement, especially the accumulation of origin principle between the Member States and the European Union, as well as many protocols and memoranda of understanding signed between Member States, especially in the areas of customs cooperation. It also offers new opportunities for economic operators in the six countries to develop their intra-trade exchanges and enhance opportunities for industrial integration and access of their products to the European market.

With the regard to all narrative above we are now able to formulate conclusions.

First, while the two-tier Europe could look as an outdated idea, it has apparently acquired second chance after recent adversities such as the migration crisis, the Brexit and the pandemic. Moreover, as the two tiers are rather an intra-

Union algorithm, the third tier is obviously the modernized Neighbourhood Policy with the Association Agreements as its highest stage to date.

Second, the enlargement is slowly changing its formats to involve nations with different degrees of political integrity, cultural homogeneity and socioeconomic development. The Union for the Mediterranean is a comfortable case to look at in this respect as both preceding the Eastern Partnership and eventually synchronized with it.

And third, the UfM institutional evolution has not only proved to be confident and sustainable through misfortunes of various external shocks and complexities of the Middle East peace process, but has also demonstrated the spillover effect characteristic of regular European integration routine and co-development, even more so in times of global impasse.

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