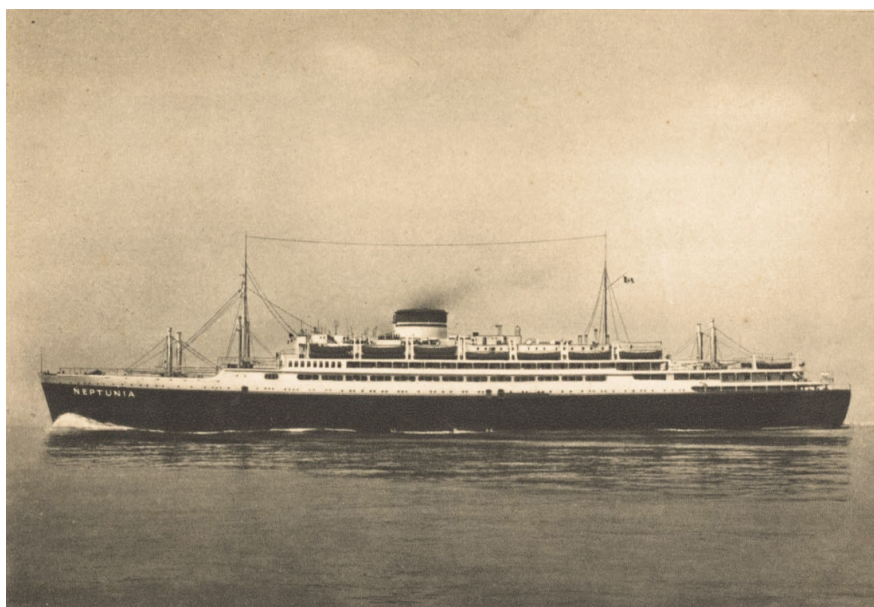


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THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE EGYPTIAN NEIGHBOUR: ASSESSING THE CHARACTERIZATION OF RESILIENCE AS AN EXTERNAL ACTION PRIORITY

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I- INTRODUCTION. II- METHODOLOGY. III- LITERATURE REVIEW. IV-RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS: RESILIENCE IN THE ACTION PROGRAMMES. V- A BROADER VIEW: BILATERAL ARMS SALES AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY. VI- RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EU RESILIENCE STRATEGY. VII-BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES.

ABSTRACT: The concept of resilience acquired academic momentum and pervaded a growing number of crosscutting disciplines along the second half of the twentieth century. Drawing on its epistemological flexibility, its implicit redefinition of agency and the inclusion of the parameters of uncertainty and the inevitability of crisis in its very core, it did not take long until the fields of International Relations and foreign policy-making paid thorough attention to its potential outreach and operationalization. Nor is it surprising that the European Union, imbued in a comprehensive review of its external strategy's flaws and shortages, embraced the term as a means to underpin the paradigmatic bridge laid by the guidance of principled pragmatism. Yet, resilience-fostering can point at states or societies, and the authoritarian nature of Egypt's regime compels to prioritize the latter, in accordance to EU's democratic stance. The current paper will offer a brief review of EU foreign-policy approaches vis-à-vis Egypt, an European Neighbourhood Policy/Instrument walkthrough and it will aim at putting in quantitative terms what kind of resilience is the Union placing at the forefront. To conclude, a series of recommendations will be formulated for EU resilience strategy.

KEYWORDS: state/societal resilience, ENP, MENA, stability-democracy dilemma, authoritarianism, civil society, policy outputs, Annual Action Programmes.

LA UNIÓN EUROPEA Y EL VECINO EGIPCIO: EVALUANDO LA CARACTERIZACIÓN DE LA RESILIENCIA COMO PRIORIDAD DE ACCIÓN EXTERIOR

RESUMEN: El concepto de resiliencia captó el interés de la academia y penetró en un número progresivo y transversal de disciplinas a lo largo de la segunda mitad del siglo XX. Apoyándose sobre la flexibilidad epistemológica, la redefinición implícita de la agencia y la inclusión de los parámetros de incertidumbre e inevitabilidad de la crisis en su seno, las áreas de Relaciones Inter-

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nacionales y diseño de política exterior no tardaron en posar su atención sobre su alcance y operacionalización. Tampoco es de extrañar que la Unión Europea, imbuida en una revisión integral de los defectos y carestías de su estrategia exterior, acogiera el término con afán de apuntalar el puente paradigmático que tiende el llamado pragmatismo con principios. Ahora bien, la promoción de la resiliencia puede apuntar a los estados o a las sociedades, y en este sentido, de acuerdo con la lógica pro-democrática de la UE, la naturaleza autoritaria del régimen de Egipto exigiría una priorización de aquella segunda dimensión. Este artículo pretende ofrecer un repaso ligero de los enfoques de política exterior de la Unión vis-à-vis Egipto, una guía a lo largo de la Política (o Instrumento) Europea de Vecindad, y procurará resolver en términos cuantitativos qué tipo de resiliencia sitúa la Unión en primera línea. A modo de conclusión, se ordenará una serie de recomendaciones para la estrategia de resiliencia de la UE.

PALABRAS CLAVE: resiliencia estatal/social, PEV, MENA, dilema estabilidad-democracia, autoritarismo, sociedad civil, productos de política, Programas de Acción Anual.

L'UNION EUROPÉENNE ET LE VOISIN ÉGYPTIEN: ÉVALUER LA CARACTÉRISATION DE LA RÉSILIENCE EN TANT QUE PRIORITÉ DE L'ACTION EXTÉRIEURE

RESUME: Le concept de résilience a acquis une dynamique académique et a imprégné un nombre de disciplines transversales le long de la seconde moitié du XXe siècle. S'appuyant sur son la flexibilité épistémologique, sa redéfinition implicite d'agence et l'inclusion des paramètres de l'incertitude et l'inévitabilité de la crise, les domaines des Relations Internationales et de la politique étrangère n'ont pas tardé à se concentrer sur son champ d'application et son opérationnalisation. Il n'est pas surprenant non plus que l'Union européenne, chargée d'un examen approfondi des défauts et des carences de sa stratégie étrangère, ait adopté ce terme dans le but de soutenir le pont paradigmatique que l'on appelle généralement pragmatisme avec principes. Pourtant, le renforcement de la résilience peut pointer vers des États ou des sociétés, et la nature autoritaire du régime égyptien oblige à donner la priorité à ces derniers, conformément à la position démocratique de l'UE.

Le présent document proposera un aperçu des approches dynamiques vis-à-vis de l'Égypte, une procédure pas à pas pour la politique européenne de voisinage et visera à mettre en termes quantitatifs le type de résilience que l'Union place au premier plan. Pour conclure, une série de recommandations sera formulée pour la stratégie de résilience de l'UE.

MOTS-CLÉS: résilience étatique/sociale, PEV, MENA, dilemme stabilité-démocratie, autoritarisme, société civile, résultats politiques, Programmes d'Action Annuels.

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2016, the EU Global Strategy (EUGS), signed by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and drafted by her close advisor Nathalie Tocci, seated the strategic priority of resilience at the core of EU foreign policy, notwithstanding it had already been introduced as a purposeful tenet in the 2015 Reviewed European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Feeding on its first steps within psychology studies and its later transposition to the field of environmental policy, an overarching definition of resilience must comprise the basic elements introduced by Haris ALIBASIC,

who deems resilience as “the capacity and ability of organizational systems to recover from shocks and disasters and to continue to thrive during and after disasters”². The term ‘disaster’ can be easily replaced by that of ‘crisis’, leading to the EUGS’ formula: “the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises”³.

On one hand, this conceptualization falls in line with the challenging equilibrium between the reminder that stability is no substitute for sustainability –what EU circles could label, among different aspects, as ‘good governance’, or plain democracy- and the need to avoid preaching⁴, that is to say, while acknowledging the limits to EU policies on the ground. On the other, it poses a clear distinction, although not always readily applicable to the highly complex realities of MENA, between those potential recipients of the resilience-driven efforts: states and societies. And in a rhetorically subtle, yet informative way, the EUGS delineates where the ideal preference lies. Almost invariably at the centre of the community’s system of beliefs, whose relevance also derives from they being policy drivers and sources of credibility, authoritarian states are considered inherently fragile in the long term, while they can boost their resilience “when societies feel they are becoming better off and have hope in the future”⁵. Adding the assumption that major improvements demand a *home-grown* character to the resilience vocabulary, non-state actors or civil society would come to represent the preferential targets when addressing its neighbourhood.

Under this logic, democratic environments are better suited for absorbing the negative effects of a shocking event, hence authoritarian states, apart from being unstable and threatening long-term security, are less accountable in the advancement of human rights and democratisation, thus represent an obstacle to EU resilience by themselves. Andrea Dessì attempts to clarify EUGS provisions and supply with strategic guidance by concluding that ‘au-

² ALIBASIC, H., “Ethics of Resiliency in Crisis Management”, In A. FARAZMAND (ed.), *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy and Governance*, Springer International Publishing, 2018, pp. 1.

³ COUNCIL OF THE EU, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the EU’s Foreign and Security Policy*, 2016, p.23.

⁴ TOCCI, N., *Framing the EU Global Strategy*. Rome, Italy: Springer International Publishing, 2017.

⁵ COUNCIL OF THE EU, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe... cit.*, p. 25.

thoritarian resilience', despite embodying the customary practice, would be a backlash for EU interests, therefore "greater resources and focus should be placed on the societal dimension"⁶.

The present research paper will try to answer, finding the channel for the bulk of the relations between the EU as a whole and Egypt in the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the question of: what kind of resilience is the EU prioritising vis-à-vis Egypt? State or society resilience?. In doing so, the author will frame his assessment in order to verify whether the European Union is prioritizing a state-resilience approach vis-à-vis Egypt, thus becoming our hypothetical statement.

II. METHODOLOGY

This case study will focus on the main instrument the European Union has for accomplishing its foreign policy objectives regarding Egypt, which, without undermining its own casuistry, depicts an exemplary partner for analysing and weighing the set of understandings and tools and their underlying concerns that we may find within the context of the so called Southern Neighbourhood, the territorial demarcation giving content to the EU's strategy towards the Middle East and North Africa. The time frame for the research will encompass the EU-Egypt Annual Action Programmes under the ENP since 2014, once Abdelfatah Al Sisi formally becomes President of the Republic and the political scene in Egypt enters a process of stabilisation, until the last Multiannual Programme that is expected to stretch its components until 2020. Through empirical research, and following OECD's recommendation to ensure the quantitative nature⁷ when building policy output indicators, this paper will itemise the financial allocations for the array of projects within those programmes, classify the monetary units by the criteria of what kind of resilience are they attempting to target and conclude where the priority in EU decision-making lies.

⁶ DESSI, A., "Crisis and Breakdown: How Can the EU Foster Resilience in the Middle East and North Africa?", *LAI Working Papers*, n° 17, 2017, p.16. Retrieved from: <<https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/iaiw1737.pdf>>.

⁷ OECD, *Slovak Republic: Better Coordination for Better Policies, Services and Results*. Paris, France: OECD Publishing, 2015.

Together with legal documents portraying their bilateral cooperation, EU official websites content and EU institutions' releases, media documents, reports by experts and various types of academic works will provide the sources for conducting the current research. The first section, covering the literature review, will be divided in a number of subsections dealing briefly with the concept of resilience and its state and societal dimensions at the EU level; the evolution and main aspects of the ENP and ENI, particularly in their form in regards to Egypt; and the salient foreign policy approach to this country materialising the fault line between Maghreb and Mashreq, also paying attention to very specific issues at the domestic level that might help to explain EU behavioural patterns. Then the second section will offer the quantitative analysis of policy outputs around state and society resilience, observing and categorising amounts, stakeholders and recipients. In order to stress the potential discordances between rhetoric and practice, a short third section will comment upon two different mechanisms out of the Action Programmes that have the potential to foster respective kinds of resilience: Member States' arms sales to Egypt and the EC Civil Society Facility. Lastly, a series of recommendations for EU resilience strategy will be put in place.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. RESILIENCE IN THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL STRATEGY

The European Union strategic tenets and premises face a ream of potential and serious contradictions that, while offering a necessary dose of ambiguity for a wider room for manoeuvre, poses some difficulty in foreign policy design. For instance, it is asserted that “our enduring power of attraction can spur transformation in these countries”⁸, however, it is equally accepted that can only happen with those countries wishing to develop stronger relations with the EU. Here, the notion of principled pragmatism finds its adequate fit, stemming from “a realistic assessment of the strategic environment as from an idealistic aspiration to advance to a better world”⁹. In this sense, the components of the concept of resilience become the bridge for both pur-

⁸ COUNCIL OF THE EU, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe... cit.*, p. 9.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 16.

poses, being “an ingredient for stability, good governance and prosperity”¹⁰, although dropping the emphasis on democratisation of the neighbourhood¹¹.

The assiduously mentioned key principles for the unified foreign policy –differentiated approach, flexibility, tailor-made policies, endorsement of home-grown initiatives, greater local ownership– reverberate the perception of an international stage, specifically in MENA, characterised by a growing complexity, a rampant dynamism¹², where the EU counts with diminishing prospects for fulfilling its will and sees itself surrounded by an arc of instability¹³. All those tenets can be integrated into the logic of resilience, whose strength resides in its measured commitment and the acknowledgement of the own weaknesses and the existence of other worldviews. In sum, a fresh intake of *realpolitik*.

For its detractors, the novel concept implies “stability for authoritarian regimes and supporting reforms in the countries the governments of which are eager to accommodate them”¹⁴. For its advocates, it means drafting feasible goals and choosing a non-linear, long-term path through which neighbouring entities can build capacities for improvement and adaptation. The former stance may miss that a resilience-driven foreign policy decision entails qualifying “the resilience of whom (or what) and resilience to whom (or what)”¹⁵. In other words, EU external action towards its southern partners will have to deem the recipients’ state or –very often, and– societal character, “not only to prevent EU policy from inadvertently strengthening ‘authoritarian resilien-

¹⁰ DESSÍ, A., “Crisis and Breakdown: How Can the EU... cit.”, p. 4.

¹¹ GAHMARANOVA, A., “The Resilience Paradigm in the 2016 EU Global Strategy, the European Neighbourhood and Democratization”, *Around the Caspian*, 2018. Retrieved from: <<http://caspianet.eu/2018/11/29/the-resilience-paradigm-in-the-2016-eu-global-strategy-the-european-neighbourhood-and-democratisation/>>.

¹² SOLER I LECHA, E. and TOCCI, N., “Implications of the EU Global Strategy for the Middle East and North Africa”, *MENARA Future Notes*, N°1, 2016. Retrieved from: <<https://www.iai.it/en/publicazioni/implications-eu-global-strategy-middle-east-and-north-africa>>.

¹³ TOCCI, N., “The European Union in a changing global environment: a more connected, contested and complex world”, *EEAS Working Paper*, 2015.

¹⁴ GAHMARANOVA, A., “The Resilience Paradigm in the 2016... cit.”

¹⁵ COLOMBO, S. and NTOUSAS, V., “Introduction Framing Resilience: A New Pathway For EU-MENA Relations”, In S. COLOMBO, A. DESSÍ and V. NTOUSAS (eds.), *The EU, Resilience and the MENA region*, Brussels, Belgium: Foundation for European Progressive Studies and Istituto Affari Internazionali, 2017, pp.11-28.

ce', [...] but also in order to ensure that its policies are based on the largest possible pool of viewpoint and concerns"¹⁶, specially relevant in a region where security and economic problems find a great deal of association with deep crises of governance and the dividing line between both targets of resilience is often blurred. In addition, a source of containment for the Union's ambitions is to be found in the wariness these authoritarian regimes have in relation to the European commitment to the promotion of values and third actors and its indirect weakening effect upon the regimes' survival, leading to the rationale that, for the engagement to be somehow successful, its credibility as a reliable partner must remain rather intact.

Regarding state resilience, it will make reference to the capacity of the state¹⁷, that is to say, virtually every policy targeting the governmental institutions, administration, public firms and services. In contrast, society resilience will cover non-state actors, encompassing civil society, "cultural organisations, religious communities, social partners and human rights defenders"¹⁸, which could be further developed into student organisations, women's groups or worker unions.

2. EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY AND INSTRUMENT

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), launched in 1995, opened the window for the first modest steps in the institutionalization of EU-Egypt bilateral relations, as exemplified by the 2001 Association Agreement, still in effect. Yet, the scope for such a non-binding cooperation soon proved insufficient in the light of rapidly mounting changes that urged the EU to secure a broader leverage across the sea, and to the east to Central Asia: the media-called 'big bang' enlargement abruptly moved the external borders, posing emerging challenges amid potential instability spillovers and the unsteady dynamics stemming from fault lines separating political spaces vastly differentiated in socioeconomic and security terms; the changing geostrategic environment, namely the failure of the Middle East Peace Process, the 'War on Terror' and U.S. invasions in the region¹⁹; and the disappointing outcomes

¹⁶ DESSÍ, A., "Crisis and Breakdown: How Can the EU... cit.", p. 16.

¹⁷ COLOMBO, S. and NTOUSAS, V., "Introduction Framing Resilience... cit."

¹⁸ COUNCIL OF THE EU, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe... cit.*, p. 27.

¹⁹ STIVATCHIS, Y., "The EU and the Middle East: The European Neighbourhood Policy". In Y. STIVATCHIS (ed.), *Conflict and Diplomacy in the Middle East*, 2018, pp. 110-127, .

of the EMP framework, which did not prevent from growing domestic islamophobia and irregular migration.

For all the aforementioned, the year 2004 gave birth to the European Neighbourhood Policy and, in 2007, the first EU-Egypt Action Plan entered into force, coinciding with the implementation of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), “the main financial instrument to fund cooperation programmes with the Neighbourhood partner countries (and committing) 1€ billion for the period 2007-2013”²⁰ to Egypt. Four years later, the Arab uprisings and the subsequent excessive optimism led to the novelty of an incentive-based approach, the ‘*more for more*’ principle, “whereby efforts by partner countries were to be rewarded with additional financial and other support”²¹. In Egypt’s case, the debate around the drivers plunging, first Hosni Mubarak’s ouster and later Muhammad Morsi’s in 2013, still discusses the triggering effect of regional mobilisation networks and the role played by external sponsors as much as it cannot be fully grasped without stressing internal developments in place. For some, popular discontent primarily stemmed from a lack of social justice, economic opportunities and a proper administration beyond coercive and extractive means. Mubarak’s regime depicted a continuity with Perlmutter’s characterization of the ‘*praetorian state*’²². Morsi’s last months were plagued with service shortages and upward prices and unemployment, despite being democratically elected in rather free polls and championing a reformist Islamist agenda that, in principle, might be appealing for a conservative society like Egypt. Yet, critics in the opposition feared the President’s widening powers and, even if Islamization gathers supporters, those aspirations do not systematically equate to the Muslim Brotherhood²³. For others, the sudden opening of the political space reignited the competition among visions over the nature and role of the state that can be traced back to the irruption of modern governance and the abrogation of

²⁰ EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations: Egypt*, 2018.

²¹ EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE, *European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)*, 2016.

²² PERLMUTTER, A. “The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Politics”, *Comparative Politics*, vol. 1 (3), 1969, pp. 382-404.

²³ MCCARTHY, A. “Shari’a after Morsi: Egypt revolted against inept governance, not Islamic supremacism”, *National Review*, vol.65(14), 2013..

the Ottoman Caliphate. In Shadi Hamid's understanding, liberalism is only neutral for those who are already liberals²⁴, and the fact is democracy would not smoothly come hand-in-hand with the former. With lessening support abroad and intensifying protests at home, the army's coup d'état initiated a process of stabilisation, crashing the dissidence and restructuration of the state grip over the country. The European Union did not condemn the government's toppling, instead fixed its position to the return to the democratic process and the rejection of the use of violence²⁵.

In sum, under the '*more for more*' principle, turning out to be poorly reflected upon, the top-down mentality and 'one size fits all' motto towards political and economic reform did not manage to produce satisfactory results. The unexpected demographic movements seeking asylum in Europe evidenced the need for a new turn.

Learning from failure, a strategic shift calls for new labels. The 2015 Reviewed ENP and the ENI did not renounce to imbue a resemblance of the traditional *logic of appropriateness* –“the idea of the ‘good life’ that is grounded in the identity of a specific community”²⁶–, sticking to the conceptualization of the universal values as inherent EU interests, nonetheless, as explained before, a logic of consequences –“deliberate consideration of alternatives, assessment of their outcomes and preference-driven choices”²⁷– consolidated within the communitarian vocabulary. Stabilisation –suggesting state resilience– becomes the core driver. The joint priorities for cooperation under ENP maintain the goal of good governance and human rights but it will be framed by economic development and stabilisation, security and migration and mobility²⁸, the last two pointing at a heavy weight for governmental resilience, and only after conceiving a complementary role for civil society's

²⁴ HAMID, S., *Islamic Exceptionalism: How the struggle over Islam is reshaping the world*, St. Martin Press, New York, 2016.

²⁵ BBC, “World reaction to the ousting of Egypt's Mohammed Morsi”, *BBC News*, July 4, 2013.

²⁶ SJURSEN, H. and SMITH, K., Justifying EU foreign policy: the logics underpinning EU enlargement. In B. TORNA and T. CHRISTIANSEN (eds.), *Rethinking European Union foreign policy*, pp. 126-142, 2004, p.127.

²⁷ SCHULZ, M., “Logic of Consequences and Logic of Appropriateness”. In M. AUGIER and D. TEECE (eds.), *Palgrave Encyclopedia of Strategic Management*, 2014, pp. 1-17, p.2.

²⁸ EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *European Neighbourhood Policy: What is it?*, 2016.

involvement. On the ground, Arab non-state actors have also tended to perceive EU's stance as biased in favour of arbitrarily selected organisations, adding to an insufficient financial support, undue bureaucratic hurdles and very slow disbursement²⁹.

For the period 2014-2020, the ENI is expected to allocate over 15€ billion to the Neighbourhood³⁰. The bulk of it would be assumed to be channelled through the Annual Action Programmes, later replaced by the multiannual frameworks -since 2017-, which aim to provide cohesion and continuity to the concrete policies and facilitate their evaluation. According to the EC, out of that figure approximately 1€ billion corresponds to cooperation with Egypt³¹. Quite interestingly, as we will see, the numbers codified within the Action Programmes do not even get close to the former, suggesting that the Single Support Framework might not be that 'single' after all. Unfortunately, the review of those missing components falls out the scope of this research, coupled with the fact that some of them remain out of public disclosure.

3. EU APPROACH TO EGYPT

Whether digging into the bilateral agreements constituting the legal structure for their cooperation, assessment reports released by EU institutions or independent academic diagnosis, conclusions tend to converge to very similar findings and dilemmas, suggesting the general lines of the joint strategy vis-à-vis Egypt have consistently prevailed, in spite of an entirely new rhetorical repertoire and innovative outputs that proved lacking, or were silently withdrawn: the stability of now, rather than the one of tomorrow, pays worthy. The security-stability nexus requires a close engagement with the state, even if it implies overlooking the regime's behaviour or whether they have virtually fused in one, but Egypt's meaning for the EU has other bifurcations, yet mostly leading to the state. As commented on a policy paper requested by one of the parliamentary committees, Egypt implies "the need to preserve political stability of many authoritarian regimes because of their moderate foreign policy outlook, their strategic and geopolitical significance, their cooperation with many countries in fighting terrorism and limiting illegal migration, and because of the EU's need to secure energy routes from North

²⁹ STIVATCHIS, Y., "The EU and the Middle East: The European... cit."

³⁰ EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE, *European Neighbourhood Policy... cit.*

³¹ EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *European Neighbourhood Policy... cit.*

Africa and keep oil and gas prices stable”³². Beyond this, in line with the resilience priority, the Union has become aware of a previously unsuspected anchorage of the regional nation-states, as the litmus test brought about by the Arab uprisings was not followed by the Sykes-Picot map’s disruption, in fact, the initial weakening of their internal sovereignty has not been necessarily matched with the same levels of erosion at their external dimension³³, making it even more compelling to deal with the state structures struggling for survival, at the expense of a civil society clutter without enough prospects for success or trustworthiness.

The Partnership Priorities for 2017-2020 show the uneasy concessions the EU has to make to Sisi’s government in order to guard its security and economic concerns and try to advance a meaningful compliance in return. For example, the opening paragraphs underline a “shared commitment to the universal values of democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights”³⁴. The document refers to the sustainability of the economy and social development, strengthening their foreign policy ties, enhancing domestic stability, security, terrorism and migration management as the central pillars in the forthcoming years. To address these issues, the agreement systematically fingers at the public role, winks at the private sector participation in the economy, in accordance to the Union’s traditional business approach, and only in the end both parties confirm to agree in the involvement of civil society as a “potent contributor”³⁵.

The cosmetic changes in EU’s stance might not be relinquished to be just so if, without undermining the common geopolitical interests placed in Egypt and the specific reinforced importance for some Member States, as the former being the world’s third largest arms importer depicts³⁶, in the current internal context, it was not that difficult to “challenge the entrenched posi-

³² GHAFAR, A.A., “A stable Egypt for a stable region: Socio-economic challenges and prospects”, *EP Directorate-General for External Policies Policy Paper*, 2018, p.32.

³³ SOLER I LECHA, E., DEL SARTO, R. MALMVG, H., “Interregnum: The Regional Order in the Middle East and North Africa After 2011”, *MENARA Final Reports*, 1, 2019, p.13.

³⁴ COUNCIL OF THE EU, *Communication to the Delegations on the EU-Egypt Partnership Priorities 2017-2020*, 2017, p.1.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9

³⁶ MAGED, M., “SIPRI: Egypt occupies 3rd position among world’s 25 largest arms importers”, *Egypt Independent*, 2019.

tions by the Government”³⁷. Similarly to other MENA countries, state and regime are growingly interdependent, the public sector supplies the biggest percentage of employment, the army is the key to the government and the so called ‘Arab social contract’ has not preceded a feasible substitute. But a distinctive feature curbs out the opportunities to pursue society resilience under the ENP in Egypt: the recent and ongoing development of one of the most restrictive NGO laws in the world, the multilayered mechanisms for controlling financing and the pervasive penetration of third competitors. Enacted on 29th May 2017, the new ‘NGO law’ makes “human rights work virtually impossible”³⁸, the National Regulatory Agency monitors funds, goals, operations and recipients, opinion polls under supervision are banned and punitive measures are extremely severe. Moreover, international donors interested in Egypt and in securing the regime’s favour have heavily diversified during the last years. China, Russia, Turkey and the Gulf states have sidelined the North American and European leverages and fragmented the range of options for a government looking for the best bargain. While countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait have managed to direct around 12 billion USD right after the 2014 coup³⁹, EU’s contribution is way smaller, time-consuming in terms of gaining access and subjected to stronger scrutiny and demand for reform.

Regarding the ENP, and in particular towards Egypt, its present, more visible deficiencies do not differ vastly from those that can be equally traceable in the Common and Foreign Security Policy. The strategic bonds with a number of major Member States renders the Egyptian state to play them to compete against each other, collect the benefits and limit the scope for a common position. The insufficient consistency in EU outputs leads the organisation to usually appear to simply move from one crisis to the next one⁴⁰. However, there is no doubt at certain aspects, such as perceiving Egypt as a first line of defence against illegal migration. Indeed, all these contingent factors have an impact on the chances for prioritising what kind of resilience.

³⁷ GÓMEZ ISA, F., “EU Promotion of Deep Democracy in Egypt After the Arab Spring: A missed opportunity?”, *Revista Electrónica de Estudios Internacionales*, 33, 2017, p.27.

³⁸ MOONRISES, J. and ZENZI, M., “In Search of a More Efficient EU Approach to Human Rights: Civil Society and EU Strategies in Egypt”, *MedReset Working Papers*, 2018, p.10.

³⁹ GÓMEZ ISA, F., “EU Promotion of Deep Democracy in Egypt... cit”, p. 24.

⁴⁰ GHAFAR, A.A., “A stable Egypt for a stable... cit.”, p. 34.

IV. RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS: RESILIENCE IN THE ACTION PROGRAMMES

The current section of the research departs from the assumption that the Annual –and Multiannual- Action Programmes (AAPs) agreed between the European Union and Egypt in the bilateral cooperation structure embodied by the Association Council constitute the legal roadmaps enabling the effective implementation of the European Neighbourhood Instrument, at least of its main components. At the same time, a variety of complementary instruments, like the European Endowment for Democracy, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Sustainable Energy Finance Facility, are understood as operating tools thus they absorb a significant yet minor amount of the financial resources previewed for the ENP and ENI. This second array of institutionalized mechanisms falls out the scope of this research, arguing the EU-led calls for standardization and integration of the legal frameworks pertaining the cooperation strategy into unitary documents –ie. Single Support Frameworks, since 2014– would have led to a lesser atomization of the funds across projects. Nevertheless, when contrasting EU publicly available data at different levels, the discovery is quite surprising.

According to European Commission's official online content, the ENI mounted for Egypt total numbers of 115€ million in 2014, 105€ million in 2015, 100€ million in 2016, another 100€ million in 2017's AAP and an estimated allocation between 432€-528€ million for the period 2017-2020⁴¹. These statements genuinely contrast with the total amount of 272.4€ million for the period 2014-2020 that the current analysis sums by quantifying the financial resources codified within the same AAPs and their available annexes in the same EC's official website. This gaping figures suggest, on one hand, the complementary mechanisms for conducting the ENI might be more prominent than initially thought, on the other, a good deal of funds are not made publicly available.

In order to assess whether the EU prioritises state or society resilience in the Action Programmes with Egypt, the author has examined the following documents: AAP 2014; AAP 2015 –four annexes–; AAP 2016 (Part I) –two annexes–; APP 2016 (Part II) and APP 2017 (Part I) –one annex–; AAP

⁴¹ EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *European Neighbourhood Policy... cit.*

2017 (Part II) –two annexes–; Multiannual Action Programme 2018-2020 –three annexes-. Through each of them, the smaller components –concrete and operational projects– have been revised to identify the exact individual amount of monetary units that has been allocated to them and the key stakeholders involved in the project. A particular actor is deemed to be a stakeholder if it is an important implementing agent within the project or if it is a clearly established beneficiary. Then, depending on the objectives and the recipient(s) within each project, we categorise the types of resilience that the policy output is aiming to strengthen into: a) state resilience; b) society resilience; and c) both state and society resilience.

Firstly, the state resilience category encompasses the cases in which the stakeholders are the government, public administration in general, legal and judiciary branches, critical economic sectors run by the state and national policy programmes. For its part, the society resilience category includes private companies –ie. Micro, Small and Medium Size Enterprises (MSMEs)-, civil society organisations (CSOs), disability organisations (DPOs) and NGOs in general.

A component is considered to apply for both state and society resilience in those cases where, in the light of no further information available that might permit to break down the funds in a more precise way, one of the conditions set at the left column of the following chart occurs in combination with one of the conditions at the right column:

TABLE 1 – Both State and Society Resilience

A) the state plays a prominent role in the management of funds.	1) at least, part of the financial resources are managed by non-state entities.
B) the state is a clear beneficiary.	2) public-private joint ventures. 3) non-state actors are clear beneficiaries.

Elaborated by the author.

A more detailed disaggregation of the components is provided in the annex to this paper. The total amount of 272.4€ million for the period 2014-2020 is divided in: a) 53.05€ million allocated to state resilience; b) 47.83€ million set aside to society resilience; and c) 160.84€ million for both state and society resilience. The total figure for our time frame -272.4€ million- includes the derived costs from EU project evaluation, audit, communication and

visibility, whereas the other figures represent the net monetary units allocated to each resilience priority.

Notwithstanding the former, the key test for assessing the prioritisation is found in the ‘both state and society resilience’ category. Apart from accumulating the biggest amount by far, it is illustrative to analyze what is the implementation rationale in relation to the triad: primary agent/second agent/end beneficiary. In most of the cases, the public entities are the prevailing agents entitled with the supervision, approval, monitoring and implementation of the components; very often depict the direct beneficiaries; and sometimes are expected to receive an indirect positive impact by giving support to an output centrally targeting civil society. Meanwhile, non-state actors, although in a well-framed manner, tend to be qualified as the end beneficiaries; sometimes have competences for a joint implementation with the state in egalitarian terms; but more often represent the secondary agent with partial instruments for enforcement under public supervision. The pervasiveness of the governmental actors has also to be considered in relation to the fact that Egypt possesses one of the highest corruption rates in the world⁴². In sum, when a combination of the two dimensions is advanced, the strength of the public structures tends to go in the first place while society resilience is usually targeted as the last stop.

V. A BROADER VIEW: BILATERAL ARMS SALES AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY

It has become clear to us that the state-resilience approach gathers more resources than the society-resilience goal along the various Action Programmes, nonetheless, is that an analogous pattern to the broader assemblage of EU foreign policy towards Egypt? The previous insights quoting different experts, which stress that security and economic interests have generally displaced the promotion of European standards, already suggest that stabilisation implies a closer engagement with the state for gaining its favour and ensuring its survival as a geopolitical asset. With the objective of corroborating that assessment, we will take a very brief glance at two other cooperation mechanisms, one that could be deemed as a quintessential thrust for state resilience and the other a sole commitment to society resilience: bilateral arms sales to Egypt and the EC Civil Society Facility, respectively.

⁴² TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL. *Corruption Perceptions Index 2018*, [website content], 2018.

Weapons trade with Egypt, although an exclusive competence by Member States, is relevant to our assessment because it is an indicator of the disparity in the added value of each kind of resilience from a monetary perspective, but also as evidence for the real attachment to the so called ‘authoritarian resilience’ discourse. Between 2014 and 2018, Egypt more than doubled its arms imports and France and Germany prevailed among the five largest weapon exporters⁴³. Not being conclusive enough, in 2016, British sales to Egypt were estimated at 168€ million –more than the financial resources allocated to both state and society resilience for a six-years period–, France closed agreements for approximately 7.2€ billion, including dual-use technology, and Germany signed a billion-euro contract for two submarines in 2014⁴⁴. Backed with data produced by SIPRI, a policy brief published last year concluded that France had surpassed the U.S. as the top provider of arms to Egypt and Germany increased its sales by 205% in five years⁴⁵.

For its part, the Civil Society Facility was created after the Arab uprisings in 2011 in an attempt to cooperate closer and more fruitfully with social actors in Egypt, hence mitigating the society’s long-standing absence from institutionalized political participation and, in some incipient understanding, enhance the country’s resilience by targeting capabilities for its population’s development and well-being. Nowadays, the newly enacted legal provisions and the overall regime’s reluctance have rendered the Facility almost non-enforceable in Egypt, however, even in 2011, “the financial envelop of the facility was small to match with its stated objectives”⁴⁶. The highest figure of 900.000€⁴⁷ in 2013 is nothing comparable to the resources devoted to state resilience.

⁴³ MAGED, M., “SIPRI: Egypt occupies 3rd position among world’s... cit.”

⁴⁴ MICHOU, H., “EU-Egypt Bilateral Relations: What Scope for Human Rights Advocacy?”, *EuroMed Rights Working Paper*, 2016.

⁴⁵ TIMEP, “European Arms Sales to Egypt”, *TIMEP Briefs*, 2018.

⁴⁶ HASSIB, B., “EU Cooperation with Civil Society in Egypt: Assessing the New Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility”, paper presented at the International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities, at the Queen’s College, University of Oxford, 2018, p.8

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EU RESILIENCE STRATEGY

For resilience –defined as *the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises*– to be met as the top, overarching priority it represents at the EU’s foreign policy core, while keeping in mind that the ‘authoritarian resilience’ model has already proven to be a double-edge instrument in a growingly unstable neighbourhood, a set of recommendations needs to be introduced:

- The European Union, even acknowledging the limits to its external outreach, has to deploy a diversity of efforts to diminish and deter the ongoing process of personalization within Egyptian politics. In fact, since times of Gamal Abdel Nasser, reliance of the political system’s sustainability upon one figure of leadership has been an endemic pattern in the country. ‘Strong-manship’ without a sufficiently consolidated underpinning structure collides with the long-term, crisis-containment endeavour that the concept of resilience poses, therefore, the EU must persevere in supporting the institutionalization of an administrative class attached to a bureaucratic model having some key resemblances with the Webberian one, that is to say, a class not easily subjected to co-optation, preferably depoliticized and constituting a firewall in the face of the risk of indistinctiveness between regime and state.
- The credibility of the EU as a supranational project with global aspirations is repeatedly questioned due to the far-fetched, often cosmetic operationalization of its pursued objectives and the recurrent dissonances in relation to its Member States’ behaviour. The geopolitical significance of issues like energy, migration, terrorism or weapons trade for Europe is practically insurmountable, however, it is convenient to take into consideration that better prospects for securing those areas demand an adequate and decisive promotion of society resilience too.
- Despite the former statement, the Union also needs to be aware of engaging in cooperation with civil society segments without triggering or favouring an unaffordable weakening of the state that would dangerously conduct to its collapse. Capacity-building of Egyptian social groups non-aligned nor co-opted by the regime would be desirable as long as a sufficiently high and double-checked benchmark for their democratic credential can be confirmed. The Egyptian state might be entitled to implement some sort of supervision

in this sense, but the EU should make sure that its selection of beneficiaries, monitoring and financial commitment is stronger. Political Islam should not be systematically discarded among the targeted groups, although the approach to it should be extremely thorough and it must ensure that the potential beneficiary is not permeated by extremist discourses and components, even consolidating a comprehensive stopcock for the latter.

– Third competitors like China or Saudi Arabia are sidelining the EU as international donor, however, the Union remains the critical market for Egyptian goods and services and its major trading partner. The EU should remind this to Egypt's government as a potential deterrence against letting these emerging powers to penetrate into the national financial sustenance so easily, since an uninterrupted and profiting international trade is key for the regime's legitimacy.

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Annex I: Component Classification by Type of Resilience

EU-EGYPT Annual Action Programme	State resilience	Society resilience	Both state and society resilience
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2014 / Annex 'Expanding Access to Education and Protection for at Risk Children in Egypt'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 30 million</p>	<p>Component 3 – Operationalising Child Law:</p> <p>-Amount: 9.5 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Government and targeted administration.</p>		<p>Component 1 – Community Schools:</p> <p>-Amount: 13.4 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Ministry of Education, governorates, local communities.</p> <p>Component 2 – Inclusive-model schools:</p> <p>-Amount: 6.5 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: MoE and civil society.</p>
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2015 / 4 Annexes.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: 63.4 million. (included the 4.4 millions financed by third entities, like Germany).</p>			
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2015 / Annex I 'Citizen Rights Project'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 11.4 million (10 million to the projects; 0.4 by third parties and 1 million for evaluation etc.)</p>	<p>Component 1 – Support to the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR):</p> <p>-Amount: 3.7 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: NCHR.</p>		<p>Component 2 – Increase women participation in public life:</p> <p>-Amount: 6.7 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: National Council for Women, several Ministries, civil society, particularly women.</p>

<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2015 / Annex II 'Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth in Egypt'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 16 million. (15 million + 1 million for evaluation and audit, contingencies, etc.)</p>		<p>Component 2 – Grant Facility Schemes that will implement projects of specific added-value:</p> <p>-Amount: 11 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: private sector and civil society delivering support services to MSMEs.</p>	<p>Component 1 – strengthening the capacity of stakeholders to implement business climate...:</p> <p>-Amount: 4 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: several Ministries, selected MSMEs, CSOs.</p>
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2015 / Annex III 'Upgrading Informal Areas Infrastructure'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 28 million (27 million + 1 million for evaluation, etc.)</p>		<p>Component 1:</p> <p>-Amount: approx. 16.2 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: CSOs.</p>	<p>Component 2:</p> <p>-Amount: approx. 10.8 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Ministries, administration and public companies, private contractors, residents.</p>
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2015 / Annex IV 'Fostering Reforms in the Egyptian Renewable Energy and Water Sectors through Developing Capacity Building'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 8 million (7.4 million for the project and 0.6 million for evaluation, etc.).</p>	<p>Component 1 – Strengthening the capacities at central and local levels in the water sector:</p> <p>-Amount: 4.6 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation.</p> <p>Component 2 – Strengthening the capacities at central and local levels in the energy sector:</p> <p>-Amount: 2.8 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: The Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy.</p>		
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2016 (Part I) / 2 Annexes</i></p> <p>- EU budget cost: 50 million.</p>			

<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2016 (Part I) / Annex I 'Advancing Women's Rights in Egypt'</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 10 million (+0.24 being financed by potential grant beneficiaries; 9.34 million for project and 0.9 million for evaluation, etc.)</p>	<p>Component 1 – Support to the implementation of the National Action Plan for Female Genital Mutilation abandonment:</p> <p>-Amount: 4.6 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: National Population Council, Ministry for Population, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice.</p>		<p>Component 2 – Support women's access to justice and legal empowerment:</p> <p>-Amount: 4.74 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Legal Aid Offices, Dispute Settlement Offices, women citizens.</p>
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2016 (Part I) / Annex II 'National Drainage Programme III'</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 40 million.</p>	<p>Component B – Technical assistance for capacity building for strengthening EPA-DP's and MRWI's planning sector:</p> <p>-Amount: 2.65 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: EPADP and MRWI.</p>		<p>Component A – Investment, mainly through work contracts, for increased efficiency of drainage:</p> <p>-Amount: 37 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: EPA-DP, MWRI, final user bodies (BCWUAs and private sector), farmers and their families.</p>
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2016 (Part II) and Annual Action Programme 2017 (Part I) / 1 Annex</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 20 million.</p>			

<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2016 (Part II) and Annual Action Programme 2017 (Part I) / Annex I 'EU Facility for Inclusive Growth and Job Creation'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 20 million (18.1 million for project and 1.9 million for evaluation, etc.)</p>		<p>Component 2 – Increased potential of SMEs to add value in the economy and generate jobs:</p> <p>-Amount: 3 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: representative organizations of businesses, academic research institutes and think tanks.</p>	<p>Component 1 – Improved enabling environment for business creation and economic development:</p> <p>-Amount: 15.1 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Egyptian SMEs , Ministry of Finance, the Egyptian Tax Authority, Egyptian Customs Authority, business associations, NGOs, think tanks.</p>
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2017 (Part II) / 2 Annexes</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 33 million.</p>			
<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2017 (Part II) / Annex I 'Support to Accountability and Democratic Governance'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 6 million (5.57 million for project and 0.25 million for evaluation, etc.).</p>	<p>Component 1 – Support to fight against corruption:</p> <p>-Amount: 3.7 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: the Administrative Control Authority, the Illicit Gains Department, the Egyptian Financial Intelligence Unit, etc.</p> <p>Component 2 – Support to the House of Representatives:</p> <p>-Amount: 2.05 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: The Egyptian Parliament and the Parliament Training Institute.</p>		

<p><i>Annual Action Programme 2017 (Part II) / Annex II 'Support to Egypt's National Population Strategy'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 27 million (26.6 million for project and 0.4 for visibility and evaluation).</p>	<p>Component 3 – Population governance:</p> <p>-Amount: 2 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: National Population Council and public task-forces.</p>		<p>Component 1 – Improved Family Planning supplies:</p> <p>-Amount: 16.6 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Ministry of Health, private enterprises, citizens.</p> <p>Component 2 – Increased Family Planning demand:</p> <p>-Amount: 8 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Ministry of Health, CSOs.</p>
<p><i>Multi Annual Action Programme 2018-2020 / 3 Annexes.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 76 million.</p>			

<p><i>Multi Annual Action Programme 2018-2020 / Annex I 'EU4 Energy and Water'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 40 million (37.8 million for projects and 2,2 million for evaluation, etc.).</p>			<p>Component 1 – Enhance capacities at central and local levels to efficient demand driven systems:</p> <p>-Amount: 18.8 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Government, financial organisations, investors, think tanks, user associations.</p> <p>Component 2 – Modernisation of the water and energy management framework:</p> <p>-Amount: 9.5 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: public-private partnerships, financial entities, administration.</p> <p>Component 3 – Improving the investment climate in the water and energy sectors:</p> <p>-Amount: 9.5 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: the New and Renewable Energy Authority, the Water Regulatory Activity, private sector participation.</p>
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<p><i>Multi Annual Action Programme 2018-2020 / Annex II 'EU for fair access to basic services'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 12 million (11.8 million for project and 0.2 million for evaluation, etc.).</p>	<p>Component 1 – Support National specialized councils' roles in inclusion and protection of vulnerable groups:</p> <p>-Amount: 5.8 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, National Council on Disability Affairs.</p>	<p>Component 2 – Targeted support to vulnerable groups through civil society organisations:</p> <p>-Amount: 6 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: CSOs, disability organisations.</p>	
<p><i>Multi Annual Action Programme 2018-2020 / Annex III 'Complementary support for capacity development and civil society'.</i></p> <p>-EU budget cost: EUR 24 million (23.3 million for project and 0.7 for evaluation, etc.).</p>	<p>Component 1 – Institutional capacity development:</p> <p>-Amount: 11.65 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: state structures.</p>	<p>Component 2 – Support to civil society:</p> <p>-Amount: 11.65 million.</p> <p>-Stakeholders: Big and small CSOs and NGOs.</p>	
TOTALS			
<p>EUR 272.4 million (includes evaluation costs, etc.)</p>	<p>EUR 53.05 million</p>	<p>EUR 47.83 million.</p>	<p>EUR 160.84 million</p>



JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SOMMAIRE / Janvier - Décembre 2019 / N° 7

ÉTUDES

Mar CAMPINS ERITJA

Transboundary Water Resources in Central Asia and its Impact in the Emergency of Conflicts Affecting Regional Stability

Eric TREMOLADA ALVAREZ

The Land and Maritime Delimitation of the Court of The Hague in the Affairs of Costa Rica v. Nicaragua, in Light of Their Proposals (February 2, 2018)

Karouma OMAR

Mutualisation des Puissances et Sécurité en Afrique: pour une approche néopragmatiste du rôle du droit

Alejandro del VALLE GÁLVEZ

The Refugee Crisis and Migration at the Gates of Europe. Deterritoriality, Extraterritoriality and the Externalization of Border Migration Controls

Maria NAGORE CASAS

The Instruments of Pre-border Control in the EU: A New Source of Vulnerability for Asylum Seekers?

NOTES

Inmaculada GONZÁLEZ GARCÍA

Immigration in Spain: Migratory Routes, Cooperation with Third Countries and Human Rights in Return Procedures

Mohamed REDA NOUR

Géopolitique de l'Intelligence Artificielle : Les enjeux de la rivalité sino-américaine

Diego BOZA - Dévika PÉREZ

New Migrant Detention Strategies in Spain: Short-Term Assistance Centres and Internment Centres for Foreign Nationals

Ahmed IRAQI

L'investissement direct étranger en tant que facteur géopolitique du Soft Power marocain en Afrique : réflexion interprétative

Angeles JIMENEZ GARCIA-CARRIAZO

Small Island, Big Issue: Malta and its Search and Rescue Region - SAR

Javier BORDON

The European Union and the Egyptian Neighbour: Assessing the Characterization of Resilience as and External Action Priority

AGORA

Claudia JIMÉNEZ CORTÉS - Montserrat PI LLORENS

Diffusion of Research Results 'Research Projects on Immigration and Human Rights : CIMCETT PROJECT'

Luis ROMERO BARTUMEUS

¿Sobrevivirá el Plan Mares al Plan Integral de Seguridad Marítima? La falta de doctrina estratégica española hacia el área del Estrecho de Gibraltar

DOCUMENTATION

Lorena CALVO MARISCAL

Relación de Tratados, Acuerdos no Normativos, Memorandos de Entendimiento y Comunicados Conjuntos España-Marruecos, 2018-2019

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OANTA, G. (Coord.), El Derecho del mar y las personas y grupos vulnerables, Bosch Editor, Barcelona, 2018. Par Annina BÜRGIN

TABLEAU D'ÉQUIVALENCE DES POSTES UNIVERSITAIRES

Tableau d'équivalence des postes Universitaires - Tabla de equivalencia de cargos académicos - Academic Ranks