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From Inception to Professionalisation:
The Evolution of Intercultural Dialogue
in EU Mediterranean Policies (1990-2014)

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List of Abbreviations

ALF: Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue among Cultures

CFSP: Common Foreign and Security Policy

CSCE: Conference for the Security and Cooperation in Europe

CSCM: Conference for the Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean

CSO: Civil Society Organisation

EC: European Community

EMP: Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process)

EMPA: Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

ENP: European Neighbourhood Policy

ENPI: European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument

EPC: European Political Cooperation

ESDP/CSDP: European/Common Security and Defence Policy

EUFP: European Union Foreign Policy

ICD: Intercultural Dialogue

JHA: Justice and Home Affairs

MEPP: Middle East Peace Process

MPC: Mediterranean Partner Country

RMP: Renovated Mediterranean Policy

UfM: Union for the Mediterranean

Abstract

This thesis investigates the promotion of intercultural dialogue (ICD) in the framework of EU external action on the Mediterranean between 1990 and 2014. ICD is understood as a cultural foreign policy instrument that the EU has promoted in a changing, vague and contradictory manner to engage the civil societies of Europe and of the Mediterranean into a common effort to attenuate the tensions that derive from the socio-cultural divergences among the people and governments of this whole area. With the goal of shedding light on this obscure aspect of EU policy-making in the Mediterranean, this thesis aims primarily to analyse why the approach of the EU to ICD has changed during the time frame in reference, and how the EU has modified the formulation, implementation and role of this policy instrument. Guided by the conceptual lens of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), the research examines ICD within a broader analysis of the evolution of EU foreign policy in the area. It argues that the EU commitment to advance ICD within its Mediterranean policies can be divided into three distinct phases: a 'phase of emergence' (1990-2001), a 'phase of consolidation' (2001-2010) and a 'phase of professionalisation' (2010-2014). The main factor that shaped this three-phase evolution is identified in how EU policy-makers assessed the potential contribution of ICD to address the changing socio-cultural divide in the Euro-Mediterranean space following three major events: a) the conclusion of the Cold War in 1990; b) the terror attacks of 9/11 2001; and c) the outbreak of the Arab uprisings in December 2010.

Introduction

1. Contextualising the study of intercultural dialogue in EU Mediterranean policies

The concept of 'intercultural dialogue' (ICD) and analogous concepts[1] have been addressed from several disciplinary approaches, including political theory (Dallmayr 2002; Senghaas 2002), social psychology (Kelman 1999; Worchel 2005; Kuriansky 2007), pedagogy (Cestaro 2004), business communication (Prosser 1978) and development studies (Hammel 1990). A growing reference to this concept within the field of current international affairs has also attracted the attention of International Relations (IR) scholars and policy analysts (Petito 2009; Tsutsumibayashi 2005; Papisca 2007b; Mollov and Lavie 2001; Pace and Schumacher 2007; Bekemans et al. 2007).

In current affairs, the concept of ICD has been employed by international organisations, especially during the 2000s to describe initiatives they have launched to facilitate interactions between 'units' (individuals, groups, communities, or 'civilisations') which are characterised by some degree of cultural and/or religious diversity. Common to all their efforts is the belief that fostering regular exchanges between such units can foster a better mutual understanding among them, and thus contribute to reducing stereotypes, improving mutual respect, inspiring empathy and ultimately to decreasing elements of the political, social and cultural tensions in which contemporary societies are increasingly entangled. Major ICD initiatives have notably been developed by the United Nations (through the 'Alliance of Civilisations'), UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Islamic Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO).

Within the context of such widespread commitments to promoting mutual understanding worldwide, this research concerns itself with the efforts made on this matter by the European Union (EU), within the specific framework of its external action towards the Mediterranean neighbourhood. The EU formally introduced ICD therein in 1995, when it established the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), a policy initiative aimed at creating an area of peace, stability and prosperity in that area. Over the years, the EU has also promoted ICD in other areas of its external action. During the 2000s,

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1 Alternative expressions used are 'dialogue of/among cultures', 'dialogue of/between/among civilisations', 'cross cultural dialogue'.

for instance, references to ICD were made in the Cotonou Agreement (2000) between the EU and ACP (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific) countries, and in the 'Eastern Partnership', created in 2009 to provide a collective framework of cooperation between Europe and its eastern neighbours. In those cases, however, ICD features as one of many items in a cumulative list of options available to enhance cooperation with partner countries, which derives from previous experiences of the EU elsewhere. Conversely, in the Mediterranean context, the EU developed its idea of ICD over more than two decades, exploring different conceptions, objectives and fields of action.

In general, therefore, these EU efforts in the Mediterranean hold a specific interest among international commitments for the promotion of ICD. Indeed, by including ICD in its conception of the EMP in 1995, the EU was one of the pioneers to address the potential social benefits of fostering exchanges between culturally different peoples in the context of international politics. Moreover, as this research will show, the EU's major contribution to developing this concept has always been rooted in the advancement of its Mediterranean policies.

From this perspective, a specific heuristic interest for this subject derives from observations of how the EU has dealt with ICD across different moments of Mediterranean policy-making. As will be elaborated below, a contradictory dynamic has underlain the promotion of ICD in this area since its introduction. The EU has attributed varying levels of priority to ICD in its political agenda for the Mediterranean, even going as far as to consider the former the defining issue of the quarter-century in the mid-2000s (Ferrero Waldner 2006a). However, an extensive vagueness has surrounded the actual meaning and content of ICD, its objectives and the manners in which the EU has conceived and deployed it over the years, transforming it into a sort of 'object of mystery'. This contradictory approach to the promotion of ICD stands out as an intriguing research topic within analyses of EU policy-making in the Mediterranean while, at the same time, making ICD an extremely complex subject of analysis, one which defies easy investigation.

2. Defining the core concepts

The preceding section has introduced a set of core concepts, whose meaning is often either absent or disputed within the relevant literature. For the purpose of analytical clarity, these concepts need to be defined precisely before setting out the main elements of the research design.

The first concept to define must certainly be the main subject of analysis, ICD in the framework of EU external action. European institutions and their partners have never provided any clear, permanent or commonly accepted definition of their efforts to promote ICD. Indeed they have remained vague and inconsistent on this matter. ICD has generally been referred to either as an instrument to improve the quality of relations between the people of the Mediterranean (EMP 1995a; Prodi 2002b; EMP 2003b), or as a policy objective of EU commitment therein (European Council 2000). As the following pages will discuss, the relevant literature has as well avoided the problem of defining ICD. Scholars have rather focused on analysing critical aspects and potential benefits of the various activities promoted by the EU in the Mediterranean under the ICD label.

This thesis offers a working definition of this concept, which is framed within the broader debate in IR that tries to analytically draw together problems of foreign policy and cultural issues, an intersection observed as the 'latest development in an evolving historical process whereby civil society is drawn ever more into the process and politics of international relations' (Hill 2007, 262). In this debate, culture is generally seen as a broad concept, which signifies 'embodied systems of values and attitudes' (Ahearne 2009, 142) and thus subsumes 'ethnicity, religion, nationality, identity and all the artefacts associated with them' (Hill 2007, 263). This debate on culture and IR is particularly relevant when exploring – as this thesis does – Middle East/Mediterranean politics. Indeed, explanations in terms of culture are among the most recurrent frames used to analyse Middle Eastern states and politics (Halliday 2005, 46). Moreover, as Chris Hill (2007, 264-265) notes, the particularly strong claims of religious groups in the Mediterranean, and their transnational dimension, 'present sharp dilemmas for foreign policy-makers in contemporary conditions, where both international terrorism and the various conflicts in the Middle East undeniably have a religious dimension, playing further into the politics of the West through immigration and diasporas'.

From this perspective, this thesis defines ICD as a cultural foreign policy instrument of the EU that aims to engage, by fostering mutual understanding and cooperation, the civil societies of Europe and of the Mediterranean into a common effort to attenuate the tensions which derive from the cultural, social and political divergences among the people and governments of this whole area. Cultural foreign policy instruments are defined in the literature as those sharing a culture-related basis, an effort to influence people more than governments, and the fact of operating over a

much longer term than other foreign policy instruments (Hill 2003, 135-138). In this context, despite the fact that the EU has generally promoted ICD through region-wide cooperation programmes in areas connected to arts and 'consciously crafted symbolic works' (Ahearne 2009, 142) such as heritage conservation, education, creativity and the media, the primary culture-related basis and target of this policy tool are the different systems of values and attitudes of the people living in the Euro-Mediterranean area. In this connection, it is also worth stressing that the roots of the divergences on which the EU has shaped the scope of its ICD efforts have not been primarily cultural. The EU has rather developed this tool around the possible contribution of engaging with cultural and religious diversity to stem the challenges for the stability of Europe connected, in particular, with terrorism, xenophobic attitudes, migrations and regional conflicts, by complementing other European security and economic policy initiatives vis-à-vis Mediterranean countries.

To better frame this working definition, moreover, it is necessary to highlight the implications for the complexity characterising ICD conceptualisation of the different interpretations of Europe's understanding of culture, which emerged at different stages of EU policy-making towards the Mediterranean. In fact, the EU, and in particular the Commission, has generally subscribed to a broad and inclusive 'socio-anthropological' conception of culture for its foreign policy, intended as 'a set of distinctive spiritual and material traits that characterise a society and social group [and that] embraces literature and arts as well as ways of life, value systems, traditions and beliefs' (European Commission 2007b, 2; see also RHLAG 2003, 6). In practice, however, the different outlook on this concept held by those in charge of EU external relations have substantially affected how culture-related tools were defined and advanced in relation to other EU policies over time. As this thesis will elaborate in detail, for instance, during Romano Prodi's term (1999-2004) the approach of the Commission to culture and cultural policy was explicitly rooted in the value-related component of the broad EU conception of this notion, and the function of ICD and other cultural tools to complement inconclusive political and security initiatives in fields as the fight against religious fundamentalisms was glaring. Differently, during Barroso's terms (2005-2009 and 2009-2014) the Commission increasingly focused on the 'cognitive' dimension of this concept, stressing the relevance of literature, arts, the media and creativity to foster economic growth and social empowerment. Consistent with this understanding, the EU gradually strengthened the role of its cultural foreign policy tools (including ICD) to complement either its economic, social or development policies vis-à-vis Mediterranean

countries.

The second main concept to be defined concerns the context within which this research analyses the development of ICD: EU foreign policy (EUFP). There is a rich academic debate concerning the ontology of the EU and its external dimension, which is addressed in detail in Chapter 1. This research adopts the definition of EUFP employed by Federica Bicchi (2007, 2) in her comprehensive work on EU action in the Mediterranean, which refers to 'that body of declarations, decisions and actions that are made by the use of all the instruments that the EC/EU has at its disposal, that are decided at the EC/EU level and conducted in its name toward a country or an area outside its borders.'

This comprehensive definition has several analytical benefits. In particular, it corresponds particularly well to the ontological assumption applied within this research to EUFP, which is viewed as a complex process, relatively autonomous from the national foreign policies of EU member states. EUFP is thus primarily intended as an outcome of the agency of European institutions, while member states' national preferences are taken into consideration to the extent that they influence the debate at the European level, within intergovernmental institutions, and lead to the adoption of European decisions and actions. In other words, in terms of output, the focus of analysis is on the decisions and actions taken by EU institutions, in the name of Europe. As far as the analysis of the formulation of these decisions and implementation of these actions is concerned, however, this research addresses EUFP as the product of a 'disaggregated entity' (see White 2004, 18) that receives inputs from states, common institutions (both supranational and intergovernmental) and bureaucracies. In this perspective, EUFP substantially equates and is synonym to the 'external action of the Union', as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty, and encompasses all the policy components where these different actors engage in defining European decisions and actions: the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the external dimension of the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) sector, and the other 'external relations' carried out by the EU in fields such as trade, aid and development cooperation.

While states and other non-state entities such as the EU and its institutions, are often treated in this thesis as unified actors possessing varying degrees of coherence, organisation and power at the level of the international system, this research draws on Christopher Hill (2016, 58) in taking agency to mean the actions of the individual

human beings – either politicians, officials or bureaucrats – who take decisions and implement them on behalf of such entities.

The third concept to define is 'Mediterranean' (region, area, or space). This term can give rise to several conflicting interpretations, depending on the perspective from which the Mediterranean is approached (geographical, geo-political, philosophical, commercial, historical, etc.). Given the empirical focus of this research on the EUFP on this region/area, however, the choice made here is to subscribe to the idea of Mediterranean developed by the EU through its own policies on the area. From this perspective, the Mediterranean is to be understood as an area composed of a variable number of coastal countries[2] of the Maghreb, the Middle East and the Balkans (ranging from 8 to 16, depending on the policy and on the period of reference) that have been involved in at least one of the following policy initiatives of the EU: the EMP or Barcelona Process (1995-2007), the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP, 2003-ongoing) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM, 2008-ongoing).

One last concept which needs clarification is that of civil society. This term, particularly in the context of civil society organisations (CSOs), appears frequently in the pages of this thesis in reference to the main recipients of the EU's efforts to promote exchanges among the people of Europe and the Mediterranean, at least according to the EU's own categorisation. However, both the concept of 'civil society', and its specific application within the complexity of Euro-Mediterranean relations provide a number of analytical challenges, which need to be introduced and discussed before addressing EU actual efforts to engage regional civil society into ICD.

A seminal notion of civil society is the one elaborated by Antonio Gramsci, who conceptualised it as the 'primary political realm, where socio-economic groups acquire consciousness of their interests and expectations, ideologies are produced and spread, and alliances formed' (in: Talani 2014). Consistent with this idea is the, more recent, conception of 'global civil society' – 'a continuation and extension of the civil society concept on transnational scale' (Feliu 2007, 368) –, which is particularly suitable to address the type of regional exchanges and interconnections that the EU has pursued among the societies of Europe and of the Mediterranean. Mary Kaldor (2003, 590), in particular, defines global civil society as a 'platform inhabited by activists, NGOs and

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2 The only non-coastal countries addressed by the EU under this conception of Mediterranean are: Jordan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mauritania and the Principality of Monaco.

neoliberals, as well as national and religious groups, where they argue about, campaign for (or against), negotiate about, or lobby for the arrangements that shape global developments'.

Kaldor's inclusive definition absorbs, in fact, a series of still open debates on this concept that are particularly relevant to grasp EU's understanding of civil society and its limits when applied to the Mediterranean case. One of these debates differentiates between a 'dichotomic conception' of civil society, which considers its complete independence form the governmental authority and defines the relationship between civil society and the state as contrastive and polarised, and an 'integral' conception. According to the latter, civil society is part of the broader political system and is not only tasked to control the state, but also to contribute to its legitimation through civil participation (Junemann 2003c, 88). Strictly related to this debate is the, more operative, challenge of defining who is included and who is excluded in the notion of civil society as, according to some commentators, it has become increasingly difficult to draw such boundaries (Kaldor 2003, 590). In the integral conception, civil society is a broader arena, and includes political parties, cooperatives, unions, and formal and informal associations. By contrast, the list of actors considered in the 'dichotomic' conception is generally restricted to NGOs and activists (Bernaboud 2003, 75-76).

EU policies in the Mediterranean have primarily subscribed to the integral conception of the notion (see Junemann 2003c; Feliu 2007). Indeed, the EuroMed civil Forum – the official periodic regional gathering of CSOs supported by the Commission – defined Euro-Mediterranean civil society as 'individuals and organisations from the whole area who promote respect for and implementation of themes such as civil liberties, human rights, social cohesion, labour conditions, gender equality, cultural diversity etc. through projects and other activities; peacefully and independently from religious, political and commercial interests, on a not-for-profit basis and respecting democratic values and international law' (Euromed Civil Forum 2003a). In fact, the EU has also broadened further this understanding by occasionally absorbing in civil society also entities that are part of, or connected to, the state both in Europe and in the Mediterranean space, such as national cultural commissions, ministerial offices tasked with development and cooperation policies, and 'governmental NGOs'.

Another thorny issue in the debate about civil society is whether the latter should be considered independent from, or should encompass the 'primordial structures of societies', i.e. the family, clan and religious communities (Junemann 2003c, 89; see also

Bernaboud 2003). This issue acquires central relevance when it comes to the analysis of EU's actual efforts to engage European and Mediterranean civil societies in ICD advancement. One has to consider, indeed, that people's sense of belonging to a particular culture, religion or tradition is a fundamental component of the overall scope of this policy tool. Moreover, EU efforts to build mutual understanding among the civil societies of Europe and the Mediterranean can be read, in fact, to an effort to developing Euro-Mediterranean 'social capital' in support of its overall policy in the area. Social capital has been defined as the set of all resources that are connected to belonging to a group, as a set of agents not only with common properties but also united by permanent and useful links (Bourdieu 1980, 2; see Cheong et al. 2007) and, as Putnam and Goss (2002, 6) note, 'there is mounting evidence that the characteristics of civil society [i.e. the 'contours' of social capital] affect the health of our democracies, our communities, and ourselves'. However, while embracing an apparently broad, inclusive and integral understanding of civil society, the EU has *de facto* excluded from its activities the primordial structures of society, failing to consider that, in many MPCs, the most relevant form of social capital is religious social capital (see Talani 2014, 90). As pointed out by some analysts, indeed, in Muslim countries, which constitute the largest part of EU partners in the Mediterranean, the associative tradition 'forms a community space for social and religious bounding and is based on the interactions between faith and social life' (Bernaboud 2003, 76). In Arabic there are even different words to refer to the modern idea of civil society discussed above, which exists in Mediterranean countries and mostly comprises representatives of secular elites, and to a more specific idea of 'citizens' or 'civic' society. The latter includes also the components of traditional, tribal and confessional modes, who constitute a large portion of the population and represent, therefore, a considerable and well linked social force (Junemann 2003c).

There is thus a fundamental gap between the overall idea and reality of civil society advanced by the EU in the Mediterranean, on one hand, and the idea and reality of civil society within the majority of MPCs on the other. Such gap is at the roots of several limits and contradictions that the EU has demonstrated in its actual engagement of Mediterranean civil society over time, and specifically in the promotion of ICD, which the ensuing chapters will highlight and discuss.

3. Research problem and research questions: explaining the vague and contradictory development of ICD

The EU has not presented a clear definition of ICD and has been vague also in defining the aims and outcomes expected from the deployment of this policy instrument. In fact, the EU and its Mediterranean Partners Countries (MPCs)[3] have produced a small number of documents and declarations to try to deploy this concept and attribute various roles to it (European Commission 2002a; EMP 2003b; EMP 2003c; Prodi 2004; EMP 2008). The result, however, has been that of gradually expanding the list of objectives of ICD, further increasing the vagueness that has surrounded the scope of this tool. Indeed, over time the EU has claimed to prompt ICD to purse very broad and different objectives, such as promoting a culture of peace and mutual understanding, achieving better interactions among nations, bringing people closer, helping conflict prevention, fostering reconciliation, strengthening artistic exchanges, and promoting democracy, development and human rights.

The situation does not become any clearer when the focus is shifted towards efforts to implement ICD. As set out in the working definition above, the EU has substantially employed this policy instrument through the launch and financial support of different regional cooperation programmes aimed at engaging the people from the two shores of the Mediterranean in various fields such as education, youth exchanges, media, arts and cultural heritage. However, the creation of these programmes, which began in 1996, has followed a piecemeal approach. The EU has not apparently planned any coherent strategy to join these programmes together in an effort to achieve the varying objectives of ICD in the long term. As a consequence, the programmes through which ICD has been wielded have often remained unrelated and overlapping over time, adding further ambiguity to the already vague rhetoric which has characterised the formulation of its objectives.

Some could observe the general confusion over ICD depicted thus far as an indicator that the latter is no more than an irrelevant element of EUFP rhetoric. The EU, however, has not dealt with this tool as meaningless, either in rhetoric or in practice. Since the establishment of the EMP in 1995, it has presented ICD as a very relevant component of its relations with Mediterranean countries and societies. Around a decade

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[3] The EU has been referring to these countries in different ways, depending on the policy initiative taken into consideration: 'partners' in the EMP and in the UfM, 'neighbours' in the ENP, etc. For analytical clarity, this thesis employs the acronym 'MPCs' to refer to the countries of the area with which the EU interacts, whatever policy is referred.

later, European institutions, including the European Council (2008), the Council (2008b) and the European Commission (2007b), further expanded the relevance they attributed to this tool, taking it as an integral component of overall EU external action. The year 2008 was celebrated both in the European and in the Euro-Mediterranean space as the 'Year of Intercultural Dialogue', demonstrating an intention, on the part of the EU, to make the citizens and governments of Europe and of its southern neighbours aware of the growing relevance of this notion (European Commission 2005a). The EU has also devoted noteworthy parts of its budget for overall regional cooperation in the Mediterranean area to advancing ICD programmes and initiatives (between 9% in the late 1990s and 35% in the early 2010s) which have succeeded in fostering interactions among a few thousand CSOs and individuals from both shores of the Mediterranean. In 2005, furthermore, the EU also managed to inaugurate an *ad hoc* Euro-Mediterranean institution – the *Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue among Cultures* (ALF) – with the overall mandate of ensuring a comprehensive promotion of ICD, especially through the establishment and coordination of a network of national networks of CSOs from all the countries of this area (RHLAG 2003; EMP 2003c).

The EU's commitment to ICD has not been constant. On the contrary, from its launch to the present day, this commitment has considerably changed, undergoing highs and lows in the overall framework of European policy priorities vis-à-vis its southern neighbourhood. Nonetheless, the EU has undeniably devoted considerable attention as well as human and financial resources to this policy tool for more than two decades of EU relations with MPCs. ICD may thus be not among the most relevant foreign policy instruments in the hands of the EU. It cannot be placed at the same level as, for instance, the promise of EU membership, trade agreements or sanctions. However neither is it a merely rhetorical expedient. The long-standing commitment of the EU to promoting this tool and the significant resources invested therein suggest that the promotion of ICD has acquired a strategic relevance: ICD was consolidated in the EU policy framework with the long-term perspective of addressing the socio-cultural tensions characterising European relations with Mediterranean countries and peoples.

The contradiction between the evolving commitment of the EU for ICD in this area, and the vagueness about the substance and scope of this policy tool over the years constitutes, therefore, a worthwhile research topic in the analysis of EU external relations. This topic indeed raises a number of heuristic questions, and, as will be discussed in the next section, has remained in large part under-researched. In this

context, this study aims to respond to the following three research questions, which underlie specific aspects of the contradictory evolution of ICD within EUFP on the Mediterranean.

Firstly, this research aims to explain the motivations that led the EU to introduce ICD into its foreign policy toolbox, and the causes that prompted the EU to periodically make changes to its commitment to ICD within its external action on the Mediterranean. This question comprises an in-depth investigation of the external and internal factors that, over time, have shaped patterns of change and continuity in EU promotion of ICD within this area, as well as of the contributions of the various actors involved in defining the agenda of Euro-Mediterranean relations. To this end, the research refers to a long time span (1990-2014) that, as better explained in section 8 below, provides a very comprehensive perspective on the various stages of the evolution of EU Mediterranean policies.

Secondly, this research aims to understand how the EU has changed its approach to the promotion of ICD in the Mediterranean neighbourhood. In particular, this question aims to investigate the different objectives set for ICD, the programmes and initiatives put in place by the EU to implement them, and the roles fulfilled by this tool in the broad Mediterranean policy framework during different moments of the time frame in reference. Answering this question, therefore, allows a comprehensive understanding of how the EU has promoted ICD in the Mediterranean and favours an in-depth knowledge of what ICD has actually meant for the EU in various moments of its external action in that area.

Thirdly, this research aims to account for the divide between the formulation of the objectives of ICD as presented in EU policy documents and officials' declarations, and the actual performance of practically pursuing them on the ground. Gaps in EU foreign policy-making, such as Christopher Hill's 'capability-expectations' gap (Hill 1993), have been identified since the early 1990s. More recently, scholars have stressed the existence of a gap between rhetoric and performance concerning, in particular, the promotion of European values and principles abroad (see: Tocci 2005b; Gordon 2010; Panebianco 2006; Elgström and Smith 2006b, 248). In particular, this research question aims to examine the difference between the formulation and the implementation of this policy tool in terms of consistency, co-ordination and co-ownership of ICD initiatives, actual engagement of CSOs therein, and overall resources allocated by the EU to these efforts.

This research approaches these three questions on the EU promotion of ICD through a theoretical framework grounded in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA). As the next sections will further elaborate, FPA provides an open perspective, and a policy focus at the international level (White 1999, 46) which are particularly suitable to analyse the actors involved, their preferences and motivation, the decision-making processes and the broader policy context within which choices concerning the definition of EUFP instruments have been formulated. In this context, the adoption of FPA represents as well an original conceptual and empirical addition to the scholarly debate on ICD and EUFP, as discussed in section 5 below.

4. The debate on ICD in EU foreign policy: the state of the art

The existence of ICD in EU external action has not generally attracted mass attention among scholars. Comprehensive works analysing EUFP (Smith 2002; Tonra and Christiansen 2004; Carslnaes et al. 2004; Smith K. 2008a; Hill and Smith (eds) 2011) have simply omitted to consider ICD among the range of instruments at the EU's disposal. Although, as has been discussed above, the EU attributed a noteworthy relevance to it within the specific framework of Euro-Mediterranean relations, it is clear that in a general account of the huge realm of EU external action, ICD does not stand out among the priority elements to be considered. Indeed, a recent exception is Christopher Hill's work on *Foreign Policy in Multicultural societies*, which devotes a chapter to address Europe's relations with 'what it saw as other cultures' in foreign policy, including a mention to some ICD initiatives in the Mediterranean (Hill 2013, 218-222).

For its part, the literature specifically devoted to analysing overall EU action towards the Mediterranean has often showed a genuine interest for the package of socio-cultural cooperation initiatives promoted therein, without however giving ICD specific in-depth analytical attention (see Calleya 2005; Pace 2006; Bicchi 2007; Ünver Noi 2011). In this context, this omission can be in part motivated by the vagueness characterising the EU approach to ICD, a vagueness which may have contributed to 'paralyse' scholarly interest on this matter. Within the complex and multi-faceted field of EU action in the Mediterranean, ICD may have appeared to the majority of analysts to be unworthy of too much attention, especially in the period before the terror attacks of 9/11 2001, when the visibility and resources provided by the EU to ICD were still low.

A small but focused body of literature has nonetheless developed important insights and perspectives for the analysis of this subject. Four different strands are identifiable. The first one considers ICD in normative (or prescriptive) terms, and attempts to show how the EU could or should improve the contribution of this tool to its policies. Some of these works address ICD in terms of regional stability, considering its potential as a confidence-building measure (Spenser 1999; Soltan 2004). Others propose possibilities for ICD to improve respect for human rights and citizenship rights in the Euro-Mediterranean space (Bekemans et al. 2007, part III; Papisca 2007a; de Perini 2010) or to mutually reinforce the political and economic dimensions of cooperation in that area (Selim 2003).

A second strand has explored a set of conceptual perspectives within which framing the analysis of this subject. The majority of these studies have approached ICD through a constructivist lens, as a case-study within a wider analysis of European efforts to create a regional community in the Mediterranean through the development of the EMP. The latter, as stated above, was the major regional policy initiative established by the EU in the 1990s, and had the goal of transforming the Mediterranean into an area of peace, stability and prosperity through a multidimensional approach to cooperation on political, security, economic, social, human and cultural issues. Stefania Panebianco (2001), for instance, underlines the role of ICD as an instrument of region-building and identity formation, towards the construction of a feeling of 'Mediterraneanness', and as a precondition of reaching the ambitious goals pursued by the EU in that area. Similarly, other scholars have addressed ICD as part of European efforts 'to develop institutional spaces within which mutual socialisation can take place, trust can develop and the social construction of common interests, discourse, narratives and myths can be promoted' (Adler and Crawford 2006, 33). Other conceptual approaches to the analysis of ICD have emerged from different angles and research agendas. Stephan Stetter (2007), for instance, has focused on how the semantics of identity in Euro-Mediterranean relations has impacted on ICD in the context of the EMP, presenting the institutionalisation of ICD as a paradoxical and conflictual operation, which depends on 'culture' as a differential unit while at the same time advocating the overcoming of this fundamental distinction. Michelle Pace (2007) has drawn upon the work of a key thinker on dialogue, Mikhail Bakhtin, and upon the work of Bruce Tuckman's 1965 forming, storming, norming and performing group development model to critically examining the role of social and cultural dialogue in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

A third strand of this literature is composed by studies that have specifically addressed the relations between ICD and the security context in the Mediterranean. Some scholars, in particular, have shown their interest on the process through which the EU boosted ICD in the EMP following the terror attacks of 9/11 2001 (Gündüz 2007; Silvestri 2005; Gillespie 2003). Some have been very critical of this process, which, borrowing from Buzan (1998), they have defined of 'extreme politicisation' or, of 'securitisation' of ICD. In particular, they argue that just as in the aftermath of the attacks the EU raised culture-based tensions to the point of transforming them into existential security threats, so was ICD pressed into service as a priority instrument to tackle such threats, favouring, among other effects, a tighter governmental control over its promotion, which distorted the genuine ideal of social communication on which ICD had originally been conceived (Malmvig 2007, 72). In a similar vein, the EU has been also criticised for having employed this tool for domestic stability interests only, 'as a means of setting the agenda, imposing hegemony, defining priorities and deviating the attention from more pressing social and economic problems of that area' (Del Sarto 2007, 45).

The fourth strand of this literature is more varied and is in large part composed of empirically grounded studies on either specific moments or aspects that characterised ICD promotion in the Mediterranean, such as the limits and advantages of the broader involvement of CSOs in the EMP (Feliu 2007), and the varying EU attitudes and initiatives towards Islam within Euro-Mediterranean relations (Silvestri 2005). The process that led, between 2003 and 2005, to the creation of the ALF, without a doubt the most visible of all EU efforts to promote mutual understanding in the area, has been an important stimulus for analysts to take stock of the implementation of ICD ten years after the launch of the EMP. According to some, ICD had long been a 'sleeping beauty' or an 'appendix', and only a few programmes had actually been effective to its implementation (Schumacher 2007; Jünemann 2003b). In that framework, the ALF was considered a promising development, which, however, needed to be put to the test (Schumacher 2007). Isabel Schäfer (2007) also observes a general difficulty in the progress of cultural cooperation activities in the area, which she mainly attributes to the slow pace of the promotion of a sense of 'co-ownership' between those involved in Euro-Mediterranean relations. In her overview of all cultural cooperation under the EMP, Michelle Pace (2005, 68) acknowledges the same limits and observes the need to translate the functions that cultural programmes should and could perform, including the ALF, 'into concrete action in response to current political, economic and social

developments within the Mediterranean as well as in a global context.'

Lastly, a small number of debates have been substantially affected by an analysis of EUFP capabilities and instruments and of how the EU has employed them. A couple of these debates are connected to the study of ICD and are now mentioned although they are not directly relevant to the design of this research, since they move the focus of analysis onto different aspects of this subject.

One of these debates concerns the theme of cultural diplomacy. Especially in the US, there has been a rich and long-standing debate on this subject and on how it has been affecting American foreign policy (for an overview, see Topić and Sciortino 2012, 1-18; Nye 2004). In the EU context, by contrast, this interest seems to have developed more recently (Gordon 2010; Isar 2015; Berger 2008; Topić and Rodin 2012), perhaps because of the late acquisition by the EU of the formal legal competences to promote culture outside its borders (Dony 2009; Smith M. 2011; Gordon 2010). A frequently quoted definition of cultural diplomacy comes from Milton Cummings (2003, 1), who understands this practice as 'the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding'. It is highlighted within the literature that efforts at cultural diplomacy assume that good relations take root in the fertile ground of understanding and respect, which need to be cultivated (Goff 2013, 419) and that the mutual understanding sought through this practice is long-term in scope (Topić and Sciortino 2012, 10-11). According to some analysts, although the implementation of cultural diplomacy efforts tend to actively involve a large variety of actors, including cultural experts and CSOs, the choices for strategies in this sector entail a 'diplomatic practice of governments, carried out in support of a government's foreign policy goals or its diplomacy (or both)' (Mark, cited in: Goff 2013, 421).

From this brief review, it is evident that there are many points of contact between the promotion of ICD, as defined in this research, and of cultural diplomacy in EUFP. Some scholars have even acknowledged that cultural diplomacy efforts are increasingly 'refracted through regional and civilizational lenses' (Goff 2013, 425, see also Changhe 2013, 554). However, the incipient literature on EU cultural diplomacy, or as Isar (2015, 494) points out, on the promotion of 'culture in EU external relations', has not shown specific interest in the efforts made by the EU to advance ICD. Studying ICD through a cultural diplomacy lens could therefore contribute to this debate but would also move the focus onto the development of EU cultural policies rather than on the

causes of the contradictory development of this specific policy tool. Indeed, as discussed when providing the working definition of ICD, the EU has primarily developed this tool to engage the culturally-different civil societies into a common effort to attenuate an alarming Euro-Mediterranean milieu, rather than fostering diplomatic relations between the EU and MPCs based on cultural cooperation at the grassroots.

Also requiring acknowledgement here is the debate on 'soft power'. Incidentally, this debate is related to that on cultural diplomacy, since the promotion of such form of diplomacy is often considered one of the main ways of accumulating soft power (Nye 2004, 107; Michalski 2005). The concept was originally coined by Josef Nye (2004) to explain the ability of an international actor (in Nye's case, the main reference is the US) to globally shape the preference of others without coercing them. The concept has been often employed by scholars to identify Europe's inclination toward employing different forms of cooperation, dialogue and persuasion with third partners with a view to attracting and co-opting them to the European model, rather than influencing international events through military force and coercion (Andreatta 2001, 41; Mascia 2010, 303-316; Topić and Sciortino 2012, 17; Michalski 2005; Telò 2007). Indeed, as Nye (2004, 80) stresses, the acquisition of soft power by the EU is partly derived from its foreign policies, 'which often contribute to global public goods'.

'Soft power' is not the only concept employed to describe how the EU compares with other international actors in world politics. This can be usefully joined to other concepts with which it shares a similar conception about the ontology of EU international action. Among the most influential are that of 'civilian power' (Duchene 1972), coined in the early 1970s to mark the absence of a European military dimension but also the ability of the EC to influence other international actors through diplomatic, economic and legal means; and, more recently, that of 'normative power Europe'. The latter was introduced by Ian Manners (2002) as a way to rethink the ideational impact of EU external identity on the basis of its ability to shape conceptions of 'normal' in international relations, through the promotion of the rules and values on which the EU is built. Some scholars have contested this rather benign view of EU's modus operandi in world politics, introducing more critical labels to explain it, such as that of 'soft imperialism' (Hettne and Söderbaum 2005).

A part of this debate's contribution to understanding the EU external dimension of the EU derives from an analysis of the EU preference for a non-coercive approach for

the deployment of its foreign policy instruments in international relations. This choice generally affects political/diplomatic, economic, and cultural tools (see Smith K. 2008a, 54-74). As a cultural instrument created by the EU to contribute to solving social and political tensions through the construction of mutual understanding at the grassroots, ICD can be thus also effectively analysed from this perspective, although this has not been done so far. However, as the research questions indicate, the focus is not on how ICD helps to define the EU's role in international relations but on why and how the EU has deployed and changed ICD in its Mediterranean action. The notion of soft power and the other concepts developed to explain how the EU compares with other actors in world politics can thus offer relevant and complementary insights, but do not constitute the most advantageous perspective to approach the questions on the EU and ICD at the basis of this study.

5. Original contribution of this work

As shown in the above review, the study of ICD is pertinent to various bodies of literature concerning EU external action and its foreign policy tools. However, ICD has been rarely researched in depth in this context. Nonetheless, four strands of literature have developed, making up a small but variegated debate on this specific subject, which has provided critically helpful snapshots of some of the objectives, limits and contradictions of ICD. At the same time, however, the debate is often fragmented, and bound to just some specific moments, aspects or initiatives concerning the EU promotion of ICD.

A first original contribution of this research is precisely to move beyond this fragmentation in the empirical knowledge of ICD by carrying out an integrative study of the evolution of this tool over a long and comprehensive time frame, ranging from the precursors of this policy tool to the latest developments of ICD following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings (the period 1990-2014). Firstly, this thesis supplements the analysis of the specific periods of time and of the aspects of ICD that have been already addressed in the literature with the many other aspects and periods that have been neglected so far by analysts. Secondly, it frames and analyses the empirical findings related to all these periods and aspects within one comprehensive and consistent account of ICD's evolution.

From this perspective, the choice of the theoretical framework through which this thesis analyses such comprehensive account of ICD evolution represents, as anticipated,

another major original contribution to ICD scholarship in both conceptual and empirical terms. Indeed, this thesis is the first study that theorises the significance of the EU promotion of ICD in Euro-Mediterranean relations through the prism of FPA. As the next section will elaborate further, FPA provides several vantage points from which to examine the different factors that shaped the changes and continuities of ICD in the evolving framework of EU Mediterranean policies. In particular, this approach enables the investigation of both the material and the ideational factors at the root of the behaviour of the wide range of actors that are involved in defining and implementing EUFP and considers foreign policy and the tools used to pursue it as a boundary activity. As a consequence, FPA allows an analysis of the influence of both external and domestic factors in the formulation and implementation of ICD over time.

Studying ICD from this original theoretical standpoint, therefore, first contributes to scholarship by exposing aspects of the promotion of this tool that studies conducted under other empirical and conceptual approaches have not managed to uncover and examine. For instance, within the strand of the literature that has provided conceptually informed perspectives on this subject, the main choice has been to employ the categories of Constructivism to analyse ICD in terms of EU efforts towards identity building in the Mediterranean space. Whilst fruitful during the heydays of the EMP (that is, between 1995 and the early 2000s), their approach appears less beneficial for explaining the prosecution of efforts to promote ICD in other EU policies, in particular following the EU decision, in 2003, to favour the ENP's bilateral approach in place of the collective region-building ideal that characterised cooperation in the EMP. By contrast, this thesis will analyse the evolution of ICD using FPA, exposing EU policy-makers' preferences and the different internal and external factors that have affected changing EU priorities in the Mediterranean over time without being limited by either a specific approach to cooperation or by an initiative of the EU in that area. Secondly, this approach allows a review of existing empirical findings on ICD in light of its original theoretical perspective. For instance, FPA will allow this thesis to reconsider and discuss important claims which emerged in the literature, such as the contention that ICD has undergone a process of 'extreme politicisation' following 9/11 2001 (Malmvig 2007; Del Sarto 2007), within a broader policy context which is shaped by the evolution of both the regional milieu and the preferences of EU leaders on how to approach ICD therein.

A third level at which this research contributes to scholarship concerns empirical

knowledge about how EUFP works. Some scholars have suggested that the many efforts devoted to conceptualising the EU international dimension have been, to a certain extent, detrimental to improving cumulative knowledge of the external influence of EU and that there is still 'a great need for more substantial empirical analysis, with historical depth' (Smith K. 2008b, 2; see also Schunz 2010). From this perspective, although limited to one policy tool and to the Mediterranean space, this research provides a significant body of original empirical knowledge about the actors, processes and constraints at the basis of the deployment of an under-researched foreign policy instrument of the EU over 25 years. Moreover, as well as shedding light on how the EU has actually deployed this cultural tool, this analysis of ICD also illustrates how this process has been affected by a changing European polity (from an EC of 10 members to the current EU of 28) and an evolving 'foreign policy system', from the pre-Maastricht competences of the EC to the most recent changes introduced with the Lisbon Treaty.

6. The choice for an FPA of the EU

As has been widely anticipated, this research adopts a conceptual framework to the analysis of EU promotion of ICD in the Mediterranean grounded on FPA. Generally speaking, FPA is the 'study of the conduct and practice of relations between different actors, primarily states, in the international system' (Alden and Aran 2012, 1). Traditionally concerned with the foreign policies of states, in fact, FPA has initially met some conceptual difficulties in trying to analyse the *sui generis* nature of the EU (Rosamond 2005) as something between an international organisation and a super-state (White 1999; Smith 2002; Tonra and Christiansen 2004). However, as Brian White argues, as an approach, FPA has developed 'as a continuing adaptive response to the challenges to traditional assumptions emerging from a transforming world politics' and, 'from the origin, it was the actor perspective, rather than a specific actor (i.e. the state) that was important to foreign policy analysts' (White 2004, 24). FPA's inherent method of analysis, which is composed of a 'close scrutiny of the actors, their motivations, the structures of decision-making and the broader context within which foreign policy choices are formulated' (Alden and Aran 2012, 1), can thus be also applied to the complex and multi-actor process of foreign policy-making in the EU.

This approach has already proved helpful, *inter alia*, in addressing the processes of decision-making in intergovernmental negotiations in CFSP and CDSP fora (Gross 2007, 39) and the contribution of perceptions of intra- and extra-European

developments from political decision-makers and bureaucratic elites to EU foreign policy-making (Mockli 2009, 7); to analyse bureaucratic politics within EU supranational and intergovernmental institutions (Hill and Smith 2005), and to conceptualise and evaluate some of the gaps of the EU in terms of implementation of its declaratory policy (Hill 1993).

Other theoretical approaches have also provided relevant contributions to understanding the external dimension of the EU. With a view to helping to consolidate the choice made to employ FPA within this broader, multifaceted debate, Chapter 1 provides a critical review of the most significant alternative approaches, including those situated within European integration studies, IR theories (liberal and constructivist approaches), as well as some insights which have emerged in the area of governance studies. None of these, however, provides the same advantages for the research goals as an FPA of the EU.

For instance, European integration studies, such as the literature on Europeanization (Exadaktylos and Radaelli 2009; Michalski 2013; Tonra 2013) have been helpful towards theorising the development of the EU project (Wiener and Diez 2009). However, when applied to the external dimension of the EU, they tend to exaggerate the uniqueness of the EU and accordingly, to analytically insulate the latter from wider IR themes and the foreign policy of other powers (Niemann and Bretherton 2013, 263).

In seeking to 'specify the conditions under which institutions can have an impact and cooperation can occur [among states]' (Keohane and Martin 1995, 42), Institutionalism is among the approaches from the liberal tradition of IR that have made a significant contribution to understanding Europe's global role (White 2004, 18-19; Smith M. 2004a; Jenson and Mérand 2010). However, their primary focus on how institutions and other structures affect actors' behaviours makes these approaches weaker on agency. As a consequence, for Institutionalism, the specific contribution brought by various types of actors, including single EU officials, bureaucrats and member states' representatives, to shaping EUFP choices is less relevant.

Some approaches which employ the categories of governance to address a changing international context where rule-making is increasingly the domain of a wide range of both state and non-state actors have provided as well insights to understanding aspects of the EU's external dimension. Multi-level Governance approaches (Smith M. 2004b; Mascia 2010), for instance, gave the appropriate relevance to all actors and

policy components involved in EUFP, considering interactions among institutions, member states' preferences and the possible contributions of sub-national authority and transnational CSOs. Other studies, by approaching EU policy in the neighbourhood as a form of 'external governance', have managed to explain why specific issues of domestic politics gain priority in relations with neighbouring countries, and why these priorities fluctuate over time, according to internal dynamics (Lavenex 2004). These approaches, however, are mostly focused on internal factors and processes and have less relevance for the contribution of external factors, which also form part of the broad context within which EUFP decisions are taken.

Constructivism has shifted the focus onto how the expectations produced by behaviours affect identities and interests (Wendt 1992), providing IR scholars with an original set of questions and insights, including towards the external dimension of the EU. For instance, these approaches explain the effects of international institutions on the policies and identities of states in European foreign policy-making (Wagner 2003), and the problematic issue of defining EU identity in a global perspective (Tonra and Christiansen 2004; Rosamond 2005; Bretherton and Vogler 2002; Manners 2002). As mentioned above, a constructivist approach has also been employed to address ICD in terms of EU efforts towards regional identity building in the Mediterranean space. As partly anticipated, however, in the context of this research an approach grounded in constructivist analysis results less helpful. In particular, these approaches highlight the ideational factors but are not suitable for exposing the material factors that also contribute to shaping EUFP decisions and instruments. Moreover, as Hill (2013, 2) notes, Constructivism is less effective when 'it comes up against problems of implementation and the ability of ideas, through the mediation of human actors, to change the logic of international politics'. Furthermore, these approaches do not entail an analysis of the complex procedures characterising the European institutional framework where EUFP outcomes are defined.

As will be further elaborated in Chapter 1, FPA allows both the material and the ideational factors at the root of the preferences shown by EU institutions and member states vis-à-vis the promotion of EUFP instruments to be taken into consideration. It thus provides for an analysis of ICD-related policy-making processes that considers the motivations, interests and expectations of the full complement of actors involved in EUFP, without necessarily excluding, moreover, the external contribution provided by partner countries within joint EU-Mediterranean decision-making *fora*. Indeed, from an

FPA standpoint, the causes and implications of EUFP decisions can be tracked within both the domestic constraints that have pushed European officials and national politicians to support the creation of new European policies and tools for the Mediterranean and the changing international context into which EUFP has developed in this area. Finally, as mentioned in the previous section, this conceptual framework allows ICD to be approached as a cultural instrument across the various policies that the EU has promoted in the Mediterranean, without being limited, as has happened for most of the literature on ICD, to the fate of one single policy initiative or EU approach to cooperation, or to a specific period of time in ICD evolution.

7. Main argument

This thesis argues that the EU's commitment to the advancement of ICD within its Mediterranean policies can be divided into three distinct phases: a 'phase of emergence' (1990-2001), a 'phase of consolidation' (2001-2010) and a 'phase of professionalisation' (2010-2014). Each of these phases, which are outlined in the next section, has been characterised by a different EU consideration of the relevance and scope of ICD to address what it saw as an alarming socio-cultural divide in this area, which has primarily manifested itself through changing levels of Islamic fundamentalism and of xenophobic attitudes in Europe vis-à-vis migrants from MPCs.

Within this context, this thesis argues that the shifts in the EU's definition of the relevance and scope of ICD – and, thus, the changes between these three phases – have derived primarily from the different preferences of the policy-makers in charge of European external action in addressing the changing socio-cultural dimension of Euro-Mediterranean relations during the time frame 1990-2014. In particular, the main factor that determined this three-phase evolution of ICD is if and to what extent the European Commission and some EU member states considered promoting mutual understanding among the civil societies of the area helpful to their broader policy response to three major events that directly affected the scope of Euro-Mediterranean relations: a) the conclusion of the Cold War in 1990; b) the terror attacks of 9/11 2001; and c) the outbreak of the Arab uprisings in December 2010. From this perspective, these three events and their connected challenges for the stability of socio-cultural relations in the Euro-Mediterranean space have acted as change enablers for ICD promotion, while the different preferences on this matter of the leaders who were in charge of EUFP when these events occurred have been the determinants of such change.

8. Division of the time frame and the three phases of ICD

The time frame of this research (1990-2014) is thus defined and split on the basis of the three major change-enabling events referred to immediately in the previous paragraph. By significantly affecting overall EU priorities and concerns in this area, indeed, each of these events also favoured a periodic change or revision in the definition of its policies, approaches and instruments therein. Following each event, EU policy-makers have thus also had occasion to reassess, on the basis of their preferences, if, how and to what extent the promotion of ICD could have contributed to addressing the changed priority in the Mediterranean milieu, attributing a different relevance and scope to this policy instrument accordingly. To be sure, EU policies and tools in the Mediterranean have also been significantly affected by other factors and events during this time frame, such as the launch and failure of the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), the various phases of enlargement and the relations of the EU to eastern European countries. These events are referred to in an analysis of the broad policy context. As the thesis will show and as will be discussed further in the General Conclusions, however, the consequences of these factors on EU policy-making in the Mediterranean have had less bearing on EU choices to promote ICD than the three events chosen above.

This thesis defines the three phases of ICD as the 'phase of emergence', the 'phase of consolidation', and the 'phase of professionalisation'. The choice of these specific labels aims to condense, in one word, the general scope of ICD within EU policies, the degree of implementation, and the actual actors within the EU that have been responsible for the promotion of this tool during each period, as outlined in the following paragraphs.

The first set of international events to significantly affect the priorities of the EU in the Mediterranean is identified as the conclusion of the Cold War. The end of the long-standing confrontation between east and west favoured a general re-prioritisation of the Mediterranean basin for Europe. The EU's strong interest in this area was dictated in particular by a need to face the intensification of a series of security concerns of different kinds, including a mounting social and political instability in some Mediterranean countries, which the EU associated to a growing presence of migrants from Maghreb and to a rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the area. Moreover, the optimism for the launch of the MEPP in 1991, despite the peripheral role played by

Europe within it, represented an opportunity for the EU to pursue peace and prosperity in this area. The efforts to provide a policy response to the challenges and opportunities offered from this evolving milieu during this decade resulted in the launch of the EMP/Barcelona Process in 1995, fostering political, security, economic, social, human and cultural cooperation in this area.

The phase of ICD which started in parallel with the conclusion of the Cold War, is labelled as the 'phase of emergence'. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, from 1990, European leaders explored the possibilities to foster mutual understanding among the culturally different people of the area in the hope of tackling some of the key issues which were emerging from the Mediterranean in those years, including mounting xenophobia in Europe and escalating Islamic fundamentalism in the Maghreb. When the Barcelona Process was launched, however, the EU and its MPCs came to attribute a vague scope of action to ICD, which did not reflect the specific objectives that the EU had proposed to pursue through the promotion of mutual understanding. The result was an erratic and initially ineffectual implementation process, the outcomes of which only started to have some tangible effect on EU Mediterranean policies in the late 1990s, when the Commission eventually launched the first three cooperation programmes among cultural heritage and audiovisual practitioners and young people from the whole area.

The second set of events is centred on the attacks of 9/11, 2001 in New York and Washington. The consequences of these attacks engendered a dynamic revision of the agenda of EU relations with MPCs, as the issues of Islamic fundamentalism, international terrorism and connected social tensions and xenophobic attitudes, already growing concerns for the EU, were quickly moved to the top rank of European priorities and 'securitised', that is, transformed into existential security threats (see Buzan et al. 1998). As well as the attacks of 2001, the collapse of the peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians in late 2000 made the already complex dialogue on security and political cooperation in the EMP framework increasingly difficult, due to the mounting tensions between the EU's Arab partners and Israel. Moreover, the 2004 enlargement process, which brought ten new countries into the EU – 8 of which were from Eastern Europe – favoured the adoption of a new policy scheme, the ENP, which modified further the European approach towards its changing neighbourhood, including towards its Mediterranean side.

The phase of ICD which developed around these events is referred to as the

'phase of consolidation'. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, from late 2001 ICD rapidly achieved a priority position on the Euro-Mediterranean agenda with particular emphasis on its potential for attenuating the implications for regional stability of increased fundamentalism and xenophobia in the region. On the initiative of the European Commission, and in particular its President Romano Prodi, EU member states and MPCs agreed on the necessity of bolstering ICD within the EMP framework, and committed to set clearer objectives for its promotion, with a proclaimed commitment to expanding the participation into this process of civil society on both shores of the Mediterranean. In support of this reinvigorated formulation, the EU also managed to multiply the number of programmes and initiatives to implement ICD in the area, also creating an *ad hoc* institution: the ALF.

The third set of international events which directly affected EU priorities in the Mediterranean is the outbreak of the Arab uprisings in late 2010. The wave of protests across almost all Arab MPCs challenged the credibility of past EU policies towards this area, displaying the deficiencies, ineffectiveness and short-termism of the latter. In response to the new opportunities offered by this rapidly changing scenario, the EU once again changed its priorities of the current policy framework for the Mediterranean (that is, the ENP). In particular, the new approach focused on presenting a credible response to the pro-democracy and human rights claims coming from a few of the countries involved, rather than on addressing the still present social, political and cultural concerns that had affected Euro-Mediterranean relations for the last 20 years.

The phase of ICD started around December 2010 is referred to as the 'phase of professionalisation'. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, within the general re-consideration of EU priorities engendered by the protests in the Arab countries, EU leaders definitely transferred to the experts leading the ALF the full responsibility for the conceptualisation and advancement of ICD, and increased the investment in the Foundation as the only EU programme accountable for the implementation of ICD in Euro-Mediterranean relations. As this phase is still open, a cut-off point has been identified in the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the ALF, which were held in Naples, Italy, on 27-30 October 2014. The event, attended by EU officials, including former Commission President Prodi, politicians, NGOs, and experts from the whole area, was the occasion to present the goals of the 3-year programme of the ALF for the period 2015-2017. Since, the EU transferred the responsibility for ICD to the ALF during this period, the launch of this new and still ongoing programme

represents a proper moment to take stock of this specific phase as well as of 24 years of EU efforts to promote ICD in the Mediterranean.

9. Analytical Framework

For each of the three phases above, the research investigates ICD promotion according to a simple analytical scheme, based on four dimensions: 1) the broader foreign policy context in which the EU has taken and implemented its decisions on the Mediterranean; 2) the processes through which EU leaders formulated their specific objectives for ICD within this outlined context; 3) the efforts made by the EU to implement ICD; and 4) the overall roles played by this tool in the broader EU policy framework.

1) As far as the foreign policy context is concerned, an analysis is made of the main challenges and opportunities emerging in the Mediterranean for the stability of Europe following each of the three sets of events outlined above. The focus is primarily set on the various 'hard' and 'soft' (i.e. non-military) security issues mainly associated with the causes and consequences of the changing socio-economic divide between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Although not as directly relevant to analyse the development of ICD, the attention is also placed on the other factors that, across the time frame, have indirectly affected the broad context within which EU action in the Mediterranean has been shaped, including the causes and consequences of EU enlargement, and the new EUFP capacities and responsibilities introduced through various fundamental treaties, in particular those of Maastricht (1992), Amsterdam (1997), and Lisbon (2007).

Within the broader context which derives from these direct and indirect factors, the research provides an overview of the preferences of European institutions and single member states for the various policies launched by the EU for the Mediterranean. It also addresses the peculiarities of these policies, underlining their main differences in terms of the overall approach to cooperation, the principles of action and their policy toolboxes. More specifically, the research takes into consideration, as the general framework into which ICD has been developed, the following: the Renovated Mediterranean Policy (1990-1995), the EMP (1995-2007), the ENP in its southern dimension (2003-ongoing), and the UfM (2008-ongoing). The research also refers to other initiatives of regional cooperation established among groups of countries outside the official EU framework, such as the '5+5 Forum' (Western Mediterranean).

2) As far as the formulation of ICD is concerned, the analysis covers both the specific preferences of the various actors involved in the promotion of this tool in EU policies (EU officials, single European and Mediterranean countries' politicians, as well as experts and bureaucrats), and the specific objectives that were set for ICD following the negotiations among them. The research also considers with attention the differences between the original objectives of ICD, as originally defined by the EU, and the possible changes to these objectives following negotiations with EU partners in *ad hoc* Euro-Mediterranean venues. This part of the analytical framework addresses both the objectives formulated for ICD and how their achievement is expected to contribute to some of the major goals of broader EU policies in the Mediterranean. According to EU policy-makers, the latter have included, among others, the construction and sustainability of a peaceful Euro-Mediterranean region, the development of a multidimensional and cooperative security framework in the area, the promotion of a sense of 'co-ownership' among Europeans and Mediterranean people and governments, the establishment of exchanges and mobility opportunities at the level of civil society and other non-state actors, the promotion of human rights and democracy, and the support of mutual trust building in areas of protracted crisis. All of these are evidently conceived by the EU as broad milieu goals[4] and mirror the loose approach of the former to political, security and socio-cultural cooperation in the Mediterranean area. As such, however, they represent the broadest possible space of manoeuvre within which the changing formulation of ICD in EUFP can be investigated.

3) The analysis of the implementation of ICD addresses the various regional programmes launched by the EU to give substance to the formulation of its goals and principles. This dimension analyses how such programmes have been decided, funded and operated as well as which steps, if any, have been taken to ensure the coordination of efforts for their promotion and delivery. From 1996, when the EU decided the launch of a first regional programme of this kind in the Mediterranean, to 2014, the EU has 'attached' the label ICD to six programmes affecting the countries of the area: *Euromed Heritage* (1998-2012), *Euromed Audiovisual* (2000-2014), *Euromed Youth* (1999-ongoing), *Tempus* (2003-2013), *Erasmus Mundus* (2004-2013) and the ALF (2005-ongoing).

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4 As in other parts of this dissertation, reference is here made to Adolf Wolfers' definition of milieu goals as those policy objectives which aim to shape, in the long term, the environment in which a political actor operates (Wolfers 1962).

These six programmes were launched at various moments of Euro-Mediterranean relations and came to represent separate layers of different, at times overlapping conceptions of how to foster ICD, as well as having different beneficiaries, fields of action and target groups, all of these without a significant amount of coordination. In fact, from an analytical perspective it is not easy task to pinpoint why EU officials and politicians held these specific layers together as ICD and not under other labels. Other cultural cooperation activities with MPCs were launched over the years, but the EU tended to frame them simply in terms of cooperation on cultural issues (Del Sarto 2007, 47). What does distinguish them from ICD? There is not a straightforward answer and EU officials and programme managers interviewed by the author have shown approximation on this matter. However, consistent with what has been set out in the working definition of ICD provided at the beginning of this introduction, the discriminating factor seems to depend on a combination of the type of outcomes expected by the EU and of the geographical distribution of the target groups of the these programmes, rather than on the latter's specific areas of cooperation.

For instance, the expression 'cultural policies' was deliberately employed by EMP cultural ministers as a tool separate from ICD to define activities linked to 'other domains of life (social policy, education, cultural industries, etc.) and [...] conceived as trans-sectoral development activities' (EMP 2008, item 34). The *Cross-Border-Cooperation 'Mediterranean Sea Basin' Programme* (CBC-MED) launched in 2007 within the ENP framework to fund cooperation projects for socio-economic development (European Commission 2006), and not included in this analysis, responds chiefly to the above idea of employing culture in EUFP, even though the programme includes a reference to 'cultural dialogue' among its sub-priorities of action. At the same time, the EU has also launched programmes aimed at promoting mutual understanding among its beneficiaries, which have occasionally included cultural cooperation activities, without incorporating them into ICD. This is the case, for instance, for the *EU Partnership for Peace*, an aid programme aimed at strengthening the capacity for conflict resolution and empowering marginalised parties (see Bouquerel and El Husseiny 2009, 65). In other words, the EU has promoted several forms of cultural cooperation and of mutual understanding initiatives in the Mediterranean over the years. Among them, they appear to have presented as ICD only those that specifically envisaged the creation of mutual understanding among the civil societies of the whole Euro-Mediterranean area, and that included among the objectives a specific focus on the cultural diversity of its participants.

4) This thesis also seeks to examine the role of ICD in EU policies towards the Mediterranean between 1990 and 2014. To this end, it focuses on the gap between rhetoric and performance in the promotion of ICD by highlighting the differences between the goals formulated for ICD and the actual programmes promoted, in light of the priorities set by the EU for the Mediterranean during the aforementioned period.

This research, however, will not attempt to account for the impact of ICD within the Euro-Mediterranean region. As has already been explained, this study aims to account for how and why the EU has promoted a changing conception of ICD implementation and includes some reflections on the general influence that this tool may have reached over the long time frame addressed. However, this type of analysis is not made systematically. If this was the case, it would be rather difficult to make this type of analysis, simply because, as the scholarship on 'cultural diplomacy' admits, there are no viable means to measure the impact of such types of tools (Goff 2013, 433). Moreover, measurable data on ICD implementation are generally not available.

Generally speaking, analysing impact or effectiveness is also a difficult task in the analysis of foreign policy, and especially in the EU framework, as there are a significant number of variables which might affect the areas in which policy instruments are employed and, accordingly, might make it very difficult and demanding to identify cause-effect relations (Tocci 2007, 7; Niemann and Bretherton 2013, 267). When referred to ICD, moreover, this hindrance appears even more challenging. As has already been mentioned, the implementation of ICD has been carried out by a stack rather than by a compact and coordinated amalgam of programmes and activities. In principle, therefore, it should be possible to analyse the single impact or effectiveness of each ICD programme. The various evaluation reports on specific programmes, however, are carried out by agencies commissioned (and paid) by European institutions and, therefore, may be biased in presenting their data. Several programmes, such as the ALF and *Euromed Youth*, have their own monitoring units and impact indicators. On this specific aspect, however, the interviewed ICD officials have admitted that these units do not in fact provide data about ICD impact but rather statistics on how many people participated in specific projects and how satisfied these participants are with initiatives and funding. The General Conclusions will nonetheless make some speculations about the impact that ICD have had in Euro-Mediterranean relations on the basis of the data collected and on the overall findings of the empirical analysis on its promotion.

10. Methodology

The data employed in this research are primarily collected throughout qualitative analysis of primary sources. A set of semi-structured elite interviews have been carried out to supplement, with testimonies from ICD protagonists, the information collected using the principle data-collecting method.

10.1 Qualitative analysis of primary sources

As a large number of actors are involved in EU foreign policy-making, the qualitative analysis of policy documents is carried out across a broad variety of data sources. Not all these types of sources, however, carry the same weight for this research. The analysis thus gives priority to those types of documents produced by the actors that have the most direct relevance to the formulation and implementation of ICD within the EU policy framework of reference.

The first consideration in this context is that since ICD is an instrument that, by its own nature, is promoted according to a collective or region-wide idea of cooperation, the analysis excludes documents concerning the bilateral relations between the EU and single Mediterranean countries. The second consideration to be made is that the definition of EU cooperation with MPCs, and of ICD within it, has generally been the result of competition among European actors, policies and instruments spanning the various components of EU external action (see Seidelmann 2009, 268-269; Edwards 2013, 283). From this perspective, to collect meaningful data about the formulation and implementation of ICD within such EU policy context, it is necessary to give an equal level of priority to the official documents concerning EUFP on the Mediterranean produced by both intergovernmental and supranational EU institutions, as well as to those produced within intergovernmental Euro-Mediterranean summits and ministerial meetings, to which both EU member states and the European Commission have given substantial contributions. In particular, the outcome documents adopted in intergovernmental fora are prioritised for their central contribution in rubber-stamping the position of ICD within the broader policy strategy defined by the EU in the geographic area studied, from one period to another. The documents from supranational institutions, in particular the European Commission's proposals and communications, are important sources for analysing the specific scope of ICD within the broader priorities set in intergovernmental European and Euro-Mediterranean fora.

Consistent with these two preliminary considerations, the next paragraphs present, in order of priority, all the types of sources referred to in this thesis and underline the specific contribution of each type of source to the overall analysis of ICD in the context of EUFP. The presentation starts from the policy documents employed to grasp the formulation of ICD objectives (divided between those produced by intergovernmental institutions and by supranational ones), and follows with the sources used to analyse ICD implementation.

The outcome documents of intergovernmental institutional meetings referred in this thesis include, in the specific context of the EU, the conclusions of the European Council (heads of state summit) and the conclusions and decisions of the Council of Ministers of the EU (mostly its 'External Affairs' and 'Education, Youth and Culture' configurations). These policy documents set the priorities of EU external action overall. As a consequence, the presence of ICD within them and the way in which it is referred therein are crucially relevant to grasp both the political relevance of this tool overtime, and the types of objectives toward which the EU member states have agreed to direct ICD.

Since, as mentioned, the definition of the priorities of Euro-Mediterranean relations has been substantially affected by the broader policy context, the outcome documents of the periodic 'Euro-Mediterranean conferences' are as relevant sources to analyse the role of ICD within the priorities agreed for regional cooperation between the EU and MPCs. 'Euro-Mediterranean conference' is a label commonly attached to the periodical meetings between the ministers of foreign affairs of EU member states, those of their Mediterranean partners and top officials of the European Commission, which have been held since the establishment of the EMP in 1995. Originally planned to be held every two years, from 1998 these meetings were held annually, and from 2003 twice a year (alternating a formal and a mid-term conference). The conclusions of these conferences have contributed to setting the political agenda of Euro-Mediterranean relations and to negotiating how to implement the initiatives and tools envisaged in the EMP action plans. They are therefore also fundamental to an analysis of the formulation process of ICD, although only up until 2008. Indeed, from the summit and the ministerial conference of 2008, held under the new framework of the UfM, to the end of the research time frame in 2014, there have been no further meetings of the ministers of foreign affairs or heads of state of the whole region.

In this framework, a contribution is provided also by the conclusions and final

declarations adopted in the framework of Euro-Mediterranean thematic/sectorial meetings. These encounters are complementary to the above-mentioned Euro-Mediterranean conferences and were held between ministers from the region with different thematic responsibilities. Outcome documents of these meetings help to analyse progress in specific areas of regional cooperation, including in a number of fields where ICD has been debated, such as audiovisual and media, culture and higher education.

The above documents are generally adopted together with a number of annexes that might include 'declarations' on a specific issue area or region, reports, guidelines and action plans to define in more detail how to advance a given policy initiative, or regulations or statutes of newly created bodies. Except for the specific case of the 'Barcelona Declaration' which, despite its denomination, is the outcome document of the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference (i.e. its conclusions), and therefore the main political agreement at the root of the EMP, the other declarations and reports adopted in the above-mentioned intergovernmental venues have a limited political value in comparison to the decisions to which they are annexed. In other words, they tend to set orientations and intents rather than politically committing institutions and states to follow them. Yet these documents remain analytically relevant because they help to shed light on the items discussed in the European agenda for the Mediterranean and reveal how the decisions to employ some instruments are gradually shaped. With reference to ICD, these annexes are employed to grasp how the roles and functions of this tool have been discussed and what priorities the tool has been expected to address over time. With regard to the study of the agenda-setting, another helpful source of data employed to grasp how the definition of the objectives of ICD has evolved, is constituted, where these are available, by the working documents of the 'Euro-Med Committee', an organism first conceived within the action plan adopted at the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Barcelona to discuss and review the agenda and the work programme of the EMP, and to prepare for periodic ministerial meetings.

Also national preferences have been referred to understand how some specific European or Euro-Mediterranean decisions about ICD have been taken. In this perspective, data on EU member states' foreign policy preferences have been mostly collected from prime ministers and foreign ministers' declarations made in European fora, and in the reports on the priorities and results of the EU six-monthly presidencies. As this is a potentially huge field of inquiry, secondary sources on the Mediterranean

policies of some particularly active EU countries (Italy, Spain, France, the UK, Sweden) have also been consulted with a view to outlining the motivations for the latter's commitment to the promotion of policies and instruments in this area. Information about Mediterranean governments' attitudes towards EU policies and ICD objectives and programmes, in contrast, has been mostly derived by press releases published in moments of particular relevance. Interviews with ICD officials as well as secondary sources complement these data, which are generally difficult to retrieve.

As the other side of the coin of Euro-Mediterranean policy-making, EU supranational institutions have produced an as relevant set of primary sources pertinent to this research. This is because the Commission has played a significant entrepreneurship role in the definition of various Mediterranean policies overtime. In this context, the communications and strategic papers adopted by this institution, which propose to the other EU institutions how these policies should be advanced, have been particularly relevant to grasp the intra-European discussions at the basis of the changes between the various phases of ICD. Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the joint communications prepared by the Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy have acquired a very prominent role in setting the EU agenda on some issues, including the policies in the neighbourhood and its tools. These sources form a crucial complement to the outcome documents of intergovernmental institutions listed above, as they contribute to defining the Mediterranean agenda of the EU, providing input on the policies to be improved and defining in more detail how the various instruments could be wielded in support of those policies. In this perspective, these documents prepared by the Commission are relevant for analysing both the formulation and the implementation of ICD. After all, the programmes through which ICD has been promoted in the Mediterranean were proposed, funded and evaluated mainly by the European Commission within an overall strategic framework decided during intergovernmental (EU and Euro-Mediterranean) meetings.

Remarks, speeches and press releases by EU officials constitute another important aspect of the overall picture. As has been argued, the preferences of those driving the EU at different moments of Euro-Mediterranean relations are contended to be the main explanation for changes in ICD promotion and implementation in EU foreign policy-making. As a consequence, although they have mostly a declaratory character, claims made in different moments by the President of the Commission, the High

Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (and, before 2009[5], by the High Representative for the CFSP) and other Commissioners, especially those responsible for the ENP and enlargement (and, before 2009, by the Commissioner on External Relations) are very helpful to understand the role that ICD has played in their perceptions of changing EU priorities in the Mediterranean.

Resolutions, motions and reports adopted by the European Parliament (and questions presented by single MPs), resolutions and working documents of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (established in 2004) and of its precursor (the Euro-Med Parliamentary Forum) are also among the primary sources considered in this research. These bodies tend to play a marginal role in defining the overall foreign policy strategy of the EU in the area. However, their outcome documents help to explain the changing expectations and evaluation of EU policies in the Mediterranean and, within them, of ICD and its objectives.

The above sources are particularly relevant to shaping the foreign policy context within which, between 1990 and 2014, the EU has promoted ICD in the period of reference, and to a discussion of the formulation process undergone by this tool therein, including the definition of the objectives. As concerns the implementation side of the analysis specifically, some of the main data are in fact gleaned from the very same sources mentioned above, especially from the appendixes of official outcome documents. For instance, the list of activities initially envisaged for the ALF, attached to the conclusions of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Crete (EMP 2003c), is very interesting for evaluating how the objectives of this institution changed when the Foundation was actually launched in 2005. Annexes to EU regulations (adopted by the Council and the Parliament) which establish financial instruments for cooperation and aid to third countries in the Mediterranean (MEDA, ENPI) provide data about ICD funding in the perspective of general EU allocations to be discussed.

Specific information concerning the implementation and some outcomes of ICD programmes is drawn from general evaluation or monitoring reports drafted by the EU itself or by independent bodies hired by the Commission. These latter reports are generally produced following the conclusion of the various periodic editions of ICD programmes (generally lasting from 2 to 4 year each). This, however, is not a rule as in some cases the EU has commissioned mid-term reports or more comprehensive reports

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5 These posts were created with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009.

analysing more editions of the same programme. The committees created to promote, coordinate and supervise the referred ICD programmes also provide detailed information and evaluation documents. Press releases and remarks by programme managers are also helpful to understand how the proponents and agents of ICD have evaluated the performance of this tool. However, since ICD is not, as shown, a plain and well-coordinated policy instrument, it was necessary to draw these data from scattered information bulletins concerning Euro-Mediterranean relations, published in the framework of past EU information and communication projects. These bulletins include, *inter alia*, interviews and speeches by field officers and politicians (*Euromed Report*, *Euromed Special Issue*, newsletter messages concerning ICD programmes). They are, therefore, very useful to grasp information that is not available in official documents and publications and to uncover possible hidden shades in the implementation of this instrument. The original archives for these documents, however, are no longer available. As a consequence, documents have been collected through web pages or paper dossiers and several issues (especially those published before 2000) are missing.

The last group of primary sources here employed is constituted of the reports and conclusions of the CSOs involved in the various civil gatherings that, since 1995, have accompanied Euro-Mediterranean conferences. Therefore, the frequency of these sources equates in principle to that of ministerial gatherings, which were, as seen, initially held every two years, then every one year and, since 2003, two for each year. Not all the outcome documents of these CSOs gathering, however, are available for analysis. These documents, although not specifically dedicated to ICD, give an idea of expectations of Euro-Mediterranean intercultural initiatives among civil society, and help to understand from a different perspective the gap between ICD formulation and its practical implementation on the ground. In this regard, available statistical studies concerning the perception of Euro-Mediterranean initiatives (IeMed's annual Euromed Survey, Euro-Med Barometer, ALF periodic surveys) and the participation of CSOs in ICD are also taken into consideration. Similarly to the specific programmes' evaluation reports, these sources, especially the 'network surveys' conducted periodically by the ALF, also show some limitations and bias. For instance, their sample is composed of the members of ALF national networks who accepted to actively contribute to the survey, that is, by the CSOs who have already been actively 'professionalised' within the activities of the Foundation. Finally, attention is also paid to available grey literature, that is, informally published written material collected from websites, such as

blogs or Facebook pages, concerned with Euro-Mediterranean initiatives. These documents help to contextualise a number of official policy choices and interviews and to fill some data gaps which exist in the analysis of the development of the EU efforts concerning ICD.

10.2 Elite interviews

14 semi-structured elite interviews were undertaken with a view to questioning the research hypotheses and to exploring possible further insights that cannot be directly inferred from the primary sources referred above. Interviews were conducted with two types of actors: 1) officials who work or have worked in various ICD programmes; 2) academics and politicians who have been involved in the formulation of ICD.

The selection of those to be interviewed has derived from the analysis of the primary sources discussed above: accordingly, each interviewee has been identified and contacted on the basis of his/her unique contribution to either the formulation or implementation of this policy tool. By allowing to directly questioning the protagonists of ICD, these interviews have thus been crucial in providing complementary data, or insights, concerning the most significant findings that emerged from the analysis of policy documents or ICD programmes' evaluation reports. Some of these interviews, for instance the one with Commission's President Romano Prodi, were particularly helpful to better understand the shades of different EU policy makers' choices to advance (or neglect) this tool. Other interviewees were selected with a view to collect original data on the behind-the-lines processes between officials and experts concerning the launch and implementation of ICD programmes that the examined documents would have not allowed to uncover. For instance, the interviews conducted with some of the experts gathered by Prodi to strengthen ICD promotion in the early 2000s (Bekemans, Isar, Joffé) have helped significantly to frame and discuss in greater detail the specific role of the Commission in driving the consolidation of this tool in EUFP. With specific reference to the last phase of ICD promotion (the 'phase of professionalisation', which will be addressed in Chapter 5) the data collected from the interviews (especially with ALF officials – Claret, Azoulay, Aubarell) have been crucial to supplement policy documents which, also due to the change of EU priorities for the Mediterranean during the uprisings (2010-2014), contained less relevant data on ICD than those investigated in the analysis of the previous phases.

The interviews were conducted between the spring of 2013 and the summer of

2015, and were mostly undertaken either by telephone, by VOIP software as Skype, or in person. Due to logistical and time zone issues, two interviews were carried out via e-mail exchanges. All the interviews involved a combination of direct questions and probing questions. The schedule of the interview changed slightly each time according to the typology of interviewee and to the medium of the conversation (face to face, via Skype, telephone or e-mail). All the schedules, however, followed a flexible reference track that focused on a number of topics at stake in this research: the nature of ICD as an instrument of EU policies in the Mediterranean; outcomes achieved by ICD programmes; significant changes in ICD fulfilment following major regional events (end of the Cold War; 9/11 2001; Arab uprisings); shifts between the various editions of ICD regional programmes; actual level of co-ownership achieved in the promotion of ICD; consistency of programmes and activities with the objectives of ICD; adequacy of human, financial and visibility resources to promoted activities.

Since the interviewees were asked slightly different questions according to the group of interviewees to which they belong and to the period in which they participated in ICD promotion, a method to compare responses and provide coherent data was necessary. This was achieved by following a four-step scheme (based on Halperin and Heath 2012, 279-281). The first step was the transcription of interviews and the analysis of the answers provided by each interviewee in their historical and political context. The second step was the reduction of redundancies in the collected data, discarding all the responses that were not interesting for the research design. The third step was the codification of each interview according to the same frame of reference. This code frame was constructed starting from the three research questions, as they are unpacked in section 3. The frame is composed of 7 categories or labels: ICD objectives; ICD outcomes/impact; resources for ICD programmes; shifts between ICD phases; implementation; rhetoric-performance gap; definition of ICD. After reducing and coding each interview, the last step was that of retrieving codified segments and quotations and collecting them thematically into new documents to serve as the raw material for the analysis of the general findings obtained from the other primary sources.

Interviews do also have a number of limitations that should be taken into consideration. First, data are collected from people who have worked for ICD programmes. Therefore, they can be biased, positively or negatively, towards the research problem. Second, as the questions refer, at least in part, to a long time frame

(about 25 years), there is the possibility that interviewees do not remember or have a false memory of events. Third, it is worth noting that the interviews with the first group of respondents – i.e. ICD officials – were almost all performed with officials and programme managers who were working in ICD programmes/initiatives during the research period. Indeed, especially with regard to the European Commission fixed-term work positions, it can be very difficult to track the people who had been in charge of these programmes in previous years and who have, therefore, a complete understanding of the changes undertaken by ICD. An overall effort to contain these limitations was made by triangulating the data collected through interviews with primary sources, secondary sources and grey literature. In addition, interviewees were provided in advance with a brief document describing the research project, the time frame in reference and the reasons why their contribution was considered important to the development of this study, enabling them to recollect their memories on the subject of analysis before the interview took place.

11. Structure of the dissertation and chapter list

This study on the changing formulation, implementation and roles of ICD in the framework of EU policies in the Mediterranean, from 1990 to 2014, is structured into five chapters, plus the Conclusions.

The first chapter presents in detail the theoretical/conceptual framework in which the analysis of ICD is framed as a foreign policy tool of the EU. First, the chapter addresses the conception of EUFP adopted for this research, providing an account of its various policy components and of the competences and responsibilities of the actors involved in it. The chapter then provides a critical review of the scholarly debate concerning the main conceptual approaches employed to address the external dimension of EU and, within this debate, it defines and justifies the choice for FPA.

The second chapter provides the policy framework into which ICD was formulated and implemented during the overall time frame of reference (1990-2014). The chapter is split into three main sections. Each one analyses how each of the three major international events mentioned in the time frame – the end of the Cold War (1990), the terror attacks of 9/11 2001, and the outbreak of the Arab uprisings in late 2010 – and other direct and indirect factors have affected the Mediterranean milieu, changed EU priorities, and triggered the revision of its policies and instruments therein. Each of these sub-sections thus provides the specific policy context within which the

following three chapters analyse the formulation, implementation and roles of ICD during the phases in which this research splits the analysis of EU efforts to promote this tool.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are devoted to an empirical analysis of ICD during the three phases identified in its evolution: the 'phase of emergence' (1990-2000), the 'phase of consolidation' (2001-2010) and the 'phase of professionalisation' (2010-2014). Each chapter follows the same overall structure, divided into two main parts. The first part is an analysis of the formulation process of ICD in the specific foreign policy context of the period, as outlined in Chapter 2. The analysis focuses in particular on the various actors' inputs that affected the definition of ICD objectives during that period, and on how the latter have been formulated. The second part is dedicated to an analysis of implementation, that is, of the regional ICD programmes and initiatives launched or implemented by the EU and its partners during each phase. This part focuses in particular on the financial resources the EU allocated for these programmes and on the number and types of projects funded in their framework, in the consistency of the objectives set for these programmes with ICD general goals, the coordination among them and the efforts to co-own ICD as a shared tool between the European and Mediterranean people and governments. The conclusions of each of these three chapters discuss the roles played by ICD in the phase of reference, contrasting the formulation and the actual implementation of the tool in light of the general context in which the EU took its foreign policy decisions for the Mediterranean. Together, these three chapters provide a comprehensive account of why and how the EU has promoted ICD in its Mediterranean policies from the end of the Cold War until 2014, the year in which EU and Mediterranean countries' leaders, EU officials, independent experts and CSOs met together in Naples with the ambition of launching the next chapter of Euro-Mediterranean dialogue by means of the ALF.

The General Conclusions of this study provide a discussion of the research findings with a view to giving an answer to each of the three specific research questions introduced above, in section 3, and a general explanation of the reasons for the EU's changing, vague and contradictory approach to the promotion of this tool in the Mediterranean. The conclusions also discuss the various original contributions brought to scholarship by this study and, finally, present further insights, research questions and possible developments for the analysis of the subjects related to ICD promotion that this research has not addressed.

Chapter 1
Approaching European Union foreign policy

Introduction

The aim of this first chapter is to present the conceptual framework within which this dissertation analyses the promotion of ICD in EU policies vis-à-vis the Mediterranean. This framework is drawn from a critical review of the broad scholarly debate that has addressed the complex realm of the EU's external dimension. After having discussed the benefits and limits of different theoretical approaches to the study of EU foreign policy-making, the choice of this research falls into a framework based on Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA). As elaborated further below, FPA is not exempt from limitations in addressing EUFP. However, this chapter argues that FPA is particularly well-suited to thoroughly address the changes and continuities in ICD as a policy instrument of EU action in the Mediterranean. First, FPA enables the investigation of both the material and the ideational factors at the root of the behaviour of the wide range of actors that are involved, at different levels, in defining and implementing EUFP and its tools. Secondly, FPA considers foreign policy and the tools used to pursue it as a boundary activity, which allows an analysis of the influence of both external and domestic factors in the formulation and implementation of ICD.

Some preliminary remarks are called for before it is possible to dig into this conceptual framework. Different conceptions of the external dimension of EU policy-making exist, depending on several factors. These factors include, as will be shown, the theoretical approach adopted by analysts and the focus of their investigations, but also the period of time in which EUFP is studied, or to which the research refers. As Telò (2006, 201) points out, the history of EUFP does not appear as a series of sequential steps in the same direction aimed at constructing a new fully-fledged international actor. On the contrary, European decision-making processes and rules, as well as Europe's foreign policy capabilities, resources, and instruments, have undergone frequent changes, especially since 1992, when the adoption of the Treaty of Maastricht established the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). EUFP should be thus understood in terms of 'successive layers or overlays, reflecting the evolution of ideas, institutions and policy' (Smith M. 2003, 568).

The piecemeal evolution of EUFP is thus part of a continuous challenge for

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analysts and, in the past, has even prompted some scholars to complain of a growing gap between the promise and the delivery of the theoretical concepts they created to address this subject (Ginsberg 1999, 430). In December 2009, the status of evolution of EUFP was (provisionally) consolidated by the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (adopted in 2007). However, for studies concerning EUFP over 'cross-treaties' time frames, it is not sufficient to refer only to the current EU legal framework to understand the decisions and actions of the EU in previous contexts. European action must necessarily be investigated in light of the capabilities and objectives that the EU had in each period under reference. The 'multifaceted and changing nature of EU foreign policy' (Tonra and Christiansen 2004, 9) is thus a main concern of any study, either theoretical or empirical, that touches upon the external dimension of the EU over longer periods, including this thesis. As the time frame of this research stretches from the end of the Cold War to the period immediately following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings (1990-2014), both this and the following chapters share the need to also take into account the empirical and conceptual challenges brought by EUFP continuous development.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first discusses the conception of EUFP adopted in this study, and provides a synthetic overview of the main components and procedures that make up this complex policy, the actors involved and their roles in the respective policy-making processes. The second section critically addresses the benefits and limits that various schools of thought have brought to the understanding of EUFP. In particular, this critical review discusses approaches from International Relations (IR) theories, European integration scholarship, and governance studies. In light of the specific insights and weaknesses of these approaches to address the specific subject of analysis, the third section discusses in depth the choice and the benefits to investigate the EU promotion of ICD in the Mediterranean within a conceptual framework grounded in FPA.

1. Defining the nature and composition of EU foreign policy

The literature provides a wide range of definitions of EUFP (see, for instance, Hill and Wallace 1996; Smith H. 2002; Hill 1998; Smith M. 2004b; Carlsnaes 2004; Bicchi 2007). Among these, this thesis adopts that provided by Federica Bicchi (2007, 2) in her comprehensive work on EU action in the Mediterranean, which refers to 'that body of declarations, decisions and actions that are made by the use of all the instruments that

the EC/EU has at its disposal, that are decided at the EC/EU level and conducted in its name toward a country or an area outside its borders.'

From the point of view of this present thesis, this definition has a key advantage: it is comprehensive enough to consider European external action in a temporal continuum, regardless of the many overlapping, changes and shifts in terms of actors, principles, procedures and capabilities that, as mentioned just above, EUFP has experienced over the years.

Indeed, the time frame of this thesis (1990-2014) encompasses many of the significant changes that have marked the overall development of this policy. In 1990, the then European Community (EC) was committed to developing its external relations with third countries in the fields of trade, aid and cooperation, while the then nine EC member states met periodically to discuss common security concerns and adopt declarations under an intergovernmental framework labelled as European Political Cooperation (EPC) (for an analysis of EPC, see Möckli 2009). Since 1992, with the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty, the provisions on EUFP included in the various treaties have incrementally contributed to bringing external action 'closer to Brussels' (Dover 2007, 243), allowing, over the years, for the creation of new European capabilities, bodies, instruments and procedures (see also Edwards 2013, 277). Early examples of this process include the establishment of the CFSP, which replaced the EPC framework, the creation of the post of High Representative for the CFSP following the adoption of the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, and a commitment to start building a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP, currently labelled as the Common Security and Defence Policy - CSDP) aimed at the establishment of a common European military apparatus. In the effort to 'facilitate continuity through greater capacity building' in EUFP (Edwards 2013, 279; see also Niemann and Bretherton 2013, 267; Helwig et al. 2013, 6), the 2007 Lisbon Treaty has introduced a number of further changes concerning the formulation and delivery of EU external action. In particular, this Treaty has created the post of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who wears two hats as both President of the Foreign Affairs Council (intergovernmental) and also Vice-President of the Commission (supranational), in addition to a European diplomatic service, the European External Action Service (EEAS) (see Dony 2009, 152-153; Helwig 2013, 238). The Lisbon Treaty, moreover, has increased the cases in which qualified majority voting can be employed in place of unanimity to take foreign policy decisions in the EU Council

(for a more detailed analysis of the differences introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, see Wessels & Bopp 2008).

Beyond allowing to encompass in one concept the continuous evolution summarised in the paragraph above, Bicchi's definition of EUFP is pertinent also because it clearly accommodates the ontological assumption adopted in this research concerning the nature of the subject of analysis of this chapter, namely that EUFP is a process conducted in the name of Europe, by European institutions, in *relative autonomy* from EU member states. This means that EUFP is primarily intended to be the outcome of the agency of European Council, the Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament, and of their leading officials. However, the autonomy of this process remains relative because, regardless of the period of reference, EUFP remains stuck in the persistent and paradoxical 'problem of reconciling the continuing, and sometimes jealously guarded, capacity for national foreign policy-making with the declared aspiration, and an evolving infrastructure, for a common, effective European foreign and security policy' (Edwards 2013, 277).

From this perspective, focusing the analysis on what the EU does externally 'in its name', does not exclude the relevance of member states' influence in the formulation and implementation of EUFP, which remain a crucial component of the equation when it comes to deciding positions and/or actions at the European level (Smith M. 2003, 557). Member states, indeed, express their voice, concerns and preferences in intergovernmental institutions, the Council and the European Council, which, as will be better elaborated below, take the lion's share in defining the strategic orientation of the overall external action of the EU, and in formulating and implementing specific policies, such as the CFSP and the CSDP. Despite the novelties introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, indeed, the common decision-making procedure for these specific EU policies remains unanimity or at least consensus among European countries (Edwards 2013, 277; Verola 2010, 48). As a consequence, member states maintain the substantial privilege of vetoing European decisions, which can lead to major compromises that *de facto* condition the outcomes of the complex EUFP decision-making system. Member states' preferences and objectives are therefore embedded into the conception of EUFP adopted in this thesis, to the extent that they influence the debate at the European level and lead to the adoption of European decisions and actions. In other words, in terms of output, the focus of analysis is on the decisions and actions taken by EU institutions, in the name of Europe. As far as the analysis of the formulation of these decisions and

implementation of these actions is concerned, however, this research addresses EUFP as the product of a 'disaggregated entity' (see White 2004, 18) that receives inputs from states, common institutions (both supranational and intergovernmental) and bureaucracies.

The concept of EUFP adopted in this research is a narrower concept than the broader idea of 'European foreign policy' which, as some analysts point out, should be conceived as a complex system made up of the 'sum of what the EU and its members states do in their international relations' (Hill 1998; see also White 1999; 2004). At the same time, contrary to some analysis of the early 2000s (Carlsnaes 2004, 1; White 2004, 18), EUFP cannot be as narrowly defined as simply the CFSP (and, within this, the ESDP/CSDP). The conception of EUFP adopted in this research equates, substantially, to that of 'external action of the Union', as the Lisbon Treaty currently describes it (see Title V of the TEU, Chapter V of the TFEU)[6]. It thus certainly includes the CFSP, which mostly deals with issues related to high politics, including security and defence (through the CDSP), but also what have been called the 'external relations' of the EU, which encompass trade, aid, development, cultural promotion and, in general, cooperation with third countries and international organisations and other initiatives (Dony 2009). EUFP also includes aspects of the so-called 'Justice and Home Affairs' sector (JHA). JHA, in fact, was originally introduced in 1992 with the aim of cooperating in a number of areas of internal security policy ranging from immigration to the fight against terrorism and organised crime, as well as in judicial and police cooperation. Over the years, however, perhaps also due to the transnational nature of these challenges, JHA cooperation has increasingly developed into one of the main active areas of EU external action, even having its agenda included among the areas of relevance of the CFSP (Longo 2013).

Within this wide framework, the roles played by European institutions (intergovernmental and supranational) and member states vary significantly according to the component of EUFP taken into consideration[7]. The CFSP, as mentioned, is mostly an intergovernmental process. It is currently defined and implemented by the

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6 The Lisbon Treaty has emended the two main legal instruments on which the EU is based: the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

7 As the relevance, procedures and actors of EU external action have evolved during the time frame of this research (1990-2014), the next paragraphs offer a brief overview of the two main components of EUFP (CFSP and the 'external relations'), updated to include the Lisbon Treaty provisions, while also taking into account some of the most significant differences compared to the past.

European Council and the Foreign Affairs Council[8], that is, respectively, from the periodic summit of EU members' heads of states and governments (plus an *ad hoc* President, the President of the Commission and the High Representative), and from the meetings of the ministers of foreign affairs (chaired by the High Representative[9]). The High Representative represents the Union in matters concerning the CFSP and, together with the member states, has the main responsibility of putting into effect the decisions, positions and strategies adopted by the Council. The High Representative is assisted in these activities by the EEAS, which has assumed the general task of navigating between different EUFP decision-making methods 'with the mission to support the EU member states, while maintaining complex relations with the Commission and the European Parliament' (Helwig et al. 2013, 6). The role envisaged for supranational institutions in formulating the CFSP, on the contrary, is minimal. The role of the Commission is limited to providing support to the High Representative in submitting questions, initiatives and proposals to the European Council. Furthermore, as far as this component of EUFP is concerned, the adoption of legislative acts is excluded. As a consequence, the European Parliament, a co-legislator in the majority of EU policy areas, has a mainly consultative role, although it must be informed about any development concerning the CFSP. The Parliament, however, also has budget powers and can therefore put pressure on the formulation of the CFSP by deciding the allocation of administrative and operational costs related to this set of policies (Smith K. 2008a, 15).

The decision-making process for the 'external relations' of the EU is based on procedures that are associated with the so-called 'Community Method'. Such method derives from the procedures that regulated the EC[10], and is characterised by '(i) the central role of the Commission in formulating proposals; (ii) qualified majority voting in the Council as a rule; (iii) involvement of the European Parliament with varying intensity depending on the decision-making procedure; and (iv) the role of the Court in ensuring judicial accountability (Baere 2009, 73). These procedures thus attribute more

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8 The Lisbon Treaty has brought into being a specific Foreign Affairs Council formally distinct from the General Affairs formation of the Council (see Dony 2009, 151-152).

9 Before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty the Presidency of the 'General Affairs and External Relations' Council was the rotating Presidency of the EU, as it was, and has remained for the other configurations of the Council.

10 Between the Maastricht Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty the EU was, as it is well known, established over three pillars. The first pillar was constituted by the rules concerning the European Communities' competences (so called '*acquis communautaire*'); the second pillar was represented by the CFSP; the third pillar regulated issues concerning JHA area. The Lisbon Treaty unified the three pillars and provided the EU with a legal personality.

weight and autonomy to supranational decision-making than those concerning the CFSP/CSDP. More specifically, in the current system established with the Lisbon Treaty, the European Council identifies the strategic interests of the EU in the areas entailed by EU external relations, acting unanimously on a recommendation from the Council. The Commission conducts international negotiations and ensures the EU external representation on these matters, and that EU actions are transparent and coherent. It can also submit (for the area of external relations) joint proposals to the Council together with the High Representative (for the area of CFSP). Although the High Representative is also Vice President of the Commission, and should be accountable within this institution for responsibilities incumbent on it in external relations, her/his mandate does not enclose all the areas of competence of the Commission on the matter. For instance, the High Representative had to share the responsibility for advancing the EU policy response to the Arab uprisings together with the Commissioner responsible for enlargement and the ENP (Edwards 2013, 283). The Parliament, as shown, can adopt normative acts in this area of policy-making together with the Council; it also approves the budget and EU international agreements, and can adopt resolutions on these matters.

The outline provided in this first section is not detailed enough to encompass the many peculiarities and exceptions that make up the complex framework of EUFP and how the respective rules, procedures and responsibilities have changed throughout the time frame of reference in this research (1990-2014). Nonetheless, it provides a sufficient overview of the main differences and overlaps existing between the various components of the external action of the EU, and of the main roles, competences and responsibilities of the different actors involved into this process. Taking into account such complexity overall is fundamental to address European relations with MPCs, which constitute the specific EU policy context within which the analysis of ICD evolution is made in this thesis. Indeed, as the next chapter will better clarify, the definition of EU action on the Mediterranean has often been the result of competition among actors, policies and instruments spanning the various components of EUFP outlined above (see Seidelmann 2009, 268-269; Edwards 2013, 283). As a consequence, the various EU policy initiatives promoted in the Mediterranean have mixed elements of the 'external relations' with common decisions and strategies related to the CFSP framework, and have also enclosed aspects of JHA, an agenda which the EU tried to develop in this area since the early 1990s, with a view to manage illegal migration and the increase in international crime in cooperation with its MPCs (Gillespie 2003).

2. Approaching EU foreign policy from a conceptual perspective

The brief overview of EUFP components, actors and decision-making processes provided also shows that the external dimension of the EU is a very peculiar, complex and fragmented subject of analysis. Although, as has been shown, member states' preferences play a crucial role in EU foreign policy-making, the existence of a supranational dimension in such process makes the EU different from a traditional international organisation, where most relevant decisions are taken through intergovernmental bargaining. At the same time, the preponderance of the intergovernmental dimension over the supranational one in foreign policy formulation and implementation makes it clear that the EU is not and is as yet far from becoming a fully independent supranational entity; neither a federation or a super state (Hill and Smith 2011a, 4). This *sui generis* nature of the EU (White 1999, 39; Smith 2002, 8; Tonra and Christiansen 2004, 4; Neimann and Bretherton 2013, 262-263) is responsible for a considerable portion of the conceptual hindrances to addressing the 'nature of the beast' (Risse 1996) in the realm of its external dimension, especially if one considers that a problem with theory of *sui generis* phenomena is that the latter 'are likely to be inherently descriptive' (Rosamond 2005, 469).

In their recent effort to combine an understanding of EU's internal character with an analysis of its international situation, Christopher Hill and Michael Smith (2011a, 8) have claimed that the EU should be approached according to three main perspectives: as a sub-system of international relations, as part of the wider processes of international relations and as a major power impacting upon contemporary international relations. This comprehensive conceptualisation, in fact, frames some of the most relevant questions that scholars from various schools of thought have been asking about the external dimension of the EU for decades, including: how states and institutions influence each other in the creation of a common foreign policy, how EUFP works and affects the system of international relations, and how the EU compares with other international actors in world politics.

Hill and Smith argue for methodological pluralism to explain and understand the EU in international relations since, they claim, no single approach, 'whether broad-brush as in realist, rationalist and constructivist or more specific, […] come near being adequate by itself' (Hill and Smith 2011a, 8). Single approaches can however turn out to be either more or less useful to the analysis of specific aspects of the all-in perception

of the EU in international relations offered by the two scholars. Therefore, the next section provides a critical review of the most significant theoretical contributions that have addressed the external dimension of the EU over the years. Without aiming to be exhaustive, this review discusses some of the advantages and relative weaknesses brought to understandings of the formulation and implementation of EUFP by European integration studies, IR theories (liberal and constructivist approaches), as well as by some insights which have emerged in the area of governance studies. By paying particular attention to the prospective applicability of these approaches to the questions on ICD and EUFP posed in this research, the ultimate goal of the following paragraphs is thus to consolidate within the broader and multifaceted debate on EU external policy the choice taken for an FPA-based approach, which is discussed in the last section of this chapter.

2.1 European integration studies

The specific literature on European integration has provided a number of helpful approaches towards theorising the development of the EU project (Wiener and Diez 2009). However, these studies have mostly focused on the economic and political integration of member states and societies into the EU rather than on the integration of members' international relations. As a consequence, this body of literature has not developed a clear emphasis on the specific circumstances of EUFP (Tonra and Christiansen 2004, 4; Hill and Smith 2011a, 4). When they did provide this, these studies have contributed to shaping a tendency in EU studies, as identified by Niemann and Bretherton (2013, 263), to exaggerate the uniqueness of the EU and, accordingly, the result is rather 'EU-introverted' because 'the EU has been (analytically) insulated from wider IR themes and the foreign policy of other powers'.

For instance, the literature on 'Europeanization' (Wong and Hill 2011), currently a major field of analysis concerned with the institutional, strategic and normative adjustments generated by European integration (Exadaktylos and Radaelli 2009, 508), has also represented a useful analytical framework for the study of the creation and pursuit of a 'common' EU foreign policy (Tonra 2013, 2; see also White 1999, 52). In these specific cases, however the focus of this approach has been mostly on how exposure 'to policy coordination and deliberative processes at the EU level has led to change in the national foreign policy environment' (Michalski 2013, 886; see also Tiilikainen 2015). Moreover, in the specific context of EUFP, Europeanization has been

considered more a descriptive rather than an explanatory device, since it describes a process of interaction rather than explaining why it occurs (White 2004, 21). This approach is thus not adequate for investigating the fundamental reasons for the evolution of ICD within EU external action on the Mediterranean. Europeanization approaches, in particular, would not allow an exploration of the role of the broader international context within which European actors' shape EUFP and its instruments, including ICD.

In the context of this study, among the theories of European integration that have also provided interesting insights on the subject of how the EU has developed its external action, Neo-Functionalism should also be taken into account. Indeed, although the latter is often relegated to the past, among the classical theories helpful to explaining the initial process and modalities of European integration, many have acknowledged the influence of its assumptions in current debates and theories (Haas 2001; Niemann w. Schmitter 2009, 55; Risse 2009, 146).

According to neo-functionalists, European integration was to be achieved spontaneously throughout a process of functional 'spillover', which would gradually transform integration in technical domains into economic integration and, finally, into political cooperation up to the creation of a new political community, superimposed over the pre-existing ones (Haas 1958 and 1961, see also Schmitter 1969). In the specific context of EUFP, some scholars have applied the logic of the functional spillover, albeit not always explicitly, to address EU efforts to construct a (security) region/community in areas surrounding Europe, especially in the Mediterranean space (Haddadi 1999; Bretherton and Vogler 2002; Bicchi 2007; Pace 2006). More specifically, this logic emerges in how these studies understand the rationale at the basis of the efforts to advance regional (political) integration in the area. According to Federica Bicchi (2006b, 154), for instance, the philosophy employed by the EU when it established the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in 1995 has continuously shown Europe's expectation 'that the opening of markets to the southern partners [would cement] political integration and security' in the continent. The same logic is claimed to have underlain the efforts to promote democratic change in the Mediterranean, also following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings in 2010/2011 (Pace 2014, 974). Seen from this perspective, the EU would have employed a forceful attempt to export its security model, strongly rooted in market economy and on fundamental principles, to the Mediterranean region (Jünemann 2003b, 2; see also the 'hegemonic perspective' on

Euro-Mediterranean relations in Attinà 2004b, 147). By contrast, however, the same neo-functionalist approach has been considered unsuitable to address EUFP in other contexts. As Michael Smith (2004a, 28) notes, for instance, this logic cannot explain the expansion of EUFP in those areas where the EU has limited economic interests or 'where the attempt to cooperate on foreign policy may interfere with European economic policies'.

When applied to the study of EUFP, neo-functionalist reasoning tends to privilege supranational actors, in particular the Commission, and accordingly, the capabilities and instruments established in the framework of the 'external relations' of the EU (Smith K. 2008a, 15), where the Commission plays, as has been shown, a more significant role than in the CFSP. As the Commission initiative has contributed thoroughly to both the formulation and implementation of EU external action in the Mediterranean and of ICD therein, a neo-functionalist logic would thus prove a good fit for an analysis of some relevant aspects of this research. In particular, it might explain the reasons why the EU introduced ICD, by focusing on expectations of the Commission about the spillover effect that technical cooperation on culture could have brought about to achieve broader European milieu goals in the area. However, by substantially neglecting the role of member states and their national preferences in shaping EUFP, the explanation would be incomplete. Moreover, Neo-Functionalism does not help to shed light on other, equally relevant questions. In particular, the logic of spillover would fail to explain why the EU has continued to implement ICD in the Mediterranean with more and more resources and determination, despite technical and economic cooperation in the area failing to provide the expected economic and political outcomes. In this specific context, furthermore, ICD is perhaps among the few tools of EU Mediterranean policies that do not appear in any direct causal relation with EU economic interests in the area, such as that of progressively establishing a free-trade area (see EMP 1995a). Although promising in some respects, therefore, the spillover logic inherent to Neo-Functionalism is not suitable to explain the overall process of formulation of ICD and the reasons for its changing promotion during the last 24 years of Euro-Mediterranean relations.

2.2 Mainstream IR theories

Mainstream IR theories, Realism and Liberalism, have particularly suffered from the unique nature of the EU, even in the case of more pluralist theorization (Edwards 2013, 276; Hill C. & Smith M. 2011, 5; Andreatta 2011, 22-24). According to

Rosamond (2005, 466), this difficulty is mostly due to the fact that conventional IR expects its core units to exhibit rationality and instrumentality, aspects on which the EU shows a certain lack of coherence.

This critical review does not give specific attention to approaches associated with the realist tradition, due to the evident ontological limitations of the latter in explaining the external action of the EU (see Smith M. 2004a, 19). Indeed, realist theories are built on a basic ontological imagery within which the fundamental units of analysis in world politics are nation states, and expect nothing less than rational, coherent state-like entities to be the only significant actors in politics beyond the nation state' (Rosamond 2005, 465-468). As a consequence, the nature of EUFP as the product of a 'disaggregated entity' made of states, institutions and bureaucracies represents, as some have pointed out, a 'provocation for the realist understanding of international relations' (Telò 2009, 28). Liberal theories, by contrast, show more optimism for international cooperation. They consider international and transnational organisations among the possible units of analysis and have more room for choice since they also shift their analytical interest onto issues of an economic nature, besides military and security (Andreatta 2011, 28; Smith K. 2008a, 11). Indeed, within the liberal understanding of international relations several fruitful approaches to the analysis of EU external dimension have emerged.

One major tradition within Liberalism to be mentioned is institutionalist theory. Generally speaking, institutionalists seek to 'specify the conditions under which institutions can have an impact and cooperation can occur [among states]' (Keohane and Martin 1995, 42) and to 'provide an explanation of actor behaviour as a function of the international institutions or other structures within which actors are located' (White 2004, 18). In the specific context of the EU, these approaches have addressed, among other aspects, how the design and rules of formal institutions of the EU (and not, for example, broader political or social forces) have affected the Union's political development (Jenson and Mérand 2010, 75).

Although EUFP has not been a major preoccupation for institutionalists, as Brian White (2004, 18-19) points out, these theories have nonetheless made a significant contribution to understanding Europe's global role, including how EC/EU institutions have grown, the extent to which decision-making has become institutionalised, and the ways in which European institutions have constructed their own agenda and developed their own capabilities. At the same time, institutionalists, similarly to Europeanization

scholars (see Tonra 2013, 2), have shown a significant degree of interest in identifying ways in which states have adapted their behaviour as a result of operating within a EU institutional context (White 2004, 18-19). Michael Smith (2004b, 11), for instance, has drawn up the 'New Institutionalism literature' in an effort to provide a coherent way to synthesise competing views about the nature of European cooperation in the field of foreign and security policy.

One limitation of institutionalist approaches to the type of questions about EUFP that this research aims to answer lies precisely in the former's propensity to explain the nature and developments of European external cooperation in itself, rather than analysing how the outcome of these processes – that is, EUFP – works and changes in a context of international relations. Moreover, since the primary focus of these approaches is, by definition, on how international institutions and other structures affect actors' behaviours, institutionalist approaches are inevitably weaker on agency (White 2004, 18). As a consequence, these approaches pay little attention to an analysis of the role played by all the other actors involved in the definition of EUFP choices, including EU member states and individual officials.

Another relevant approach within the same theoretical tradition is the one proposed by Liberal Intergovernmentalism, which considers the EU 'as a successful intergovernmental regime designed to manage economic interdependence through negotiated policy co-ordination (Moravcsik 1993). This approach conceptualises the external projection of the EU as 'a consequence of cooperative, rational, interest-driven activity by the EU member states' (Rosamond 2005, 469). Accordingly, national governments are considered the most important actors to explain EU policy-making, and EUFP decisions result from bargaining/negotiation among states, with a particular emphasis on the importance of economic gains and the impact of states' action within intergovernmental institutions. Yet there may be room for the agency of supranational institutions, to the extent that the latter enhance but do not constrain the capacity for decisions taken by national representatives in intergovernmental fora (Wiener and Diez 2009, 9).

The position of Liberal Intergovernmentalism is well suited to explain the creation and functioning of EU policies such as the CFSP and the CSDP since, as mentioned, these policies are the component of EUFP in which national agents are freer to impose their national preferences and interests on collective EU activities (Smith M. 2003, 567). For the same reasons, this approach would be also helpful to explain negotiation

dynamics in intergovernmental conferences, such as those leading to the adoption of new EU treaties, or the debates in the Council to ratify economic agreements with third parties, such as the Association Agreements on which Euro-Mediterranean relations have been legally based for more than two decades. In the specific context of EU policies in the Mediterranean, a liberal intergovernmentalist position may also provide interesting insights concerning the processes of negotiation between EU member states and partner countries which led to the employment of specific actions and policy instruments of the EU in the area, including, therefore, decisions on the relevance to be attributed to ICD initiatives in Euro-Mediterranean relations. As in the case of Neo-Functionalism above, these prospective benefits in addressing the subject of this research, however, are partial. Indeed, these approaches tend to neglect the very significant component of external influence exerted by the EU vis-à-vis Mediterranean partners in the areas where supranational institutions have a larger responsibility, including aid, development and cultural cooperation, and which also substantially affect the process of ICD promotion.

2.3 Governance approaches

Another source of insight for the study of the EU with significant theoretical implications for the analysis of its foreign policy comes from studies that focus on the categories of governance. After all, these studies, as the employment of the loose term 'governance' in place of state-centred 'government' implies (Bauman and Stengel 2014, 490), have shared with EU scholars some of the main conceptual challenges in addressing a changing international context where rule-making is increasingly the domain of a wide range of both state and non-state actors.

Multi-level Governance, in particular, is an approach that was developed in the mid-1990s to propose an alternative to both state-centrism and supranationalism, on the assumption that 'European integration is a polity-creating process in which authority and policy-making influence are shared across multiple levels of government – subnational, national, and supranational' (Marks et al. 1996, 342-343). In particular, this approach aims to unify the peculiarities within the idea of governance by straddling the borders between internal and external, comparative politics and IR, private and public spheres, using empirical observations on how the EU is increasingly functioning (Aalberts 2004, 24). Multi-level Governance tends to place a greater importance on supranational institutions than intergovernmentalist theories. This implies that when

applied to the study of EUFP, Multi-level Governance would prove particularly suitable for analysing the 'external relations' of the Commission, as well as the contribution of foreign policy initiatives carried out at the subnational level, such as 'city diplomacy' efforts or other forms of transnational cooperation (Papisca 2008; Shaffer 2010).

Some scholars, moreover, have claimed that this approach is suitable for the study of EUFP in its entirety (Telò 2006; Mascia 2010). Marco Mascia (2010, 59), in particular, stresses that, on one hand, Multi-level Governance is particularly helpful to explain the functioning of the CFSP, since it provides for both the authority of sovereign EU members and the gradual emergence of supranational institutions in the CFSP process. On the other hand, according to Mascia's argument, this approach also allows an interception and explanation of the role of non-territorial actors of civil society in the overall system of EUFP, while also connecting European external action with the other internal policies of the EU, for example within the JHA sector; policies that, as mentioned previously, have gradually developed an international dimension. Michael Smith (2004b, 752-753) has hypothesised the case in which the multi-level governance of the CFSP would be optimal: the issue on which the decision is taken conforms to a European Council mandate and the decision is reached by qualified majority voting in the Foreign Affairs Council; the decision has a long time horizon, does not involve violence (which may imply vital national interests and therefore the possibility of veto) and involves explicit delegation to EU organizations or a pre-existing framework; funding to implement the decision is provided by the EU budget, and the European Parliament provides input as required by the policy decision.

In principle, thus, Multi-level Governance would attribute the appropriate relevance to all actors and policy components involved in the formulation and implementation of ICD in EUFP, considering interactions among institutions, member states' preferences and the possible contributions of sub-national authority and transnational CSOs. The latter, in particular, are relevant actors to be investigated in the framework of this thesis, since they constitute the main targets of EU efforts to implement ICD initiatives in the Mediterranean. However, as Hill and Smith (2011a, 7) put it, the patterns of interaction of the EU are not yet dense or homogeneous enough to deserve the encomium of being characterised as a multi-level governance. Moreover, similarly to the Europeanization framework, Multi-level Governance seems to also drown its contribution to the understanding of EUFP within a helpful description of how different typologies of actors interact in shaping European decisions. If on one

hand, this approach would be helpful to identify the contributions of all those involved at the European level to promote ICD in the Mediterranean, on the other, it proves unsuitable to explain the reasons at the basis of the inputs that these actors provide within the processes of EUFP formulation and implementation.

Apart from Multi-level Governance, other approaches have also employed the language and categories of governance to explain EUFP. Some studies, in particular, have addressed aspects of the latter as an effort to expand the EU sphere of governance outwards EU borders. This perspective proves particularly effective for addressing European policies in those proximity areas, such as in the Mediterranean or in Eastern Europe, where the EU has better opportunities to exploit interdependence and to expand its own governance system. Sandra Lavenex (2004, 686), for instance, has explained the ENP as a form of 'external governance' of the EU, which consists of the (selective) extension of some European norms, rules and policies while precluding the possibility of membership. According to her argument, such a perspective might help to explain why specific issues of domestic politics gain priority in relations with neighbouring countries, and why these priorities fluctuate over time according to internal dynamics. A similar approach has been employed to explain the different policy frames promoted by the EU to engage with the countries of the Mediterranean neighbourhood (from the EMP in 1995 to the UfM in 2008) as an effort to create a 'EuroMed system of governance' (Cardwell 2011, 220).

This focus on governance categories, therefore, provides a very comprehensive approach to the analysis of some aspects of EUFP, and, among other things, makes it possible to bypass some of the problems connected with the intergovernmental-supranational divide in the analysis of the overall EU foreign policy-making process. To follow Lavenex's hypothesis, for instance, an external governance approach would allow an explanation of the changing objectives and contents that ICD promotion has encountered in EU Mediterranean policies over the years as a function of emerging domestic political priorities during the period of reference. However, the above-mentioned approaches are mostly focused on internal factors and processes and give less attention to the contribution of external factors including, for instance, the analysis of EU partners' preferences, which can be part of the broad context within which EUFP choices are made.

2.4 Constructivist approaches

Social Constructivism has made an important theoretical contribution to the analysis of EUFP. Indeed, within the broader debate between the classical rationalist theories discussed above (in particular, liberal approaches) and what has been labelled as the 'constructivist turn' in IR (Sterling-Folker 2000, 97), the latter has emerged as particularly helpful for addressing some peculiarities of EU external action (Rosamond 2005). In particular, by shifting the focus onto how the expectations produced by behaviours affect identities and interests (Wendt 1992), these theories have provided interesting insights both on the effects of international institutions on the policies and identities of states in European foreign policy-making (Wagner 2003), and on the problematic issue of defining EU identity in a global perspective, *inter alia* (Tonra and Christiansen 2004; Rosamond 2005). Some of the most innovative (and debated) theoretical works of the last decade which focus on the nature and scope of EUFP and on EU international 'actorness' are indeed framed within the constructivist tradition (see, for instance, Bretherton and Vogler 2002; Manners 2002).

Constructivist approaches focus on the subjective and self-constituting nature of interests and values and consider the impact of ideas and discourse on social action, the end result being socially constructed realities, including those constructed internationally (Burnham et al 2008). Therefore, their analytical lens challenges the traditional assumptions of IR mainstream theories that assume the rationality of actors, states following a self-evident national interest, and an inherently anarchical international system. According to the constructivist camp, institutions are created through reciprocal interaction and actors' interests and identities change through the process of cooperation (Smith K. 2008a, 15-16). From this perspective, constructivist approaches also offer a position from which to bypass the long-standing 'agency-structure' dilemma in IR, since they argue for the mutual constitutiveness of (social) structures and agents (Risse 2009, 145; Andreatta 2011, 36; Behr and Tiilikainen 2015). The reasons for the making of EUFP can thus be encountered within the dynamics of socialisation (Bicchi 2007, 13).

Constructivist approaches focus on normative and ideational aspects and motivations, not only of the EU's international actions, but also of its own relations toward normative objectives such as the promotion of human rights, democracy, peace and the rule of law (Tocci 2007 and 2008). This internal/external dynamic relationship has been considered by some as more relevant to an understanding of EUFP than for an

analysis of what the EU is actually doing in its external actions. In his influential work on *Normative Power Europe*, for instance, Ian Manners (2002, 252) argues that the EU is constructed on a normative basis and is thus predisposed to act in a normative way in world politics. Accordingly, the most relevant aspect needed to understand the external role of the EU is not what it does or what it says, but 'what it is internally'.

From a constructivist viewpoint, the capacity of the EU to act on the international scene, i.e. its 'actorness' (Sjöstedt 1977), is intended as a function both of external opportunities and internal capabilities, 'which include the availability of policy instruments and the capacity and legitimacy of decision-making processes' (Bretherton and Vogler 2002, 29). This view has been considered particularly helpful to address the conceptual hindrances raised by the *sui generis* nature of the EU. In particular, this approach manages to combine the concept of 'actorness' with that of 'presence', which was proposed back in 1990 by Allen and Smith to denote the EC influence in some areas of international relations without treating it as a conventional actor (see Bretherton and Vogler 2002, 22). As concerns the actors involved in EU external action, finally, the positions adopted by constructivist approaches make a full use of the variety of actors involved in the complex process of EU foreign policy-making (Bicchi 2007, 13).

Constructivism has also provided original insights to the analysis of specific EU policies in the Mediterranean. In particular, some studies framed under this approach have managed to explain EU action therein as an effort to build a sense of common identity or belonging throughout the whole Euro-Mediterranean space (Pace 2006; Adler et al. 2006). As set out in the introduction to this dissertation, a constructivist lens has also been employed to investigate the specific rationale of ICD as a case study within these policy-making processes. ICD does indeed entail a set of norms and values whose contribution can be effectively framed and discussed under this logic. Stefania Panebianco (2001), for instance, has addressed the innovative elements and the challenges brought about by the introduction of ICD and cultural cooperation into mid-1990s EU policies on the Mediterranean, looking on these as an instrument of region-building and identity formation towards the construction of a feeling of 'Mediterraneanness'. Similarly, Adler and Crawford (2006, 33) have explained ICD as forming part of European efforts 'to develop institutional spaces within which mutual socialisation can take place, trust can develop and the social construction of common interests, discourse, narratives and myths can be promoted'.

Brian White (2004, 23) claims that the most radical contribution of

Constructivism to understanding European foreign policy was to change the research agenda by asking different sorts of questions. These questions concerned, among other topics, the roles of dominant belief systems, conceptions of identity, symbols, myths and perceptions in shaping European foreign policy decisions. The goals of this research, however, do not fall primarily within that research agenda. This study aims neither to analyse the contribution of ICD's evolution in terms of identity formation in the Mediterranean area, nor to arrive at an understanding of the relationship between the EU and the domestic values it reflects through the employment of this tool. As has been touched upon above, this research is mainly interested in analysing the processes of formulation and implementation of EUFP in a changing Mediterranean politics context which have affected change and continuity in the promotion of ICD as one of the EU's policy instruments therein. The research aims to account for why and how EU institutions and member states have cooperated and/or competed, at different degrees, to introduce and develop ICD in various moments of Euro-Mediterranean relations and what roles this tool has gradually assumed over time in the evolving regional policy milieu.

In this context, constructivist analysis has limitations. Firstly, these approaches highlight the ideational factors but are not suitable for exposing the material factors that also contribute to shaping EUFP decisions and instruments. Secondly, as Barnett (1999, 7) points out, constructivist reasoning has tended 'to operate with an oversocialized view of actors', thus risking a failure to recognise the relevance of actors' agency in appropriating the cultural and social norms surrounding them for various ends. In this perspective, as Hill (2013, 2) notes, Constructivism 'starts to fall short when it comes up against problems of implementation and the ability of ideas, through the mediation of human actors, to change the logic of international politics'. Thirdly, these approaches do not entail an analysis of the complex procedures characterising the European institutional framework where EUFP outcomes are defined. Therefore, although Constructivism provides very helpful insights concerning the overall subject of analysis of this thesis, as is elaborated in more detail in the next section, these goals are better pursued through an approach grounded in FPA.

3. The Benefits of an FPA-based approach

In general terms, FPA is the 'study of the conduct and practice of relations between different actors, primarily states, in the international system' (Alden and Aran

2012, 1). Traditionally concerned with the foreign policies of states, FPA is in fact one of the theoretical views that has experienced the greatest difficulties in attempts to analyse the *sui generis* nature of the EU. Particularly from the early 1990s onwards, indeed, adopting a primary focus at the state level would have led to the exclusion of 'much of what is distinctive and significant about the EU' and, accordingly, would have impeded the development of an appreciation of the EU's influence in international politics (Niemann and Bretherton 2013, 263). Rosamond (2005, 469) points out that it takes a 'radical leap' to move from state-centrism to the peculiarities of the EU as an international actor, especially if one considers that interests are pursued differently according to the unit of analysis. Indeed, nation states tend to build their foreign policies on logic such as the balance of power and zero-sum or 'two-level games' (Putnam 1988). Meanwhile, as the subject of this research also confirms, the EU prefers to establish forms of cooperation and dialogue with third countries or regions and other forms of co-option and attraction to pursue its own interests and objectives (Tocci 2007; Manners 2002; Smith 2002; Rosamond 2005; Smith K. 2008a).

However, while not in fact referring to the complex case of the EU, several foreign policy analysts have allocated a less radical position to states in the definition of their unit of analysis. Brighi (2013, 3), for instance, has partly bypassed this problem by identifying the unit of analysis for 'actorness' in the 'foreign policy political process', defined 'as that broad political site where "a community thinks collectively" about its foreign policy and foreign policy decisions come to be taken'. Valery Hudson (2005, 3), for her part, has stressed that the point of intersection between the primary determinants of state behaviour is not the state, but human decision makers. In their study on FPA, globalisation and non-state actors, Baumann and Stengel (2014, 491) have argued that FPA scholars are already well positioned to explain 'today's more complex foreign policy-making, which involves networks of state officials, representatives of NGOs, business companies, IOs, and (if indirectly), terrorist and criminal networks'.

In principle, all these conceptions should render the application of an FPA approach to the EU feasible, as they provide an implicit escape from the trap of state-centrism, without of course altogether removing the state from the focus of analysis. The 'community' that collectively thinks about its foreign policy can indeed be either national or European or both. Human decision makers can evidently act at different levels of policy-making besides the national (or sub-national) one; therefore nothing excludes, in principle, addressing officials working in the Commission and/or member

states' representatives in EU intergovernmental institutions as apposite units of analysis if an FPA approach is applied to the study of EUFP. Finally, Europe represents a particularly pertinent example of the complex and mixed-actor systems of foreign policy-making to which Bauman and Stengel (2014, 511-512) refer in their study.

In their specific efforts concerning Europe, the first, crucial step made by foreign policy analysts has been that of accommodating the peculiarities of Europe, showing that, in fact, FPA is not primarily concerned with states but with actors. As early as the mid-1990s, when European foreign policy was much less developed and autonomous than it is today, Christopher Hill (1996, XI) explained the reasons for employing the term 'actor' instead of 'states' in the title of his book on *Europe's foreign policy*: not to denote any fundamental downgrading of the state as an actor, but to make it possible to include the Commission together with the member states. In fact, as Brian White (2004, 24) argues 'FPA is not wedded to traditional state-centric realism', but can be better characterised 'as a continuing adaptive response to the challenges to traditional assumptions emerging from a transforming world politics'. He continues by underlining that 'FPA happened to emerge at a time when the state was evidently the main actor in IR but, arguably, it was the actor perspective, rather than a specific actor that was important to foreign policy analysts' (*ibidem*). To synthesise, then, FPA approaches can address EUFP because they offer an actor- rather than a state-centred perspective, and, crucially, provide a policy focus at the international level (White 1999, 46)[11].

As the above-mentioned theorists have argued, a conceptual framework grounded in FPA provides a solid structure for analysing both member states' foreign policies and other subsystems of EUFP. Particularly helpful in this context are FPA 'middle-range theories', which are approaches that 'move from very general propositions about international institutions and cooperation, to specific decision-making structures, their mechanisms of change, and the outcomes they produce' (Smith M. 2004a, 26). From this perspective, FPA appears particularly well-placed to examine 'the interlinkages

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11 To these insights, it is also worth adding the contribution made by Keukelerie and Schunz (2008) who have been working to develop an approach that, they argue, proves particularly suitable for the study of EU external action. This approach, labelled 'structural foreign policy' (see also Telò 2006, 227-232 on this concept) addresses a foreign policy conducted over the long term which seeks to influence or shape sustainable political, legal, socio-economic, security and mental 'structures'. Such multidimensional structures do not only characterise states and interstate relations but also societies, and individuals as well as the relations between states, societies and the international system as a whole (see also Keukelerie and MacNaughtan 2008).

between the axial elements of foreign policy decision making [decision makers, bureaucracies, societal actors, the state], foreign policy implementation, and foreign policy behaviour in a cross national context' (Alden and Aran 2012, 119), and also, as shown below, at the EU level. Indeed, the application of an FPA inherent method of analysis, which is composed of a 'close scrutiny of the actors, their motivations, the structures of decision-making and the broader context within which foreign policy choices are formulated' (*idem*, 1), to the complex and multi-level policy-making processes in the EU, is not only possible in principle, but has been already done very fruitfully.

Within the wide field of IR, FPA has provided very significant insights for the study of EU foreign policy (Hill and Smith 2011a, 5). These approaches are regarded as among the most prominent to have addressed the processes of decision-making in intergovernmental negotiations in CFSP and CDSP fora (Gross 2007, 39). Distinct from (liberal) intergovernmentalist approaches, for instance, FPA allows a consideration both of inter-state bargaining in EU fora and the specific contribution of (and interaction with) supranational actors in shaping these choices. Moreover, since foreign policy choices are generally made on the basis of preferences which are 'in part situationally, in part biographically determined' (Alden and Aran 2012, 2), these approaches also allow for a consideration of the important contributions to European foreign policy-making which have been brought about both by political decision-makers' and bureaucratic elites' perceptions of intra- and extra-European developments (Mockli 2009, 7). The specific focus on the bureaucratic politics dimension of FPA has further proved itself to be very useful when addressing the peculiarities of EU external action. As Christopher Hill and Michael Smith (2005) point out, FPA middle range theories have proved very applicable to analyses of bureaucratic politics within EU supranational and intergovernmental institutions. This aspect is particularly relevant for addressing Euro-Mediterranean relations. As has already been stressed, indeed, EU action in this area has been in large part shaped by a complex combination of policies and instruments resulting from coordination and competition between different decision-making processes, which involved, at different levels of responsibility, all European institutions, including directorates, offices and ad hoc Euro-Mediterranean bodies composed of senior officials.

The application of FPA to the analysis of EU external action has also proved very helpful for conceptualising and evaluating some of the main limitations of the EU in

terms of the implementation of its policy decisions. Namely, the notion of a 'capability-expectation gap' was coined in the early 1990s by Christopher Hill (1993) to point out the dangerous tensions emerging between, on one hand, the major expectations created in third countries by then-recent developments expressed through the rhetorical image of Europe's increasing size and potential in foreign policy and, on the other, the limited instruments, resources and ability to act that the EU could actually put in place in the international context. Similarly, FPA is also useful to evaluate the other contradictions which exist within EUFP, including what can be called the 'rhetoric-performance gap', that is, the divide which exists between the promises made by the EU in the presentation of its foreign policy initiatives and tools, and their actual delivery (see also 'gap between rhetoric and reality' in Tocci 2005, and Gordon 2010; or 'conception-performance gap' in Panebianco 2006; and Elgström and Smith 2006b, 248). In this context, FPA is particularly apt for addressing the 'rhetoric-performance gap' in the EU promotion of ICD within its policies towards the Mediterranean, which is a key aim of this thesis.

As a general remark, it should be pointed out that most of the studies referred to in this section to justify an application of FPA categories to the analysis of the EU have not generally focused on the 'narrow' foreign policy of the EU, as this research does. More or less explicitly, these studies have referred to broader 'European foreign policy', which, as already mentioned, adds an analysis of member states' foreign policies to what the EU does 'in its own name' in international relations (Hill and Wallace 1996, 5; Hill 1998; Carlsnaes 2004, 1; White 2004, 11-13). In fact, some of these studies have explicitly relegated the analysis of narrow 'EU foreign policy' to a structuralist-institutional perspective. According to their argument, this latter perspective, 'with its focus on cooperative, integrative behaviour at the European level, also downgrades the significance of the different foreign policies of member states which, per se, are not regarded as part of European foreign policy' (White 1999, 44). However, as this chapter has shown, FPA has an actor-centred rather than a state-centred focus, and EUFP is the product of a 'disaggregated entity', in which member states, supranational institutions and bureaucrats contribute, at different levels, to the formulation and implementation of a common EU external action. From this perspective, there is no obstacle to the successful application of FPA to the narrower field of EUFP as well.

Adopting an approach grounded in FPA, moreover, brings two further advantages to the study of EUFP, which, *de facto*, allow taking on board some of the most relevant

insights of the aforementioned approaches. First, FPA naturally entails an analysis of the internal determinants of EU action abroad. Indeed, in seeking to provide a fuller explanation for foreign policy choices, FPA scholars have had to take account of the boundaries between the [...] domestic […] and the external environment' (Alden and Aran 2012, 1). Although this issue is at the root of a perhaps unresolved debate in scholarship, it is undeniable that the 'shifting boundary' between domestic politics and international relations remains at the heart of foreign policy, empirically, conceptually, and theoretically (Brighi 2013, 1). This means that this approach allows the reasons and modalities for EUFP decision-making to be investigated within how both domestic (national and European preferences and interests) and external factors have affected the decisions of EU policy-makers in different periods of the time frame of reference.

The second additional benefit of this approach is that, as Hudson (2005, 2) claims, since FPA is interested in explanatory variables from all levels of analysis to the extent that they affect decision-making processes, this is 'the most radically integrative theoretical enterprise'. In particular, FPA has developed an intellectual proximity 'to the changing currents of thinking within the various domains of the policy sciences' (Alden and Aran 2012, 3). Scholars, in particular, have underlined the closeness of this approach to governance literature, in particular as FPA poses attention to non-state actorness without overlooking the role of states and of agency (Baumann and Stengel 2014, 491), public policy approaches (White 2004, 57) and, increasingly, with constructivist reasoning (White 1999, 55, and 2004, 57; Alden and Aran 2012, 2; Tiilikainen 2015). In this perspective, as White (2004, 17) argues, since constructivist approaches consider the mutually constitutive nature of structures and agents, an FPA approach informed by Constructivism would make it possible, *inter alia*, to analyse the dialectical relationship between agent and structure in European foreign policy-making 'rather than privileging either the one or the other'. While acknowledging the analytical benefits offered by this intellectual proximity, however, this research focuses its causal explanation largely on how a varied set of actors (within European institutions, bureaucracies, member states) translate their ideas and perceptions into EUFP action, rather than on how norms, social roles and social identities arise, change, and influence these actors' behaviour.

To sum up, therefore, the application of this FPA-based approach to the subject of this research allows both the material and the ideational factors which are at the root of EU and member states' behaviours vis-à-vis the promotion of ICD to be considered (see

also Hill and Smith 2011a, 8). It permits ICD-related policy-making processes to be analysed within the complex procedures making up the institutional framework in which EUFP decisions are taken. This approach, moreover, allows considering the motivations, interests and expectations of the full variety of actors involved, including European institutions' and member states' officials, non-state actors but also EU's partner countries' representatives within joint Euro-Mediterranean decision-making fora. While pursuing their national preferences vis-à-vis the EU, indeed, the latter also contribute affecting some of the policies and tools in the area, contributing to shape the broader context within which EU decisions have been taken. Indeed, as has been stressed, using FPA's inherent attention to the internal-external boundary of policy-making, the causes and implications of these decisions can be tracked in both the changing international milieu within which EUFP has been conducted in the Mediterranean, from the end of the Cold War up to the Arab uprisings, and in the domestic constraints that have pushed European officials and national politicians to pursue the creation of new European policies and tools for the area during the same period.

Furthermore, this approach makes it possible to address the evolution of ICD across the various policies that the EU has promoted in the Mediterranean as one of the foreign policy instruments at the disposal of the EU overall. In this perspective, the adoption of an FPA approach helps to bypass the limit, encountered in almost all the literature that has focused on this specific subject from other conceptual or empirical standpoints, of reducing ICD to merely a case study within a wider analysis of a single policy initiative of the EU in the Mediterranean, namely the EMP/Barcelona Process.

Conclusions

This chapter has addressed a number of conceptual aspects concerning the complex realm of EU foreign policy-making, with the goal of presenting and justifying the theoretical framework under which the empirical analysis of ICD is conducted in the next chapters. Among the several approaches that have brought relevant conceptual contributions to the understanding of EU external dimension over time (including liberal IR theory, constructivist approaches, European integration scholarship, and governance studies), the chapter favours an approach grounded in FPA. Following on from the efforts made by several analysts to apply FPA categories to the *sui generis* nature of the EU, this chapter has argued that FPA provides for a very comprehensive

perspective into the analysis of the several actors and processes involved in complex and multi-faceted EU foreign policy-making and, within this framework, in the promotion of ICD abroad.

More specifically, the FPA-based approach chosen for this research allows, on one hand, both the material and the ideational factors at the root of EU and member states behaviours vis-à-vis the promotion of ICD in the Mediterranean space to be considered. On the other, it favours an analysis of the policy-making processes that have affected ICD, taking into account the motivations, interests and expectations of the full variety of actors involved, including both European institutions and member states' officials, non-state actors, and the role of partner countries' interests within joint Euro-Mediterranean decision-making fora.

This theoretical framework, in other words, permits the causes and implications of EU decisions on ICD to be tracked, both in the changing international politics milieu in which the EU has developed its foreign policy approach for the Mediterranean area, and in the domestic constraints and opportunities that have prompted EU officials and member states' politicians to define or reconsider European policy objectives and tools therein during the long period ranging from the end of the Cold War up to the early developments of the Arab uprisings.

Chapter 2

The Evolution of EU Policies

in a Changing Mediterranean Context

Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to outline the foreign policy context within which the EU has promoted ICD as one of the instruments of its external action in the Mediterranean area. During the research time frame (1990-2014), EU policies in this area were affected by a complex set of challenges and opportunities of different natures. Some of these specifically concerned the evolution of the political, security and socio-economic Mediterranean milieu. Among the most significant were regional conflicts, including tense Arab-Israeli relations, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism in the area, and the challenges connected with a growing presence of migrants from MPCs into Europe. Other factors affected EU Mediterranean policies indirectly, namely the development of EU relations with Eastern Europe, and the advancement of the enlargement process. Shifts in EU Mediterranean policies, moreover, were also prompted by general factors affecting EUFP overall, such as the gradual acquisition of new foreign policy capabilities, or the effects of the global economic crisis of late 2000s on EU general expenditure on its external action.

As claimed in the introduction to this thesis, the EU developed ICD from the outset to soften the alarming causes and consequences of a growing socio-cultural divide in the Mediterranean. EU choices on the evolution of this tool were thus primarily influenced by those challenges and opportunities that directly affected the evolution of this regional milieu. However, in order to properly define the policy context within which the evolution of ICD took place, this chapter provides an overview of how the EU developed and revised the objectives, approaches and instruments of its Mediterranean policies in response to all the types of factors mentioned above. In this perspective, the analysis is structured around three major events that had a direct bearing both on the EU's general relations with MPCs and on ICD in the period 1990-2014. Within this tripartite structure, it also addresses the consequences of all the afore-mentioned indirect and general challenges on the evolution of EU Mediterranean policies.

The first section addresses the definition of EU Mediterranean policies following

the end of the Cold War. The conclusion of the long-standing confrontation between east and west favoured a general re-prioritisation of the Mediterranean basin for Europe. The EU's strong interest in this area was dictated in particular by a need to face the intensification of a series of security concerns of different kinds, including a mounting social and political instability in some Mediterranean countries, which the EU associated to a growing presence of migrants from Maghreb and to a rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the area. The attention was also favoured by southern European member states' efforts to balance the then EU's extensive involvement in the process of transition underway in post-Soviet Europe. Moreover, the optimism for the launch of the MEPP in 1991, despite the peripheral role played by Europe within it (Hutchence 2001, 190), represented an opportunity for the EU to pursue peace and prosperity in this area (Peters 2006). The efforts to provide a policy response to the challenges and opportunities offered from this evolving milieu during this decade resulted in the launch of the EMP/Barcelona Process in 1995.

The second section begins with an analysis of how the EU tried to face the political, security and socio-cultural implications for the Mediterranean of the attacks in the US of 9/11 2001. The consequences of these attacks engendered a dynamic revision of the agenda of EU relations with MPCs, as the issues of Islamic fundamentalism, international terrorism and connected social tensions and xenophobic attitudes, already growing concerns for the EU, were quickly moved to the top rank of European priorities. As well as the attacks of 2001, this section also analyses how two other relevant events affected the approach of the EU to the Mediterranean in those years. On one hand, the collapse of the peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians in late 2000 made the already complex dialogue on security and political cooperation in the EMP framework increasingly difficult, due to the mounting tensions between the EU's Arab partners and Israel. On the other, the 2004 enlargement process, which brought ten new countries into the EU – eight from Eastern Europe – favoured the adoption of a new policy scheme, the ENP, which modified the European approach towards its changing neighbourhood, including towards its Mediterranean side.

The third section investigates the beginning of a still open-ended process that originated from the outbreak of the Arab uprisings in late 2010. In the wake of the wave of protests in some MPCs, the EU underwent a further revision of the ENP framework, with a view to presenting a credible and effective response to the pro-democracy and human rights claims coming from the civil societies of some of its partner countries.

1. EU policies and the Mediterranean milieu in the early 1990s: challenges and innovations

The majority of EU policy analysts agree that the most ambitious and original outcome of EU efforts to develop its relations with Mediterranean countries during the 1990s was the Barcelona Declaration (Calabrese 1997; Biad 1997; Stadviris S. 2001a; Mascia 2004; Adler & Crawford 2006). This declaration was adopted by the ministers of foreign affairs of all EU member states and 12 MPCs [12] at the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference, held in Barcelona on 28–29 November 1995. The idea of this conference was first endorsed by the Corfu European Council in 1994 and later championed by the European Council and Commission with a view to offering a platform to discuss the establishment of a medium- and long-term framework of cooperation between the two shores of the common sea (European Commission 1994, 2). The outcome of the conference was the launch of the EMP or Barcelona Process, which became the official EU policy towards its southern neighbours for the following decade.

Scholars have generally described the policy framework of the EMP as a 'true novelty' and a 'radical departure' from past cooperation initiatives of the EU in the Mediterranean, particularly on account of its comprehensive approach to security, which encompassed the political, economic, social, and cultural challenges faced by Europe in the area (Bicchi 2006; Adler and Crawford 2006; Pace 2006). However, in order to present and better contextualise the innovative features of the EMP it is necessary to take a step back and analyse the historical and institutional processes that led to the establishment of the Barcelona Process in the first place.

1.1 European policies in the Mediterranean before the launch of the Barcelona Process

In the 1970s and 1980s, European relations with Mediterranean countries were encompassed under the label of 'Global Mediterranean Policy'. Some authors questioned the actual reach of this policy, limited as it was to economic and trade issues and dominated by bilateral cooperation agreements (Calabrese 1997, 94). Socio-cultural cooperation was envisaged within the informal, and largely unsuccessful, 'Euro-Arab dialogue', established in the mid-1970s between the European Community (EC) and the Arab League (Biad 1997, 54). In 1990, there was a decision on the part of the EC to

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12 The MPCs in 1995 were: Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority. Cyprus and Malta became EU member states in 2004.

revise the basic parameters of its relations with the countries of the Mediterranean. This revision was motivated by the recognition of a need to go beyond mere trade relations and to bridge the growing development gap, both economic and social, between the two shores of the Mediterranean (European Commission 1990). The outcome of this process was known as the 'Renovated Mediterranean Policy' (RMP). The advantages of this policy framework were the introduction of decentralised cooperation programmes as well as aid programmes and higher budgets for promoting development in Mediterranean countries (Adler and Crawford 2006, 22).

The RMP had a relatively short life and was *de facto* replaced by the EMP in 1995. Though newly revised, this policy quickly appeared unsuited to address the multi-dimensional changes then underway in the aftermath of the Cold War (Mascia 2004, 194; see also Calabrese 1997, 88). With the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, and the definite conclusion of the decades-long confrontation between the western and the soviet blocks, the EC underwent a process of re-examination of its position, role and priorities in the emerging post-bipolar system of international relations. The new international security milieu was characterised by a multiplicity of challenges, both military and non-military, ranging from increasing migration flows from developing countries to the spread of generalised threats to security, such as terrorism and organised crime. At the same time, the emerging international scenario offered unprecedented opportunities, such as the potential democratisation of former communist neighbours and the removal of barriers to cooperation in areas, including the Mediterranean basin, which were of lower priority to the great powers during the Cold War (Attinà 2004a; Adler and Crawford 2006, 22).

Within this framework, the EC/EU considered its foreign policy system 'inadequate to the new world order' (Smith K. 2008a) and started a revision of the overall scope and instruments of its external action and related priority areas. The European Political Cooperation (EPC), established in 1970 and institutionalised with the 1986 Single European Act, was replaced by the creation of the CFSP with the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force in 1993. The CFSP was expected to enable the EU to build on the *acquis* of the EPC, improve joint action, and 'make full use of the means at its disposal' (European Council 1992a). The first two areas of priority implementation for the CFSP were identified in the European neighbourhood, and comprised Eastern and Central Europe as well as the Mediterranean (Council 1992, part III).

The Mediterranean basin presented examples of most of the 'hard' and 'soft' (i.e. non-military) security challenges faced by the EU in the early 1990s (see also Biad 1997; Haddadi 2006; Calabrese 1997; Adler and Crawford 2006). 'Hard' security challenges included, among others, issues related to the proliferation of non-conventional weapons (especially in the broader Middle East) and the emergence of new armed conflicts, such as the 1990 crisis in Kuwait and the ensuing Gulf War. Within the Mediterranean basin, the outbreak of conflict in former Yugoslavia in 1991 represented the first armed conflict on European soil since the Second World War. That conflict was thus a major cause of concern for EU countries and institutions, not least because it 'exposed the improvised collective decision-making of European States during the conflict's early stages as embarrassingly ineffectual' (Calabrese 1997, 90). Nonetheless, European ministers announced a number of declarations in support of the efforts underway for peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction (European Council 1992b, annex II; 1995a, 13). In that framework, the EU blamed the Serbian and Bosnian-Serb leaderships for the conflict and the atrocities of ethnic cleansing (European Council 1992e, 100). However, the EU explicitly excluded former Yugoslavia from the scope of its Mediterranean policies (European Commission 1994, 2). In the early 1990s, the 'Mediterranean region' comprised the Maghreb and the riparian countries of the Middle East with which the EU had established formal relations[13].

'Soft' security challenges referred to a number of issues connected to the growing socio-economic gap between Europe and its partners as well as the socio-political instability that resulted from it. European politicians were quick to identify social and political instability in these countries as synonymous with European insecurity (Fernandez-Ordoñez 1990). This perception of insecurity was most strongly felt in connection with the Maghreb, especially among those European states overlooking the Mediterranean (namely France, Italy and Spain). One particular source of apprehension among European leaders was the rise of religious extremism in Algeria following the victory of the Islamic Salvation Front in 1991 and the ensuing *coup d'etat* in 1992, which, in fact, was identified as one of the main catalysts for the revision of EU policies which led to the EMP (Gillespie 1997, 67-68; see also Joffé 1997; Adler and Crawford 2006).

The sense of insecurity generated by the events in the Maghreb intensified further

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13 This also included Jordan, with which the EU had signed a cooperation agreement.

when such extremism evolved into a series of terrorist acts that during the mid-1990s affected European southern countries such as France, Spain and Italy, and their citizens abroad. For instance, in the period July-October 1995 alone, the 'war' of the Armed Islamic Group of Algeria against France, launched in December 1994, resulted in eight terror attacks that killed 10 people and injured more than 165 (Kepel 2003, 466-469). As reported by Calabrese (1997, 90), the consequences in Europe of these events produced alarmist rhetoric in the continent, such as 'the French Euro-parliamentarian Claude Cresson's comment about the "advance of fanaticism", and the Spanish EU Commissioner Manuel Marin's reference to a "possible domino effect"'. From this perspective, European institutions emphasised in particular the causal relationship between the rise of religious fundamentalism in the Maghreb, the current terrorist drift in the region, and the worsening socio-economic divide between Europe and its neighbours (Council 1992, 38; European Commission 1994, 8). Indeed, as Kepel (2003, 470) reports, the people arrested in the context of the wave of terrorism of the mid-1990s in France revealed a universe of young people of Maghrebi origin, living in conditions of severe poverty, who had embraced militant Islam as a reaction to their social malaise.

A similar relationship was identified by the EU in connection with the emergence of other threats to regional stability, such as the growth of transnational organised crime and the increase in both legal and illegal migration flows from the Maghreb (Adler & Crawford 2006, 20; Calabrese 1997, 91-93). According to the European Council (1992b), the problems raised by migration and the living and working conditions of migrant communities in Europe were additional issues to be given priority in the framework of ongoing EU relations with the Maghreb. The issue was felt most acutely in those European countries that had a strong tradition of emigration rather than immigration, such as Italy and Spain (Calabrese 1997, 91). According to the aggregated data of an ILO report, in Spain the number of Moroccan residents had increased from 5,200 in 1985 to 61,000 in 1997, representing 75 per cent of African immigrants in that country. In Italy, the number of Tunisians, estimated at 4,400 in 1985, had risen to 50,000 in 1993, while Moroccans (2,000 in 1985) had increased to over 97,000 in 1994 (Giubilari 1997, 60). Reports underline that Italy also represented at the time the largest communities of irregular migrants in Europe, whose total number increased from between 350,000 and one million in 1987, to between 600,000 and 1.4 million at beginning of the 1990s. Reports of the period also stress that while these estimates referred to all immigrant populations in Europe, the phenomenon of illegal migration in

those years mainly concerned migrants from North Africa/Maghreb countries (*idem* 70-71; see also Eurostat/European Commission 2002, 23-33).

As Stavridis (2001, 7) notes, the fear of immigration, besides the numbers reported above, was also linked to a substantial presence of Turks in Germany and of Albanians in Italy and in Greece and there was also a 'link, real or perceived, between the presence of foreigners and the rise of racism and fascism' in Europe. Indeed, the problems connected with the growing presence of migrants in these countries further fed an already growing number of incidents of xenophobia on the part of European citizens (Baumgartl and Favell 1995; Stolcke 1995), causing alarm at the European institutional level.

Worried by the increasing incidence of aggression against foreign immigrants in EU member states, the European Council of Edinburgh of 1992 emphasised its determination to protect all immigrants and its commitment to developing measures for integrating legal immigrants in European societies, as well as to drafting new principles for the governance of the external aspects of migration policy (European Council 1992e, item 25 and annex V). The problem, however, remained largely an unresolved concern for Europe. According to a 1997 survey on racism and xenophobia in the continent, only one in three of those interviewed said they felt they were 'not at all racist'; 44.5% of the respondents said that the presence of foreign minorities was a cause of insecurity, while 43% of those interviewed admitted that 'legally established immigrants from outside the EU should be sent to their country of origin if they are unemployed' (Eurobarometer 1997). As Taras (2009, 9) reports, the 'groups viewed most unfavourably were Turks, followed by North Africans and Asians (see also Lahav 2004, 89-90). These percentages further increased over the period 1997-2000, although at the same time a growing number of EU citizens said that they appreciated policies designed to improve the coexistence of majorities and minorities (Eurobarometer 2001, 11).

Besides the mentioned challenges, the Western Mediterranean was, at the same time, encouraging economic cooperation opportunities following the establishment, in 1989, of the Arab Maghreb Union. Against this background, the EU proposed a special relationship with Maghreb countries to promote cooperation within the political, economic, social, and cultural sphere (Council 1992, 38). This 'Euro-Maghreb Partnership' constituted the immediate precursor to the EU pan-Mediterranean initiative established a few years later with the EMP (Calabrese 1997, 98). The geographical upgrade of this policy resulted from the growing relevance for Europe of challenges and

opportunities emerging from the Eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, as Bicchi (2007, 163) notes, the 1992 partnership was 'too limited [an] initiative to really involve northern European countries, whose attention was increasingly distracted by the Middle East rather than attracted to the Maghreb'.

Two opportunities coming from the Eastern Mediterranean deserve special attention in this context. Firstly, the formal beginnings of the MEPP, within the framework set out by the Madrid Conference in 1991, offered the EU new opportunities to achieve regional stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean. For Europe, the peace process represented 'a great opportunity which [had to] be seized if dangers to the stability of the region [were] to be avoided' (European Council 1992e, 108). In this context, the signing in 1993 of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) at the basis of Oslo Accords provided an effective political breakthrough, without which 'it would have been difficult to foresee the launch of the Barcelona Process' (Peters 2006, 214).

Although the role of Europe in the Madrid Conference was in fact peripheral (Hutchence 2001), the opportunities for joint action introduced by the CFSP in 1992 made the EU better equipped than in the past to play an active political role in the Middle East, parallel to its traditional function of aid provider or 'payer' (Bulut Aymat 2010**,** 17). In particular, the focus of EU joint action was targeted at the promotion of regional integration in the MEPP, the deployment of confidence-building measures, and support for bilateral talks and prospective international agreements conducive to a peace settlement (European Council 1993a, 43). The EU was also keen to amplify the perception among both Israelis and Palestinians that those first steps towards peace were bringing an immediate improvement in material conditions (European Commission 1993, 1). In brief, the goal of the EU in the Middle East was to embed any positive outcome of the MEPP within the regional framework of cooperation under construction. In this sense, the EU made it very clear from the outset that the EMP was not meant to be a new forum for conflict-resolution or a platform for the MEPP (Edis 1998, 96; Asseburg 2003; Hutchence 2001; Peters 2006). After all, in the summer of 1995, the EU showed confidence in an imminent and positive finalisation of the peace agreement (European Council 1995a, part II).

The second, perhaps less immediate, opportunity emerging from the Eastern Mediterranean was the submission, in 1992, of accession applications by three MPCs: Malta, Cyprus and Turkey. European institutions were quick to follow up on these

requests in hope of improving their medium- and long-term economic relations with the three states. Moreover, the applications of the three MPCs provided a possibility, particularly welcomed by Greece, of finding a solution to the long-lasting Turkish-Cypriot crisis (Calabrese 1997, 104).

1.2 The influence of Eastern policies and the active lobbying of southern EC/EU members

The political, security, economic, and social challenges and opportunities emerging from the Maghreb and the Eastern Mediterranean were multi-dimensional and interdependent. However, the establishment of an ambitious, comprehensive, and region-wide initiative in the form of the EMP, in 1995, was not a foregone conclusion. Progress towards the Barcelona Process was possible due to the commitment of southern European member states to balance the then EU's extensive involvement in the process of transition underway in post-Soviet Europe. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 had posed direct challenges and opportunities to the EU's eastern, rather than southern, borders. Eastern dynamics were given political priority in central and northern European countries – Germany *in primis* – which was directly concerned by possible changes of its national borders (Attinà 2004a, 142). Under lobbying by these member states, post-Soviet Europe was the recipient of intensive EU economic, political and social support and aid initiatives (Council 1994b). European efforts materialised, in particular, into the establishment of a 'Stability Pact'. The pact was developed as a preventive-diplomacy initiative involving those eastern and central countries that were likely to join the EU in the near future. When the 1993 European Council of Copenhagen officially accepted the accession application of those countries involved by the pact, the barycentre of the Union was prospectively moved east. This prospective was a source of concern for those southern EU countries directly affected by the instability challenges coming from the Maghreb. France, Italy and Spain (as well as, to a lesser extent, Portugal and Greece), in opposition to the channelling of EUFP resources towards the east, mounted a sustained lobbying campaign in European fora with the aim of ensuring 'a semblance of balance between east and south' in EU external action (Gillespie 1997, 68; see also Calabrese 1997; Attinà 2004a).

The active lobbying of France, Italy and Spain was also advanced through parallel initiatives in conjunction with different groups of MPCs. The most significant of these was the proposal to develop a Conference for Security and Cooperation in the

Mediterranean (CSCM), the Dialogue '5+5' (Western Mediterranean), and the Mediterranean Forum. All of them called for a multi-dimensional and integrated approach to cooperation between Europe and its southern neighbours (Calleya 2006; Calabrese 1997, 89; Philippart 2003, 9). This trend was consistent with an approach proposed by a prominent school of thought – i.e. the 'Copenhagen School' (Buzan 1991; Buzan et al. 1997) – which stressed the need to adopt a 'broad' concept of security that moved beyond the military dimension and took into account the societal aspects of security in view of the wider challenges discussed above (Panebianco 2010, 186).

The CSCM, in particular, was proposed in 1990 by the foreign ministers of Italy and Spain during the Italian Presidency of the EC. The idea was that of developing a model of structured cooperation with the Mediterranean countries on the example of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE, now OSCE), which had successfully put the new approach to comprehensive security mentioned above into practice. The CSCE had already developed a specific focus on the Mediterranean in the Helsinki Final Act of 1974[14]. The prospects of the CSCM, however, were more ambitious than a simple extension of the CSCE framework to Europe's southern flank. The CSCM should have been established as a system that would have '[taken] a comprehensive and balanced view of all aspects of security, [encouraged] economic development and [promoted] dialogue between cultures' (Fernandez-Ordoñez 1990). The proposal did not make it past the preliminary development stage for a number of reasons, ranging from the outbreak of the 1990-91 Gulf War to France's scepticism towards such a highly institutionalised profile of cooperation with Mediterranean countries (see Calleya 2006, 115; Mascia 2004, 194; Biad 1997, 55). At the same time, the initiative was adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which organised a series of meetings on this matter from 1992. Its proposal was to build a CSCM project based on three pillars: political- and security-related cooperation; economic cooperation; and dialogue among civilisations and human rights (IPU 1992).

The CSCM project and the other mentioned alternative frameworks were all eventually overshadowed by the Barcelona Process. However, these initiatives remain of crucial analytical importance insofar as they contributed to shifting the agenda of southern European member states closer to the prospect of an integrated and

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14 This commitment was reaffirmed in the 1990 meeting of the CSCE on the Mediterranean, held in Palma de Mallorca (CSCE 1990a), and in the Paris Charter (CSCE 1990b).

comprehensive framework of cooperation between the EU and MPCs. In this context, it would be naïve not to assume that the active participation of European ministers and parliamentarians in those initiatives would have not resulted in the transfer of some of the ideas discussed therein into the Council and other institutions. It will suffice to note, by way of example, that it was the European Parliament which in 1994 called upon the Council and Commission to revive the CSCM project (EP 1994), just as it was the IPU which requested the distribution of its final documents to parliaments and governments and, in particular, to the participants of the Barcelona Conference (IPU 1995, annex). Moreover, as others have underlined, the diplomacy of Spain, the country which organised and hosted the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference and the first IPU Conference of the CSCM, was by no means incidental in successfully providing the structural link between the global approach of the CSCM proposal and the traditional economic basis of European foreign policy in the EMP (Bicchi 2007, 162).

The above points to two main catalysts which reinforced the upgrade of the bilateral RMP agreements to the 1995 pan-Mediterranean initiative launched by the EU in Barcelona: 1) the fact that Europe was presented with a growing set of multi-dimensional and interconnected challenges and opportunities originating from the whole Mediterranean basin after the end of the Cold War; and 2) the technical alignment of a southern 'EC lobby' (Calabrese 1997, 101) committed to redressing the prioritisation of Eastern Europe in EUFP. In this context, an important position should be also attributed to the European Commission that, from the establishment of the RMP, had demonstrated a relevant entrepreneurial role for the promotion of a comprehensive EU policy vis-à-vis the Mediterranean basin (Bicchi 2007, 162-164). In the end, however, the subsequent accommodation of the positions of the southern lobby by Germany, the UK and the Netherlands – partly, of course, in furtherance of their political and economic interests in Eastern Mediterranean[15] – was also determinant in allowing European institutions to strengthen their Mediterranean policies 'in parallel' with their ongoing commitment to central and Eastern Europe (European Council 1994a, part II; 1994b, annex V).

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15 Germany was traditionally more concerned with migration flows from Turkey; the UK had an historical interest in advancing the situation in the Middle East; while the Netherlands had concerns with the worsening situation in former Yugoslavia (Gillespie 1997; Calabrese 1997).

1.3 The Barcelona Process and its elements of innovation

The EMP was in some ways developed in continuity with past European policies in the Mediterranean. For instance, it continued to emphasise the enhancement of bilateral trade relations with MPCs, and also to attempt to bridge the growing development gap between the two shores of the Mediterranean through the promotion of decentralised cooperation initiatives. These features were, as mentioned, elements already encompassed in the 1990 Renovated Mediterranean Policy. Beyond this continuity, however, it is possible to identify three main elements of innovation inherent to the Barcelona Process.

First, the EMP put in practice a multi-dimensional and comprehensive approach to security, which in fact drew on the earlier CSCE experience and on some insights of the failed CSCM proposal. Likewise, the EMP established a programme of cooperation with MPCs on three complementary and interconnected thematic partnerships (or 'baskets', in the jargon of the initiative). The first basket involved a political and security partnership to promote human rights, democracy, disarmament, and the fight against terrorism; the second basket was based on the development of an economic and trade partnership, including the creation of a free trade zone in the area by 2010; the third basket envisaged a partnership in cultural, social and human affairs (EMP 1995a). Some have pointed out that the EMP served as a 'laboratory' for the EU to attempt an ambitious experiment in international relations (Pace 2006, 15). The experiment was, as mentioned, to bring to fruition, for the first time in the Mediterranean, a model of comprehensive and human security based on the experience developed by the CSCE. Indeed, the EU presented the development of such multi-dimensional approach to regional security as one of the key goals of its Mediterranean cooperation frameworks launched in the 1990s (Panebianco 2010, 186, see also Biad 1997; Mascia 2004; Adler and Crawford 2006; Aliboni and Saaf 2010). In this context, according to some analysts, one of the greatest innovations of the EMP was the introduction of ICD into the third basket of the Barcelona Declaration insofar as it instantiated the importance of a cultural dimension in international politics (Schumacher 2001; Panebianco 2001).

As a second element of innovation, the EMP introduced a regional 'Euro-Mediterranean' dimension of cooperation, in addition to the established bilateral (association agreements) and unilateral (aid for development) channels promoted under the RMP (see figures in Phillippart 2003, 34). This feature, in particular, led some scholars to consider the EMP as an initiative primarily aimed at establishing from

scratch a security community in the Mediterranean (Attinà 2004b; Pace 2007). Functional to the objective of 'constructing' a region was also the concept of 'co-ownership', which was introduced by the EU and stubbornly presented as a vital component in the advancement of the Barcelona Process (European Commission 2000b, 14; Prodi 2002b; EMP 2005b, item 11).

The concept of 'co-ownership' has been interpreted as the sharing of responsibilities, achievements, resources and an equal sense of belonging among participants from both sides of the Mediterranean (DRN and ADE 2009, 31). The EU thus considered the achievement of these forms of sharing a key condition for the sustainability and efficiency of the various initiatives promoted under the EMP institutional umbrella. In practice, however, despite the rhetorical ambitions surrounding the creation of the Barcelona Process as a co-owned process, the EMP remained a EU-sponsored initiative, funded by the EU only, and developed along principles and priorities that were at the core of the European understanding of international relations. As a consequence, the goal of creating a sense of co-ownership in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation resulted from the outset in a very contradictory aspiration that, *de facto*, opened the door to a significant 'rhetoric-performance gap' in the new EU policy initiative, and fed the suspicion of MPCs vis-à-vis European promises.

The third element of innovation was that the Barcelona Conference of 1995 actively involved from the outset different types of actors including, national governments, EU officials, members of Parliaments and CSOs. Indeed, to achieve the 'comprehensive security' paradigm pursued by the EU in the Mediterranean in those years, new threats to security required 'cooperation among both traditional state actors and non-state actors' (Panebianco 2010, 186).

In the multilateral institutional framework of the EMP, the officials from the European Commission and the ministers of the 27 partner countries (15 EU + 12 MPCs) held the main responsibility for putting forth the EMP and taking the main decisions about regional initiatives. To this end, they met periodically in the so-called 'Euro-Mediterranean conferences'. These were chaired by the Presidency of the EU Council and were originally gathered every two years, then every year, and from 2003 to the collapse of the EMP in 2007, approximately every six months (two per year). These conferences were complemented by *ad hoc* sectorial meetings of ministers to advance other areas of action envisaged in the Barcelona Declaration, such as culture, transport,

trade, energy and higher education. A very relevant mechanism established to ensure the functioning and consistency of the Barcelona Process was the so-called 'Euro-Med Committee'. This was also chaired by the rotating EU Presidency and composed of the EU troika and a senior official from each country involved in the EMP. The task of the Euro-Med Committee was to discuss and review the agenda and the work programme of the EMP, meeting six times a year, and to prepare the periodic Euro-Mediterranean conferences (Philippart 2003, 2). As envisaged in the Barcelona Declaration, members of both national Parliaments and the European Parliament also met periodically, establishing in 1998 a Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum, which had the function of fostering inter-parliamentary dialogue on the various areas envisaged for EMP cooperation.

From the Barcelona Conference onwards, CSOs began to have meetings coincident with the Euro-Mediterranean conferences of ministers of foreign affairs (normally a few days before the official meeting) in what was to be defined as the 'Euromed civil forum', and in a number of other sectorial forums and networks, such as the 'Euro-Mediterranean Network of Human Rights' (see Jünemann 2003c; Van Hüllen 2008). The general civil forum was normally supported by the European Commission and the EU Presidency and had the main goal of aggregating the political demands coming from the bottom-up and providing, on this basis, an input to Euro-Mediterranean ministers (Mascia 2004, 196).

The position of the EU on this component of the EMP was, as stressed by the then European Commissioner for external relations Manuel Marin (1995-1999), that the contribution of civil society was fundamental to establishing a permanent and lasting dialogue between the two shores of the Mediterranean (EMP 1995b). In practice, as this thesis will also show when discussing the evolution of ICD, the efforts of the Commission to involve CSOs from both shores into the advancement of the Barcelona Process have not been immune from difficulties, contradictions and shortcomings. For example on one hand, several MPCs' governments tended to obstruct the activities and the independence of these non-state actors, and on the other, there were noteworthy differences of views and resources between northern and southern organisations (Akrimi 2007; Junemann 2003c; Feliu 2007; Xuereb 2007, 238). In principle, however, the interest and encouragement showed by the EU for the participation of these actors in forums, networks and platforms in parallel to governments' meetings was welcomed as a major element of innovation in the Barcelona Process (Mascia 2004, 200).

2. EU Mediterranean policies following 9/11 events and other challenges of the early 2000s

Starting from 1995, EU relations with MPCs were essentially carried out within the above-outlined framework of the EMP, without however achieving noteworthy improvements in the relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean, especially in the field of political and security cooperation. The activities in the first basket of the EMP were particularly delayed by the procrastination at signing a Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability (Aliboni and Saaf 2010, 14; see also Attinà 2001), and further hampered by the first setbacks of the MEPP following, in particular, the assassination of Israeli PM Rabin in 1995 (Asseburg and Salem 2010, 16). As the next chapter elaborates in detail, also cooperation in the third basket of the EMP, which envisaged joint efforts for the management of legal and illegal migratory flows, the fight against terrorism and organised crime as well as for the enhancement of cultural cooperation was basically left behind during the 1990s (Gillespie 2003). It is symptomatic, in this regard, that only a few years after the launch of the Barcelona Process, the European Commission (2000b) prepared a communication to discuss and propose ways to reinvigorate such a policy initiative.

In the first decade of the new millennium (2001-2010), the original approach adopted by the EU vis-à-vis its MPCs in 1995 – mostly aimed at region building in the Mediterranean space (Attinà 2006; Pace 2007) – was further put to the test and gradually eroded by the rise of a mixture of direct and indirect challenges, as well as by some of the policy responses put in place by the EU to address these. On one hand, the consequences of the terror attacks of 9/11 showed the EU the need to reinforce regional cooperation on other areas of action envisaged in the Barcelona Declaration which, however had not been prioritised till then, including those embedded in the third basket (JHA sector and ICD). In parallel, the definitive collapse of the peace process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in 2000, one of the main events motivating European hopes behind the preparation of the EMP during the early 1990s, provided new insurmountable obstacles to collective cooperation in the area (Asseburg 2003). On the other hand, the concerns of some European countries about the implications on the EU border of the enlargement of 2004[16] constituted the 'proximate motivation' (Aliboni 2005, 1) for the development, between 2002 and 2003, of a new major policy scheme

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16 In 2004, 10 new countries acceded to the European Union: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

affecting both Eastern Europe and Mediterranean countries: the ENP. Among other aspects, the ENP embodied a radically different approach to cooperation, mostly based on bilateralism, which competed against and finally overcame the idea of collective regional cooperation brought forward since 1995 within the Barcelona Process. Weakened by these challenges, the EMP experience was *de facto* concluded in July 2008, when the French Presidency of the EU launched the UfM, which thus represented the last of the 'nails in the coffin' for the EMP and its vision (Kauch and Youngs 2009, 963).

2.1 The consequences of the 9/11 attacks on EU policies on the Mediterranean

The attacks of 9/11, 2001 were undoubtedly among 'the most decisive events determining international relations in recent years' (Jünemann 2003a, 1). In the context of Euro-Mediterranean relations, in particular, the events of 2001 engendered a dynamic revision of the agenda of EU relations with MPCs, as the issues of Islamic fundamentalism, international terrorism and their socio-cultural implications were quickly placed at the top of European concerns about the area.

In fact, the 2001 terror attacks did not constitute the birth of an 'Islamist challenge' for the EU and MPCs. The attacks, rather, provoked what Jünemann (2003a) calls the 'securitisation' of international terrorism; that is, an urgent reconsideration of its risks and implications, leading to this phenomenon being addressed as an existential threat for Europe, its population and partners. Indeed, as discussed in the previous section, threats connected with Islamic fundamentalism in the Maghreb had been a significant concern for several European countries since the early 1990s and were among the main reasons leading to the establishment of the EMP. However, as Bicchi (2007, 143) notes, during that period these topics were still 'part of a growing trend of concern toward the Mediterranean and of the debate about "what to do" with it'. The risks of terrorism were loosely discussed during the EMP ministerial conferences and received the same degree of attention as other important concerns, especially migration (EMP 2000). However, no significant Euro-Mediterranean actions were taken on these matters during the 1990s.

Immediately after 9/11, on the contrary, a shift was suddenly visible, beginning with rhetoric. In the Brussels Conference, held in November 2001, the Euro-Mediterranean ministers of foreign affairs devoted the core of their conclusions to terrorism, which was commonly defined as 'a threat and a scourge'. They condemned

the phenomenon 'in every shape and form' and declared their firm resolution to fight it in unison, as well as to address its underlying causes (EMP 2001).

In practice, the implications of this rhetorical shift on EU cooperation with MPCs resulted in a perpetual effort to balance between two interconnected needs. On one hand, European institutions and countries had to face the imminent 'hard' security implications carried by the upsurge of this internationally organised threat. On the other, while increasing anti-terrorism cooperation in the Mediterranean, the EU faced the risk of having its efforts perceived as a European struggle against Islam. Indeed, given the Islamic creed proclaimed by the terrorists who conducted the 2001 attacks in New York and Washington, the extent of the fear and hate generated by their acts, and the religious identity of the vast majority of MPCs' leaders and populations, such an equation might have further widened the existing tensions both between the two shores and within increasingly multicultural societies in Europe. In other words, although the events of 9/11 added new 'hard' security risks that neither the EU nor its MPCs could ignore, tackling the consequences of terrorism in terms of social and cultural tensions between the two shores 'remained pivotal for the development of a peaceful and prosperous Mediterranean region' (Jünemann 2003a, 19).

The effort to balance these two needs appears clearly in the creation of a mantra that consisted in rejecting 'as both dangerous and unfounded any equating of terrorism with the Arab and Muslim world', immediately after having stressed the need to enhance Euro-Mediterranean cooperation against terrorism in all its forms (EMP 2001). This sentence may have been originally coined to ease or publicly legitimise Muslim leaders' cooperation with the EU to counter terrorism in the EMP framework in the aftermath of the attacks. Since then, however, the mantra became a leitmotiv in official documents adopted by EMP/UfM ministers, especially when regional security concerns were either directly or indirectly connectible to forms of Islamic fundamentalism: from the terror attacks in Madrid and London in 2004 and 2005, to the 'Muhammed cartoon crisis' in 2006 (EMP 2005c; EMP 2006b).

In light of this balance of priorities, the most immediate challenge for the EU remained the imminent risk of new attacks against European countries and citizens, especially in light of the 'War on Terror' triggered by the Bush administration following the 2001 attacks. In this context, however, the EU approached the terrorist threat in a radically different way to the US, whose reaction to the attacks was developed on a unilateral response, 'primarily military and based on a Manichean discourse of absolute

good versus absolute evil' (Silvestri 2005, 385). Although some EU members, such as the UK, Spain and Portugal, participated individually in various stages of the 'War on Terror', the common approach eventually negotiated among all EU countries vis-à-vis the emerging international scenario resulted in a consolidation of the principles of 'effective multilateralism' and of 'comprehensive/human security'. This approach was rubber-stamped as the official EU position on security in the 'European Security Strategy' (Biscop 2005), adopted by the European Council in December 2003 to provide a common strategic vision and to enhance internal cohesion at EU level. Such cohesion, indeed, was particularly questioned following the split between EU Member States over the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

In the Strategy, EU ministers of foreign affairs agreed on the point that none of the threats currently faced by Europe could be considered as purely military anymore. As a consequence, each specific challenge should be addressed by employing a combination of the policy instruments that the EU had at its disposal. In particular, dealing with terrorism might require 'a mixture of intelligence, police, judicial, military and other means', and a focus on the social, economic and cultural roots of the phenomenon (European Council 2003, 7). The core of EU counter-terrorism action in the post 9/11 context was developed under the common European framework for the fight against organised crime and the management of migratory flows (that is, the JHA sector) within the area of 'Security, Freedom and Justice' (European Council 2001a, IV). Member states quickly proceeded towards the launch of the European Arrest Warrant in 2002 to facilitate and streamline judicial cooperation in criminal matters within Europe (Council 2002a). Other measures included intelligence sharing, especially with the US, and steps to attack the financial assets of terrorist organisations, in cooperation with the UN Security Council.

This kind of commitment was essentially translated as such within the multilateral framework of the EMP, where a JHA dimension had been included in the third basket of the Barcelona Declaration in 1995 'following EU's desire to engage MPCs in collaborative efforts to regulate migratory flows' (Gillespie 2003, 21). The JHA dimension of the EMP third basket did indeed provide an area of security cooperation between the EU and its partners. This area remained relatively open for exploration since, as mentioned, the tools of the third basket had been fundamentally neglected until this point. Moreover, this area of cooperation had not been affected by the major 'stumbling blocks' of political and security cooperation in the EMP, namely the various

setbacks of the MEPP. Furthermore, the Euro-Mediterranean JHA agenda also allowed for cooperation on other urgent issues of concerns besides terrorism. The most pressing was the management of migration from MPCs. On one hand, the terrorist threat from Muslim fundamentalism quickly accelerated the process of 'securitisation' concerning also Muslim migration into Europe, reinforcing phenomena such as Islamophobia, social unrest within Muslim countries, and right-wing extremism in Europe (Talani 2007, 1). On the other hand, the specific phenomenon of illegal migration, together with trafficking and other connected international crimes, was increasing across the Mediterranean, 'with adverse consequences in social and human terms' (European Commission 2002b, 6). ILO data about irregular migrants from Africa and the Maghreb apprehended in Italy, Spain and Malta provide an idea about the rise of these specific concerns in Europe, with numbers rising from about 5,000 in 1993 to 34,000 in 2003 up to 60,000 in 2006 (De Hass 2008, 62).

The fight against terrorism and the problems connected with migrations emerged as the two leading issues at the EMP Summit held in Barcelona in November 2005 to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Barcelona Declaration (Bicchi 2007, 171). On that occasion, the relevance achieved by these two issues in EMP cooperation was acknowledged, and in the 5-year action plan adopted during the summit, JHA issues were separated from other aspects of the third basket. A new 'fourth basket' was thus devoted to 'Migration, social integration, justice and security' (EMP 2005c). Another outcome of the 2005 summit was the adoption of the Euro-Mediterranean Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism. The code, in truth a mere declaration of common intent, was aimed at improving cooperation in fighting terrorism in the respect of UN standards to reduce vulnerability, improving the protection of the people of the Euro-Mediterranean area and reducing the socio-cultural causes of terrorism (EMP 2005d). These novelties, however, were achieved in a generally unsupportive context. Several Arab heads of state in fact boycotted the 2005 summit. Despite the European rhetoric on co-ownership, indeed, the political mood of the Arab countries vis-à-vis the EMP was frustrated by the ineffectiveness of the EU on the Israeli-Palestinian question, but also by the low level of European investment in the region and by a deepening European intolerance, especially on the divisive issue of migrations (Youngs and Schoefthaler 2007, 134-135). While the EMP experience definitively closed in 3 years, in 2008, the Code of Conduct and the 5-year action plan adopted in 2005 were nonetheless integrated within the UfM vision as part of the *acquis* of the Barcelona Process (UfM 2008b, 2 and 7-8).

As previously described, another key aspect of the EU's multidimensional approach to counter-terrorism concerned the socio-cultural implications of these threats to European and Mediterranean societies. The resonance of the terror attacks, the ensuing rhetoric of both the US administration and some European leaders[17] and the consequences of the 'War on Terror' on Muslim public opinion, including the scandals of Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib, facilitated the rapid emergence of a global scale of discourses which reproduced impending civilisational clashes between the West and the Islamic/Arab World (Lahav 2004, 102-104). This result was also sustained by the renewed violence between the Israelis and the Palestinians following the outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000. The events of the Middle East conflict, in particular, reinforced feelings of frustration among Arabs towards a powerless Europe while giving force to the western perception of Islam as 'a religion breeding violence, radicalism and fundamentalism' (Asseburg and Salem 2010, 15). In European multi-cultural societies where, as seen, the presence of both regular and irregular migrants from MPCs was growing, these discourses boosted further existing social, economic and cultural tensions and led to new alarming episodes of violence, racism and xenophobia, especially towards Muslims and Arabs (Allen and Nielsen 2002; Taras 2009).

The discourses emerging both in Europe and in the Mediterranean drew evident inspiration from Samuel Huntington's notorious thesis of a 'clash of civilisations' (Huntington 1993). Although the EU had rejected Huntington's core hypothesis when it emerged in the 1990s (Gillespie 1997), following 9/11 it admitted to be reluctantly obliged to take his predictions into consideration (Ferrero-Waldner 2006a; RHLAG 2003, 12). Indeed, especially at the beginning of the new millennium, the implications of these discourses on popular images of Europe's rapport with Muslim communities quickly resulted in a conception of the Mediterranean as a fault line rather than as a shared space (Bechev and Nicolaidis 2010, 4). The resulting shift in popular discourse ran counter to the fundamental aims of peace and stability pursued by the EU in the area through the Barcelona Process. It thus represented another challenge to Euro-Mediterranean relations and led the Commission to clarify that one of the cardinal European objectives for the 21st century was precisely to avoid the Mediterranean coming to represent a new fault line (European Commission 2002b, 2).

One of the instruments employed by the EU to pursue such a cardinal objective

17 See for instance the controversial 2001 speech by Italian PM Berlusconi in Berlin, stating the supremacy of Western civilisation over others (Hooper & Connolly 2001).

was identified in ICD. Mostly on the initiative of the Commission and its then-President Romano Prodi (European Commission 2002b; Prodi 2002a), ICD was rapidly proposed as 'one of the defining issues of [the] decade if not of [the] quarter century' (Ferrero-Waldener 2006a, 2). Besides the enhancement of ICD during this period (an in-depth analysis of which follows in Chapter 4), the EU also committed itself to reinforcing other forms of dialogue and cooperation among non-governmental actors. As shown in the previous section, the latter had been envisaged by the Barcelona Declaration but in fact had been only occasionally implemented since then.

The general aim of this renovated commitment of the EU was to improve the low level of visibility and co-ownership of the Barcelona Process in two strategic sectors already set as relevant components of the new initiative in 1995 (EMP 2005b, item 11). The first one involved CSOs and was focused on empowering relations among these actors (north-south and south-south) as well as in enhancing the sectoral/thematic Euro-Med Civil Forums through which 'civil society [could] have the most effective operational influence on the development of the Partnership' (European Commission 2002b, 16). In this context, the Commission also supported the creation of a permanent Non-Governmental Platform to ensure that its consultation with Euro-Mediterranean civil society was coordinated (Euromed Civil Forum 2003a; EMP 2004b, item 35). The EU's other proposal was reinforcing the democratic legitimacy of the EMP by upgrading parliamentary relations from the informal Parliamentary Forum (where MPs had been meeting since 1998) into a new co-owned institution, the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) (EMP 2003a). Inaugurated in Athens in 2004, the EMPA was attributed consultative and recommendatory powers over all the areas of cooperation of the EMP (see EP 2006).

2.2 The failure of the MEPP and the stall of EMP political-security agenda

Another major external challenge for the EU in the EMP during this period was created by the collapse of the MEPP during the second half of 2000, after the failure of the Camp David Summit and the renewed explosion of violence which followed the outbreak of the second Intifada (see Enderlin 2003 for an account of the period). As one of the main opportunities on which the idea of the EMP had been based in the early 1990s, the failure of the MEPP caused Arab-Israeli relations, already conflictual, to deteriorate further and, specifically in regard to Euro-Mediterranean relations, resulted in a major slowdown of cooperation in the EMP (Asseburg 2003). In some cases, such

as in the 2002 Conference of Valencia, the representatives of Lebanon and Syria decided to boycott EMP ministerial meetings to protest against the participation of Israeli representatives. In this context, the overall advancement of the EMP ambitions in the political and security dimension was severely downsized, because the approach upon which the Barcelona Process had been built favoured the participation of all partners in a region-wide debate, especially where the advancement of the political-security agenda was concerned.

Since its conception in the early 1990s, the Barcelona Process had been developed as 'complementary but separated' from the MEPP (Edis 1998, 96; Hutchence 2001). As a consequence, even if Arab countries had reacted to the collapse of the MEPP with renewed dialogue instead of boycotting ministerial meetings, the EMP would have had no legitimate contribution in backing a reprisal of negotiations, or any leverage to help put an end to ongoing violence. Indeed, the only results achieved by the EU through the EMP were to advance some cooperation projects in less conflictual fields, provide aid and collect concerns, praises and intents in the conclusions of the various ministerial meetings (EMP 2002; EMP 2003a; EMP 2006). In this perspective, European officials came to formally acknowledge that the 'running sore' of the Middle East conflict was the main cause for the continual setbacks of the EMP (Ferrero-Waldner 2007, 2). The EU, thus, tried to back a settlement between parties by means of new parallel diplomatic initiatives, such as favouring the establishment of the Quartet for the Middle East (European Council 2001c, item 8)[18]. In 2004, the Council also tried to frame these concerns into a broader strategy to promote peace, stability and common interests with the adoption of a report on a 'Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean and the Middle East'. This new strategy, in particular, contained an attempt to liberate the overall advancement of the EMP from the fate of the MEPP. Indeed, in preparing the report, the Council recognised the core priority represented by the Arab-Israeli conflict but claimed that progress in that area could not have been 'a precondition for confronting the urgent reform challenges facing our partners, nor vice versa' (Council 2004, 6).

The report on a Strategic Partnership was backed by all Euro-Mediterranean partners (EMP 2004a, item 14), without, however, bringing about any notable change in the EU's present and future decisions concerning this area. The spirit of the Barcelona

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18 Discussed since autumn 2001 and formally launched in 2002 in Madrid, this diplomatic initiative comprises representatives of the EU, UN, USA and Russia.

Process remained 'haunted' by the ghost of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, even beyond the EMP. Indeed, a few months after the launch of the UfM in Paris in 2008, Arab countries forced institutional cooperation into deadlock following Israeli operation 'Cast Lead' in the Gaza Strip. This effective stalemate showed that, like its antecedent, the new Euro-Mediterranean initiative was unsuited to playing any relevant role in this conflict (Bicchi 2011, 11-17; Hollis 2010). It is thus unsurprising that the most significant contribution brought by the EU to Arab-Israeli relations during these years – i.e. the commitment to mediate the 2006 crisis between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, and to claim a European leadership for the resulting UNIFIL II peacekeeping mission – developed outside the framework of the Barcelona Process and on the initiative of single EU countries, such as Italy and France (see Aliboni 2006; Engberg 2010).

The continual setbacks to EU cooperation initiatives provoked by problematic Arab-Israeli relations during the 2000s provided a further reminder that any possibility of building collective security and prosperity in the Euro-Mediterranean space would first have to pass through a political settlement of this conflict (Kauch and Youngs 2009, 965). As the conflicts between Israel on one hand, and Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Gaza Strip on other, made such settlement increasingly unlikely, the regional approach for cooperation pursued through the EMP was also destined to remain unsuccessful, at least at the political-security level.

2.3 The 2004 enlargement and the shift from regionalism to bilateralism

The direct consequences on the Mediterranean of challenges such as the 9/11 attacks and the renewed crisis between the Israelis and the Palestinians had, as has been shown, significant implications for the scope of relations among EMP partners. If the 2001 attacks contributed to a shift in the agenda and the rediscovery of a number of tools which had not been given particular importance by the EMP in its early years, the failure of the MEPP, while holding all Euro-Mediterranean cooperation to ransom, shed some light on the structural limit of the regional approach pursued by the EU via the Barcelona Process. Still, an increasingly weakened EMP was kept alive and praised by some European officials as the only multilateral forum where, *inter alia*, Israeli and Arab representatives sat on a regular basis at the same table (Prodi 2002a, 4).

A further shift in the EU's approach towards MPCs resulted from the launch of the ENP in 2003 which, however, responded to diverse, mainly internal dynamics.

Indeed, although the motivations for its launch were multiple, the ENP was mainly developed as a 'response to the changing composition, shifting borders, and altered geopolitical outlook of the EU that the enlargement evidently implied' (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005, 19). Enlargement was certainly an internal question and above all an opportunity for the EU but, as Karen Smith (2005, 758) underlines, the extension of the borders of Europe also created 'new dividing lines between insiders and outsiders, lines which themselves create formidable problems for the countries on either side of them'. Thus, in preparation for the incoming enlargement, the European Council (2002, item 22) stressed its determination to avoid new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union.

MPCs were not among the original beneficiaries of the ENP. On the contrary, when the UK pushed for a substantive 'wider Europe' initiative in 2002, the latter should have been aimed only at the new-coming eastern neighbours: Belarus, Moldova, Russia (which then declined) and Ukraine (Smith K. 2005, 759). As the new initiative was originally expected to grant freedom of movement opportunities to cooperative 'neighbours' (European Commission 2003a, 4), some European countries were concerned by the possibility of including MPCs in the policy, fearing a massive increase of uncontrolled immigration and of influxes of Islamist terrorist cells (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005, 31). MPCs were added as an 'afterthought' (Bicchi 2007, 131) by the December 2002 European Council in Copenhagen. This was partly to respond to the concerns of southern member and non-member states, worried about a possible downgrade of Euro-Mediterranean relations following the launch of a new proximity policy towards the east (Smith K. 2005, 758). The inclusion of MPCs was also encouraged by the Commission since, as its then-President Romano Prodi acknowledged, it would have been a 'great mistake' to allow the creation of a new Europe that neglected its own 'cradle' (Prodi 2002a).

Once again, thus, as had happened after the end of the Cold War, the interest taken by some (northern) EU countries in the challenges and opportunities coming from Eastern Europe led, in a much evolved context, to radical changes in EU policies towards the Mediterranean. Indeed, by promoting a bilateral approach to create a 'ring of friends' to the east and the south of the EU (European Commission 2003a, 4), the new policy scheme dealt a very powerful blow to the regional vision pursued through the EMP, and began the gradual departure of the EU from support for collective (regional) cooperation within this area. Euro-Mediterranean relations already had a

bilateral dimension, constituted by the legally binding Association Agreements between the EU and each MPC set as the basis of the partnership. However, while the EU had created the EMP with region-building ambitions (Adler et al. 2006) threatening 'negative conditionality' (sanctions) to foster political change (Panebianco 2010, 23), the logic of the ENP was explicitly built on the principles of 'differentiated bilateralism' and 'positive conditionality'. This meant that, with each neighbour country, the ENP functioned on a benchmarking approach and, on the basis of individual progress, it 'proposed the substantial upgrading of political and economic relations, going as far as offering "a stake" in the EU's internal market' (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005, 19). In this context, positive conditionality was preferable to its negative counterpart also because the latter required unanimity in the Council of Ministers of the EU (Tovias 2010, 175).

The ENP also revived the principle of 'co-ownership' (re-labelled 'joint ownership' in this specific policy framework) that the EU had pursued since the establishment of the EMP, albeit with a slightly different meaning. As discussed above, the Barcelona Process linked the idea of co-ownership to sharing common values, responsibilities and a sense of belonging to the same community. In the ENP, this principle was pursued through the definition of tailored 'action plans' for each country, meaning that the reforms to be launched and implemented by neighbours 'need[ed] to be agreed by partners, so that they become a shared endeavour' (Aliboni and Saaf 2010, 15). A further shift in the presentation of shared values for co-ownership meant that while the EMP revealed an effort to present the security and economic interests motivating the initiative as a common regional concern, the ENP was explicitly framed in terms of EU interests (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005, 23). The introduction of the slightly different concept of joint ownership in the new policy framework thus functioned as both an acknowledgement of the wide rhetoric-performance gap created with the introduction and reiteration of the idea of co-ownership in the EMP, and as an effort to limit this gap by building MPCs' expectations toward a more realistic objective.

In his interview with the author, Prodi complained that he had to constantly justify the launch of the ENP with Mediterranean leaders to explain why the European priority was given to enlargement towards the east, instead of strengthening existing policies for the Mediterranean (Interview no. 14, 2015). Perhaps to avoid this criticism, the EU initially presented the ENP as complementary to the EMP (European Commission

2003a; Wallstrom 2005). Quickly, however, the former took over the latter, with the introduction of a 'Euro-Med regional programme of cooperation' among the multi-country programmes, to be funded together with country programmes and cross-border cooperation projects (European Commission 2007a, 4). In other words, before the UfM was launched in 2008 to replace the EMP, the latter had already been reduced to a regional articulation of the ENP which, by emphasizing 'differentiation' instead of regionalism, 'sidelined collective relations and, in contrast, reinforced bilateral ones' (Aliboni 2005, 7).

For some, the move towards bilateralism showed the 'EU's new sense of reality' (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005, 25) particularly with regard to the changing configuration of MPCs after enlargement. With the accession of Malta and Cyprus to the EU in 2004, and with the attribution of candidate country status to Turkey in 2005, only Israel and the Arab MPCs remained EU 'partners' in the EMP. As shown above, however, especially after the failure of the MEPP, none of these had a specific interest in cooperation amongst each other, which left the regionalist vision of Barcelona on the ropes. On the contrary, bilateralism was a welcome option for Israel because it allowed it to separate its cooperation with the EU from the advancement of the peace process (Del Sarto 2011, 125). The Arab countries, moreover, appreciated the flexibility of the new initiative which allowed them to improve their relationships with the EU instead of being pushed to enhance a less interesting south-south cooperation (Aliboni 2005, 3). In practice, therefore, and apart from early concerns and complaints, the ENP scheme came to be positively received by MPCs, particularly because, due to the diversity and fragmentations of the Mediterranean, 'most of these states never really appreciated being put into the group of "southern Mediterranean states", together with real or potential rivals or foes, and in disregard of the country's special features or type of relations with the EU' (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005, 29).

The EU's shift from regionalism to bilateralism beginning with the ENP between 2003 and 2004 continued with the launch of the UfM in 2008, although the latter was presented as 'a multilateral partnership with a view to increasing the potential for regional integration and cohesion' (UfM 2008a). In fact, French presidential candidate Sarkozy had originally proposed the UfM in 2007 as a separate initiative to involve only countries around the Mediterranean basin. The original idea was to create a Mediterranean Union, on the model of the EU, in which to relocate Turkey's ambitions for European accession (Sarkozy 2007). However, negotiations within the EU and, in

particular, opposition from Germany, Slovenia and the preoccupation of the European Commission to launch regional projects that could negatively affect European unity (Aliboni 2008, 2), led to the original idea being reshaped into a comprehensive Euro-Mediterranean initiative, a type of 'upgrade' of a very weakened Barcelona Process (see also Emerson 2008; Aliboni et al. 2008). In practice, however, despite its proclaimed regional integration objective, the UfM proposed an approach that constituted a further step away from the original spirit of the Barcelona Declaration (Bicchi 2011, 5). In the absence of both a political common ground and any sense of community in the Euro-Mediterranean milieu of the late 2000s, the UfM partners, now 43 in number, decided to resort to a more traditional pattern of intergovernmental cooperation, and to implement larger economic and social development projects among willing countries, to be centrally managed by new joint institutions (Aliboni and Saaf 2010, 16).

Over a span of a few years, therefore, the EU adopted two policies that radically changed its already weakened approach towards the countries of the Mediterranean. This shift also affected the majority of the policy tools involved in the Barcelona Process, including political dialogue and trade relations, which were to be conducted more forcefully at the bilateral level, as defined through ENP action plans. However in spite of this new trend, other tools, such as the involvement of CSOs, the promotion of ICD and the dialogue between parliamentarians, continued to keep a region-wide dimension and to respond primarily to the evolution of the broader Mediterranean milieu. They were thus further promoted in the manner of separate complements to (or pillars of) incoming EU policy initiatives towards the Mediterranean (UfM 2008b, 10, 22; European Commission 2007a, 4).

3. The rehash of EU Mediterranean policies following the Arab uprisings

In spite of the several innovation discussed in the previous section, by the end of the 2000s the Mediterranean began to undergo a phase of general downgrading within the priorities of the EU. One of the visible causes was certainly the full deadlock of UfM activities immediately following its launch, after the outbreak of a major crisis between Israel and Gaza which escalated into Israeli operation 'Cast Lead' in December 2008. More generally, however, the downgrade was rooted in what the former President of the Commission Prodi (1999-2004) defines as 'a progressive change within the equilibrium of EU foreign policy decision-making process' (Interview no. 14, 2015, *my translation*).

As Prodi points out, the 2000s represented a decade of major changes in the balance of power in Brussels, during which the supranational aspect gradually surrendered to the national, moving the political centre of Europe elsewhere. This process also seriously affected EU action in the Mediterranean, since in the resulting context it became much more difficult to make communitarian policies without lobbying by the dominant country, Germany, itself not particularly interested in the Mediterranean (*idem*). In other words, during this period, the EU increasingly pursued the possession goals of its most powerful members rather than the common milieu goals stated for the Mediterranean (Panebianco 2010, 193). This changing balance partly explains why the UfM resulted such a weak initiative. Indeed, it was in large part due to Germany's lobbying efforts that the 2007 French initiative to create a Mediterranean Union among European and Mediterranean riparian countries only, a proposal also supported by Spain and Italy, was transformed into the weakened rehash of the Barcelona Process which maintained the weaknesses and limits inherent to the failed EMP experience, including in relation to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Moreover, as Prodi recognises, Germany's interest in having a say on this Mediterranean initiative was mainly due to an effort to limit France's power (Interview no. 14, 2015).

By the late 2000s, however, the EU was already in the middle of a further process of reorganization and re-balancing of its foreign policy system, to adapt to the novelties introduced with the entry into force, in December 2009, of the Lisbon Treaty. In particular, the new Treaty created the post of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who was called to put into effect a delicate compromise between the competences of member states and European institutions in EU foreign policy-making. Within this general context of reduced interest in its southern neighbourhood and general re-balancing of EUFP procedures and responsibilities, the wave of protests which started from December 2010 in Tunisia brought a new and unexpected mix of challenges and opportunities to the EU, suddenly setting the Mediterranean back in the spotlight.

Following a short initial period of hesitancy, during which the stability of historical ties between such countries as France and Italy and contested Arab regimes prevailed over uncertainty (see Echangue et al. 2011, 332; Behr 2013b, 28-29; Pace 2014, 977), EU institutions and member states swiftly realigned into a common position in support of the demonstrators. The rapid spread of support for the protests and ensuing transitions in Europe encouraged generous diplomatic efforts by the new High

Representative, Catherine Ashton, at least in the period immediately after the uprisings. Furthermore, the EU supported transition processes by providing a significant amount of humanitarian aid for reconstruction, especially in Libya (about EUR 155 million) and Syria (more than EUR 400 million)[19]. These efforts anticipated a more comprehensive policy response. Indeed, between March and May 2011, the EU quickly finalised the review process of the ENP, which it had first started in 2010 to adapt this policy to the new opportunities created by the Lisbon Treaty (Pace 2014, 978)

The scenario which resulted from the uprisings led to some embarrassment for EU credibility (Jünemann 2012). In fact, as early as 2010, when the ENP revision was about to begin, some EU officials had already recognised a certain lack of coherence with some neighbour countries and that in some cases European choices prioritised form over substance (Füle 2010). The uprisings, however, provided a wealth of empirical evidence in support of long-standing critics of EU Mediterranean policies. In particular, the uprisings contributed, at least initially, to dispelling a number of myths characterising the European (western) perception of the Arab World on which, according to some analysts, the EU had traditionally based its action vis-à-vis these countries. The latter included the so-called 'Arab exception', which posits 'that the Arabs are not interested in, concerned by or prepared for democracy' (Khader 2013, 33; see also Pace 2014, 972). This myth had perhaps not been explicitly expressed in most previous EU rhetoric. However, pressed by the evidence coming from the Arab world in the early months of the uprisings, some EU officials went as far as to publicly regret the 'pervasive and rather offensive' feeling of powerlessness in these countries vis-à-vis democracy, that characterised several generations of European politicians (Füle 2011a).

In fact the uprisings shed light upon a serious EU contradiction: that, as the EU Commissioner for enlargement and the ENP, Štefan Füle, admitted in a couple of public speeches, the EU had long privileged its stability interests at the expense of its own values and that, accordingly, the approach pursued vis-à-vis these countries in the past was 'at best short-termism - and the type of short-termism that makes the long-term ever more difficult to build' (Füle 2011a; see also Füle 2011b). This self-critical position was confirmed in a European Parliament resolution (EP 2011a) and echoed by

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19 Data updated to 2013 provided by the ENPI Info Centre press packs based on European Commission's memos on EU cooperation with Libya (http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?lang_id=450&searchtype= simple&id=299&id_type=3) and Syria (http://www.enpiinfo.eu/mainmed.php?id=369&id_type=3&lang_ id=450).

other top officials when they committed themselves to ensuring Europe's place 'on the right side of history' (Barroso 2011). These tardy acknowledgements may have been nothing more than a further exercise in public relations, aimed at buying time until it was more clear where the uprisings were heading. In fact, as the following sections will show, these words were not matched by an equally relevant shift in EU principles, objectives and tools. Nonetheless, the limpid self-acknowledgment of EU's contradictions by a top official in the Commission was an infrequent event in EU declaratory politics, and was initially observed by some as a sign of a real commitment to modifying failed approaches to Mediterranean policies (Tocci 2013).

The 'democratisation-securitisation dilemma', or the 'prioritisation of security to the detriment of political reform', was thus publicly recognised and regretted by EU officials in one immediate consequence of the Arab uprisings. As shown throughout this whole chapter, outside EU rhetoric, this dilemma had strongly characterised EU actions vis-à-vis the Mediterranean for at least the last twenty years (see also Khader 2013, 31 and Behr 2013a). After all, it has always been very plain to EU officials that if Europe did not 'export' stability to the Mediterranean, it would import 'instability' (Ferrero-Waldner 2006c). This institutional *mea culpa* might have been a real conviction of EU officials or just an instrumental gimmick, but was functional to present the EU commitment to do more for the Mediterranean (and to do it more effectively) in a new (and positive) light. The EU wanted to demonstrate, in particular, a committed support for the transitions within these countries without trying to pre-determine their outcomes. This was consistent with the claim expressed by its top officials, that the future of the Arab world was firmly in the hands of the people who made those events possible (Ashton 2011a).

The European Parliament called for a 'paradigm shift' in the EU approach to relations with southern neighbours (EP 2011a). However, while events were quickly unfolding in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria and other countries of the area, the EU opted in favour of a revision of existing policies (and paradigms) rather than concentrating on the creation of a new strategic framework of cooperation. Between the two policy initiatives then active in the Mediterranean basin – the ENP (southern dimension) and the UfM, efforts were largely directed towards the former, for a number of reasons. First of all, as stated above, the ENP revision process had been underway since the summer of 2010 and had already involved a large section of governmental, parliamentary and civil society stakeholders throughout the neighbourhood (Füle 2010a). As Nathalie

Tocci (2011) notes, therefore, the uprisings came at a very favourable time for EU policy-making.

Secondly, there was a clear demand by a number of EU Mediterranean countries to significantly strengthen the southern dimension of the ENP. A letter signed by representatives from France, Spain, Malta, Greece, Cyprus and Slovenia was sent to the High Representative on 16 February 2011, with an attached 'non-paper' in which these countries called for more EU attention to and resources for the south, and a better management of existing programmes, even at the expense of the eastern dimension of the same policy (Government of France et al. 2011).

Thirdly, the situation unfolding in the MPCs was very heterogeneous and liquid. Each of these countries, in other words, had its own needs, resources and expectations from the EU, and had developed over the years different degrees of suspicion vis-à-vis EU promises about the actual advantages of cooperation and co-ownership in the area. Such a scenario urged flexibility and adaptation, something that could be granted through a bilateral approach, such as the one at the roots of the ENP rationale. For the same reasons, the region-wide intergovernmental approach to cooperation embodied by the UfM did not appear to be a viable path. On one hand, as stressed above, this policy initiative had lost traction shortly after its launch in 2008 (Bicchi 2011, 11-17; Hollis 2010). On the other, the initiative had been further 'delegitimised by its neglect for political reform epitomised by Hosni Mubarak's role as co-chair' of the initiative (Tocci 2011).

Fourthly, the countries most traditionally interested in Mediterranean dynamics, in particular Italy and Spain, were undergoing major economic crises, reducing *de facto* the possible intergovernmental input to the formulation of new European policies vis-à-vis this area. Their input, on the contrary, had been a crucial element to lobby for the various Mediterranean initiatives discussed so far (see Calabrese 1997; Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005; Aliboni et al. 2008).

3.1 A rehashed ENP framework

The revision process of the ENP was finalised with the presentation of a joint communication by the European Commission and the High Representative on 25 May 2011 entitled 'A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood'. This policy document, which was to renovate both dimensions of the ENP in the south and the east, was anticipated and largely affected by the adoption, on 8 March 2011, of another joint

communication devoted to the creation of 'A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean'. If until 2011 the main developments of past EU policies to address concerns and opportunities created by southern neighbourhood had been 'a function of European policy in Eastern Europe' (Soltan 2010, 68), during the Arab uprisings, for the first time since 1990, the trend was in the opposite direction, since challenges and opportunities concerning the Mediterranean dictated the overall agenda of EU policies towards the whole neighbourhood.

The two joint communications shared a common lexicon, concepts and ideas as well as the majority of their objectives and tools. The one on the 'Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean', was specifically aimed at making a 'qualitative step forward in the relations between the EU and its southern neighbours' (European Commission and HRFASP 2011a, 1) and represented the first official outcome of the several declarations and promises made by EU top officials during the revolts in Tunisia and Egypt. The proposal for this 'new' Euro-Mediterranean partnership built on three main objectives. The first was the support of democratic transformation and institution building, with a particular focus on human rights, fundamental freedoms, constitutional reforms and justice, later condensed under the concept, particularly advanced by High Representative Ashton and Commissioner Füle, of 'deep democracy' (Füle 2011d, Ashton 2013). The second objective was to establish a partnership with people and societies, by supporting civil society capacity building in the south, exchange opportunities and, generally speaking, enhancing people-to-people contacts, especially among youth. From the renewed perspective, in fact, this element was functional to the first objective since 'a thriving civil society can help uphold human rights and contribute to democracy building and good governance, playing an important role in checking government excesses' (European Commission and HRFASP 2011a, 5). The third objective was to support further sustainable and inclusive growth and economic development.

The second joint communication adapted and slightly reshaped these general objectives into the broader field of application represented by the entire neighbourhood (east and south). To the general picture depicted by previous communications on the Partnership with the Southern Mediterranean, this joint proposal on 'A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood' stressed more strongly the need to strengthen the two regional dimensions of the ENP: the Eastern Partnership and the UfM. The latter, in particular, was considered a good idea that had not delivered the expected results and

needed, accordingly, to reform in order to realise its full potential (European Commission and HRFASP 2011a, 11).

The three main principles underlying the functioning of the revised ENP were identified in incentive-based differentiation, positive conditionality and mutual accountability. Among them, only mutual accountability suggested any fresh approach to the allegedly renovated policy framework proposed through the revision of the ENP. Positive conditionality and differentiated bilateralism were, as shown in the preceding section, the principles that distinguished the ENP from the Barcelona Process when the former was presented in 2003/2004. Moreover, despite a rhetorical emphasis of the relevance of these two principles, the EU continued with its regime-friendly approach, thus undermining the credibility of the latter from the outset. One example is the case of Morocco and Algeria (European Council 2011c; Ashton and Füle 2011), where EU officials bestowed with exaggerated praises minor constitutional reforms contested by local civil society (Alami 2013; Malmvig and Tassinari 2011, 98). The third principle, that of mutual accountability, was itself introduced with a broad and unclear meaning (Khader 2013). However, even if the principle is accepted without criticism or scepticism, some have stressed that there were no mechanisms for the EU's partners 'to hold it accountable for delivering on its promises' (Balfur 2012, 26). The introduction of this principle can be thus understood as a rhetorical device to replace the concept of joint-ownership/co-ownership, which had been relentlessly pursued by the EU since the launch of the Barcelona Process in 1995 but in fact suddenly vanished from the EU jargon in documents following the Arab uprisings.

The EU opted in favour of several palatable expressions, tirelessly repeated by its top officials, to illustrate the alleged novelties of the ENP. These, however, rather sounded as an effort to create attractiveness for partners and to gain public opinion for an approach that, as this section is arguing, was in fact very similar to the pre-existing policy. One of these expressions was that of 'more for more' (and conversely of 'less for less'), which was aimed at exemplifying how conditionality was to work in the framework of the new differentiated approach vis-à-vis each of the ENP partners: more national reforms towards the achievement of 'deep democracy' would result in more engagement by the EU. A second frequently used expression illustrated what such 'more' engagement might look like, in terms of EU incentives to committed neighbours: the '3 Ms': *Money*, *Mobility* and *Market*.

As far as *Money* is concerned, the EU added EUR 1 billion to the 5.7 billion

already programmed for the period 2011-2013 under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) (for the whole neighbourhood), and encouraged a larger availability of resources though the European Investment Bank (EUR 6 billion). As some have noticed, however, the overall money pledged by the EU was, in terms of scale, very similar to the past and remained a 'far cry from the macroeconomic support needed by the countries in transition' (Dennison 2013). It was also a long way from the idea of launching a 'Marshall plan' for the Mediterranean, which was supported by some European politicians, including Italy's Foreign Minister Frattini (2011). The gap between EU promises of more money and the actual disbursement can be explained in the context of the euro crisis, with specific reference to the status of EU southern members. Indeed, during the last years, the latter had increasingly turned their attention towards internal problems and, under the pressure of austerity measures, were compelled to significantly revise foreign priorities and financial assistance (Paciello 2013, 86-87). Besides an increased bilateral support, the EU also launched new regional programmes to complement the delivery of committed resources in the pursuit of new ENP priorities. For instance, it channelled EUR 350 million into the 'SPRING' programme to contribute to the consolidation of democratic reforms and institution-building and the achievement of sustainable and inclusive growth and economic development in some countries.

A significant effort was employed within the programmes aimed at supporting CSOs and non-state actors in the Mediterranean neighbourhood. Although this had been a long-standing objective in the declaratory policy of the European Commission since the 1990s, allocated resources and visibility were insufficient for the few *ad hoc* programmes launched before the uprisings. For instance, the EU had invested EUR 1.5 million in the ENP Civil Society Regional Programme for the period 2010-2012 (ENPI Info Centre 2011b). By contrast, following 2011, besides increasing the resources for existing programmes that targeted civil society globally, such as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) (Europaid 2012), the EU also supported two brand new *ad hoc* regional initiatives. The first was the *Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility*, funded with a budget of EUR 33 million for 2011-2013 period (for the Mediterranean neighbourhood only) to strengthen civil society actors in partner countries and contribute to promoting an enabling environment for their work. The second was the *European Endowment for Democracy*, established in 2012 as a private foundation, with the strong support of Poland and other eastern and northern EU countries and with the initial budget of EUR 6 million. The Endowment, which is

primarily aimed at supporting the democratic transitions underway in the neighbourhood, allows direct and facilitated access for those non-state actors (parties, non-registered NGOs) which are generally unable to access EU funds through normal procedures, working as a 'gap-filler' under existing EU budget lines. Even in this case, however, promises exceeded delivery due to the implication of the financial crisis, as the Endowment did not manage to secure the financial support of some important EU members, including France, Italy, the UK and Spain, who were pressed by their own economic concerns (Paciello 2013, 84). Although it might have been bigger, the EU's renewed commitment to creating a partnership with Mediterranean societies was a visible change and, at least in principle, was also positively welcomed by the civil society of the area, as claimed in a joint communiqué issued by a group of southern NGO platforms (ANND 2011).

The second 'M', *Mobility*, was directly connected to both the opportunity of increasing the numbers of exchanges for Mediterranean citizens and the necessity of strengthening capacity building in Mediterranean governments on migration-related issues. According to Commissioner Füle, the possibility of establishing mobility partnerships corresponded to a long-standing request by the EU's partners, and was a demonstration of the EU's desire to start a new era in its relations with them (Füle 2011c). To this end, the EU proposed dialogues on migration, which would function to establish mobility partnerships for some categories of persons (cultural actors, students, businessmen, academics). However, these opportunities remained very limited and security-driven, as they were offered in exchange for painful measures for partner countries, such as the acceptance of readmission agreements for irregular migrants (Tocci and Cassarino 2011; Paciello 2013, 84-85). Moreover, similarly to the other alleged 'innovations' of the revised ENP, nothing in this initiative was original in a European interest perspective. An effort to introduce a clause on joint management of migration flows and on compulsory admission in the event of irregular migrations in bilateral association agreements with these countries had been pursued from at least the Seville European Council of 2002 (Tovias 2010, 170). Eventually, 'Dialogues on migration, mobility and security' began with Tunisia and Morocco by the end of 2011, while EU engagement remained conditional on effective efforts by partners to control illegal migrations (readmissions, border management) (Council 2011d).

The last 'M', *Market*, provided the possibility of entering into a 'Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement' with the EU as its main incentive for reforms

towards deep democracies. This was, in fact, a substantial upgrade compared to the possibilities offered by previous bilateral association agreements (Balfur 2012, 21). Still, this possibility may have not constituted such a strong incentive as to encourage Mediterranean governments, consumed by their domestic troubles, to comply with the complex arrangements and reforms required by EU common market regulations (Tocci 2011; Behr 2013a, 78). Morocco, which has had advanced status within the EU since 2008 and whose government was not drastically affected by the Arab uprisings, became the first (and so far only) Mediterranean country to begin negotiating this type of agreement with the EU in March 2013 (European Commission 2015).

In general terms, the blend of *mea culpas* and promises made by the EU in response to the uprisings were initially given at least the benefit of the doubt (or of hope) by the majority of analysts. Still, a gradual sense of scepticism has grown, particularly with regard to the gaps between the promises of 'paradigm shifts' or 'qualitative leaps' and the actual objectives, resources and tools set to deliver the ENP following the uprisings (Khader 2013; Balfur 2012, 8; Tocci 2013; Kauch 2013, 19). As has been shown, besides a certain repetitiveness within principles and ideas, the majority of objectives did not become as ground-breaking as EU declaratory policy suggested. After all, the promotion of democracy (albeit not 'deep'), human rights and good governance, as well as the need to take civil society seriously, had been dealt with as components of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation since the establishment of the Barcelona Process in 1995. The only change was, as Michelle Pace (2014, 979) points out, an increase in financial support that, in fact, underlay 'the same old logic and belief in liberal democracy' of the EU. Critical discourse analysis methodology confirms this scepticism: according to a study comparing the joint communication of 8 March 2011 with a 2001 European policy document on democracy assistance (COM(2001)252), what was actually put on the plate by the EU was essentially 'a rhetorical variation on themes set in pre-uprisings policy documents' (Teti 2011, 280).

Moreover, the revised ENP remained trapped into an 'enlargement light' logic (Emerson 2011, 46), that is, asking partner countries to make major efforts, including the acceptance of readmission agreements in the field of mobility, without however promising the sort of incentives that accession to the EU could bring, and had brought in the past (see also Tocci 2013). Furthermore, in terms of delivery, the new tools of the EU suffered a credibility problem even before their implementation since, as shown above, the persisting euro crisis caused several EU member states, the actors primarily

responsible for the delivery of EU policies incentives, to show a reduced support for these types of initiatives (Balfur 2012; Paciello 2013, Tocci 2013). With the exclusion of the upgrade of European efforts to support civil society in transition countries that, as seen, was both noteworthy in practice and positively welcomed by its direct beneficiaries, the process of revision of the ENP very quickly appeared to be no more than a rehash of pre-existing policy lines.

3.2 The EU response to the Arab uprisings outside the ENP framework

In revising the ENP as outlined above, the EU evidently fell prey to some regrettable miscalculations. In particular, European policy-makers shaped their allegedly new approach to the neighbourhood around the immediate developments in those countries where the Arab uprisings had apparently brought early positive outcomes, such as Tunisia and Egypt. In contrast, they did not include any indications, or allusion, of those worrisome trends that already in 2011-2012 were evidently developing in parallel to pro-democracy and pro-human rights protests, such as attempts to exploit the vacuum left by former dictators to establish new forms of Islamic despotism.

In fact, as far as the dramatic situations that have developed in Libya and Syria are concerned, the EU has explicitly excluded the two countries from the possible benefits promised within its rehashed policy framework for the neighbourhood. Libya has always been an external observer to all EU major initiatives concerning the Mediterranean basin (EMP, ENP, UfM). In 2011, moreover, the EU decided to suspend the association agreement and bilateral cooperation programmes with Syria, signed in 2005, following the brutality of the regime towards protesters (Council 2011f). In the absence of the formal possibility of recurring to the ENP framework, the EU has addressed the increasingly more serious challenges emerging from these two countries through an inorganic and thus far ineffectual employment of political, diplomatic and economic instruments. These have initially included harsh sanctions to the regimes in parallel to the delivery of significant amounts of humanitarian aid to support civilian populations (Council 2014b).

For instance, the challenge posed by the unprecedented flow of migrants and asylum seekers during this period, in large part resulting from the conflicts in Libya and Syria, was not addressed through any systematic policy effort at the EU level, at least in the period considered within the research time frame, i.e. until mid-2014. Indeed,

according to UNHCR data, arrivals into Europe across the Mediterranean (particularly into Spain, Italy and Greece) increased from 22,439 in 2012, to 59,421 in 2013 and to 216,054 in 2014. 48% of the 2014 arrivals were fleeing from Syria[20]. This massive increase 'unsettled the delicate balance on which the Euro-Mediterranean border-control regime [had] been built' during the previous years (Campesi 2011, 1). However, EU institutions did not put in place immediate efforts to speed up the efforts underway to develop a common European framework to manage migration issues, such as pushing for a rapid finalisation of a Common European Asylum System, a progressive process of harmonization started in 1999 (Bendel 2005). Rather, the EU primarily reacted to this urgent challenge with targeted measures aimed at providing support to its most-affected member states, namely Italy and Greece, to manage search and rescue activities in the Mediterranean, especially through operations of its border management agency (FRONTEX), such as 'Hermes' and later 'Triton'. In this context, moreover, as pointed out in a recent experts' study requested by the European Parliament on the subject of EU funds for migration policies, despite the FRONTEX budget being recently tripled, 'this may not suffice to carry out sea operations to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean' (Hausemer et al. 2015, 82).

The small window of opportunity for democratisation opened in 2010-2011 by the Arab uprisings also pushed one of the most deep-rooted and long-standing concerns of the EU vis-à-vis the Mediterranean temporarily into the background. Cooperation in the fight against terrorism no longer appeared as a EU priority at the beginning of the uprisings, and in fact was not reinstated until after the consolidation of violence between the Egyptian Army and the Muslim brotherhood, the outbreak of intra-tribal tensions in Libya, and the rise of ISIS in Syria. In particular, no references to 'terrorism' were made in the joint communication on 'A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity in the Mediterranean', although this 'partnership' was to be built with countries that, as extensively discussed above, had acted as incubators of and bases for the development of this major threat since the 1990s, and whose previous rulers were among Europe's main partners in fighting it. One explanation of this omission could be the rather benign and misled evaluation that EU officials made of the early demonstration of compact heterogeneity in some Arab countries, where people from every walk of life, including Islamist groups, protested against existing regimes. An

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20 UNHCR, Refugees/Migrants Emergency Responses – Mediterranean, data available at: http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php, retrieved on 23 December 2015.

additional explanation, however, is that, in omitting references to terrorisms and fundamentalisms, the EU was better able to portray its promises of a policy shift towards its Mediterranean partners as a true effort to value positive opportunities, rather than a focus on age-old preoccupations. The full responsibility for action, or inaction, on these matters was indeed left to *ad hoc* decisions of the Council of Ministers (see, for instance, Council 2014f on the ISIS threat).

During the turmoil in the Arab world, the EU's overall commitment to Israeli-Palestinian relations, which, since the mid-1990s had represented a major obstacle to the advancement of European cooperation efforts in the Mediterranean, resulted in particularly weak and passive actions. European institutions and officials concentrated their efforts on issuing periodic statements and institutional declarations, making on-site visits, and participating, represented by top EU officials, in the Quartet meetings, in which the US undoubtedly has the greater impact (Möckli 2010). Unsurprisingly, none of these actions gave the EU any particular role or visibility in a period characterised by stalled negotiations between parties. In the context of Israeli operation *Protective Edge* in the Gaza Strip, which started on 8 July 2014, the EU took almost two weeks to adopt its first common position on the situation underway.

The slightly different positions among member states concerning the question of who merited the primary blame for the ongoing violence contributed to slowing down European action in this context. Indeed, while all EU members called for the cessation of violence and an immediate ceasefire, France and Germany leaned more towards stressing their solidarity with Israel in the face of rocket fire from Gaza and in condemning the aggressions by Hamas (Arutz Sheva 2014). Spain and Austria, by contrast, primarily voiced their concern for the civilian casualties in the Gaza Strip and the need for Israel to protect its legitimate security interests in compliance with international law (Government of Austria 2014; Government of Spain 2014). When a common decision was finally made, European heads of states showed a balanced and diplomatic position between the two parties. They condemned the firing of rockets from Gaza into Israel and the indiscriminate targeting of civilians and the loss of innocent lives in the Gaza Strip as a result of Israeli military operations (European Council 2014a). After this, the commitment of EU institutions and officials to stopping the fighting intensified but did not go beyond offering humanitarian aid to Gaza and periodically reiterating blames, concerns, calls for ceasefires and support expressed for the initiatives of other, more influential, peace brokers such as the US or the UN

(Council 2014d; 2014e; Barroso and Van Rompuy 2014). In the context of the 2012 UN General Assembly vote on Palestine's status, EU members were shown to be divided again on the issue (Euroactive 2012), while top EU officials continued to linger over the EU's long-standing commitment to Palestinian statehood (Ashton 2012), without, however, taking any clear stance on the voting process.

A major channel claimed by the EU to complement some of the gaps left by the rehashed ENP's partial response was a revival of regional and multilateral cooperation. The previous section, which covers the period from 2001 to 2010, has concluded that, before the Arab uprisings there was a gradual disengagement of the EU from this approach, in favour of bilateralism. As seen, however, a call to strengthen the regional dimension was made in the 2011 joint communications, as one of the four main objectives that the EU should have pursued in the post-uprisings scenario. On one hand, this goal was pursued through the launch of new cooperation programmes, such as the above-mentioned SPRING and others which aimed to create a partnership with the societies. On the other, the EU started supporting closer cooperation and integration in sub-regions, such as in the Arab Maghreb (European Commission and HRFASP 2012). The EU also tried to cooperate with other international and regional organisations by supporting their efforts in the Mediterranean's various areas of crisis, such as with the Arab League envoy in Syria and with NATO in the context of the 2011 Libyan war (Füle 2011a; Van Rompuy and Ashton 2011). To facilitate coordination, the EU also created the post of Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean, originally entrusted to Bernardino Leon, an experienced Spanish diplomat (Ashton 2011c).

As far as the UfM is concerned, this was considered an important complement to the ENP, especially in light of its comprehensive character, including Turkey and the Western Balkans which, because of their status as EU candidates, are not included in the ENP framework (European Commission and HRFASP 2011b, 17). The EU took the co-presidency of the UfM together with Jordan in 2012 (Council 2012a) but invested only EUR 4 million to support the Secretariat in implementing old and new projects (European Commission 2013b). This sum equated to about one tenth of the funding allocated to the sole *Civil Society Facility* within the revised ENP for a period of two years. These efforts, thus did not give the idea of a real European commitment to provide the UfM with the needed boost within the crowded framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation initiatives, and also led to calls for the abolishment of this initiative (Kauch 2012).

Finally, outside of the framework of the EU, an effort was made by some southern EU countries to revive the '5+5 dialogue' (or Western Mediterranean Forum)[21], created in Rome in 1990 and substantially neglected within the broader framework of Euro-Mediterranean initiatives until the outbreak of the Arab uprisings. In a meeting organised and co-chaired by Italy in 2012, a proposal was made for 'launching a new platform for dialogue through new proposals for concrete collaboration in a series of sectors, ranging from security to economic development and cultural and civil society exchanges' (Terzi 2012). The rediscovery of this Italo-French initiative for the Mediterranean signified an effort by southern European countries to re-appropriate their traditional role in orienting the scope of Euro-Mediterranean relations. Their effort, however, proved unhelpful. The energy of this 5+5 strategy was quickly lost and the implementation of the projects identified within this framework was passed under the very poor operational capabilities of the UfM. Perhaps this was because the plan proposed in 2012 was very similar to EU priorities in the ENP, and risked fostering a duplication of efforts and funding, as Commission President Barroso had warned during the 5+5 meeting (ENPI Info Centre 2012b). Or perhaps, similarly to other foreign policy priorities of the involved EU southern members, this initiative suffered a setback due to the latter's persistent socio-economic problems, which resulted in large part from the ongoing global financial crisis.

None of the renewed institutional efforts based on regional or multilateral cooperation appear therefore to have significantly or successfully complemented the bilateral commitment of EU policies in the Mediterranean neighbourhood during this period. As a consequence, although the regional cooperation approach introduced with the EMP in 1995 was in the spotlight following the Arab uprisings, above and beyond mere rhetoric the EU and its member states have done nothing concrete in the Mediterranean from a multilateral point of view (Aliboni 2012).

Conclusions

This chapter has addressed how EU policies concerning the Mediterranean developed from the end of the Cold War to the period immediately following the Arab uprisings (up to 2014). In particular, it has focused on three consecutive periods in which, following a series of eventful direct and indirect changes to the overall priorities

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21 Composed of Italy, France, Malta, Portugal and Spain Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Tunisia and Morocco.

in this area, the EU modified the goals, approaches and instruments of its policies therein. However, as argued, and as will be further substantiated in the ensuing pages, only some of the factors addressed in this chapter – namely those that directly concerned the evolution of the political and social divergences in the area – affected EU choices on the promotion of ICD. In this perspective, within the broad policy context outlined above, it is possible to identify three interconnected trends that will help better contextualise the analysis of ICD promotion in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

The first of these trends concerns the existence of a set of persistent challenges characterising significantly the relations between European and Mediterranean people, whose changing pace over time has *de facto* dictated some of the major shifts in EU policies and instruments in the area. Indeed, since the early 1990s the Mediterranean has been the incubator of a number of both 'hard' and 'soft' security concerns for Europe that have continued to resurface with differing degrees of intensity, threatening the stability of the continent. In particular, the EU has been constantly concerned with the consequences of an alarming political, socio-economic and cultural divide between the two shores of the Mediterranean, which was connected to a number of worrisome phenomena. The latter have included the consequences of a constant increase in migration from MPCs into European societies, the spread of Islamic fundamentalism linked to cycles of terrorist violence both in Europe and in some MPCs, and a rising trend in xenophobia and intolerance on the part of many Europeans, especially vis-à-vis Muslims and people of Arab origin. There have also been opportunities to improve EU relations with the countries and people of this area, including the initiation of the MEPP in 1991, and the possibility of supporting the pro-democracy movements that characterised the beginning of the Arab uprisings in some MPCs. Overall, however, the EU has never proved capable of taking advantage of such opportunities. It has rather chosen to rehash its unsuccessful approaches and propose them to its MPCs under new rhetorical variations. In the absence of a proper European response, when these opportunities quickly transformed into further challenges, they marked even more clearly the limits and contradictions of the EU's approach and the alarming growth of EU's long-standing worries in this area.

From a similar perspective, a second interesting trend that has emerged from this chapter is the continuous European emphasis in promoting forms of ownership with MPCs in the various policy initiatives. In fact, labels have changed over time, from the 'co-ownership' of the EMP, to the 'joint-ownership' of the ENP, up to the 'mutual

accountability' principle characterising the revision of the ENP in 2011. All these labels, however, underlay the same EU attempt to pursue a more effective attitude towards cooperation by MPCs and their citizens on the basis of the promise of both deciding together the targets of cooperation and sharing the responsibilities for these choices. As this chapter has repeatedly shown, however, the reality was that the EU has exploited and revised its various policy initiatives in the Mediterranean to promote its own values, interests and objectives, and dictated the agenda, priorities and conditions of both regional and bilateral cooperation. This recurring attitude caused growing suspicion in some MPCs and contributed to the widening of the rhetoric-performance gap, consequently affecting the credibility of those tools and initiatives in which the EU has claimed to invest in order to develop a feeling of ownership, such as, as will be shown, ICD.

A third interconnected trend in the evolution of EU policies on the Mediterranean which is helpful to contextualise the promotion of ICD therein concerns the efforts to actively involve civil society from MPCs into regional cooperation initiatives. Indeed, as defined in the introduction to this thesis, ICD is among the tools through which the EU has expected to pursue such type of engagement. With the launch of the EMP, the EU showed interest in learning from the common needs identified by European and MPCs' organisations within the 'civil forums'. However, it did not take further significant steps to give substance to such commitment. During the 2000s, the European Commission also tried to reinforce and institutionalise Euro-Mediterranean civil society dialogue through the establishment of a structured 'platform'. As mentioned, however, these efforts encountered several obstacles, due also to the fact that CSOs in the south had different degrees of freedom and independence from governments, and fewer resources and experience in networking than their European counterparts. The outbreak of the Arab uprisings eventually gave the (false) impression that some of these gaps had rapidly reduced, encouraging a more direct and substantial investment of the EU on this aspect of regional cooperation.

The next three chapters will analyse how and why, phase by phase, the EU has developed and revised the conception, objectives, implementation and scope of ICD within the broad context outlined in this chapter. In doing this, they will pay particular attention on how the specific choices made by EU policy-makers on ICD can be framed within these three general trends that have characterised significant aspects of EUFP on this area over time.

Chapter 3

The Emergence of Intercultural Dialogue (1990-2001)

Introduction

As elaborated in the Introduction, this research refers throughout to ICD with reference to a cultural foreign policy tool that the EU has developed with the general objective of attenuating the tensions which derive by socio-cultural divergences among the people of Europe and the Mediterranean, through fostering mutual understanding among them. In light of the consequences on such divergences of the three major events discussed in the previous chapter, EU policy-makers have re-assessed the scope and relevance of ICD, engendering, as a consequence, three phases in the evolution of this tool. Within this evolving context, the aim of this chapter is to analyse why and how the EU has formulated and implemented ICD in this area during the first of these phases, going from the end of the Cold War to the eve of the terror attacks on the US of 9/11 2001.

This chapter argues that the 1990s represented a phase of patchy emergence for ICD, developing over three stages. In particular it claims that, before it was officially introduced into EU policies in 1995 with the establishment of the EMP/Barcelona Process, ICD was already latently present within European policy considerations for the Mediterranean following the end of the Cold War. From 1990, European leaders were exploring the possibilities to foster mutual understanding among the culturally different people of the area in the hope of tackling some of the key issues which were emerging from the Mediterranean in those years, including mounting xenophobia in Europe and escalating Islamic fundamentalism in the Maghreb. In addition, the EU expected to deploy these 'precursors' of ICD to support grassroots confidence building in the framework of the then ongoing Arab-Israeli peace process. When the Barcelona Process was launched, however, the EU and its MPCs came to attribute a vague scope of action to ICD, which did not reflect the specific objectives that the EU had proposed to pursue through the promotion of mutual understanding. The result was an erratic and initially ineffectual implementation process, the outcomes of which only started to have some tangible effect on EU Mediterranean policies in the late 1990s, when the Commission eventually launched the first three cooperation programmes among cultural heritage and audiovisual practitioners and young people from the whole area.

The chapter advances two related explanations for this slow and patchy emergence of ICD. On one hand, a number of MPCs were reluctant to lend much credit to the intercultural aspect of regional cooperation, showing lack of interest or suspicions over a potential new form of European cultural imperialism. On the other, the EU had, at that time, a growing but still restrained sense of urgency for the specific issues ICD was designed to address. The EU thus included ICD within the Barcelona Process as a potential resource, leaving its development to progressive cooperation.

The argument of this chapter is primarily substantiated through an analysis of the policy documents produced in the framework of the broader European response to the effects of the end of the Cold War on the Mediterranean milieu (CSCM, Euro-Maghreb Partnership, Barcelona Process) and of EU reports and documents related to the launch and implementation of ICD initiatives therein. This data is complemented by research interviews with EU officials and ICD programme managers, and through references to secondary sources dealing with the launch and evolution of the EMP in the 1990s.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first one provides an analysis of how and why the EU came to attribute strategic credit to pursuing mutual understanding in the area before the launch of the EMP, as contrasted to the vague conception of ICD that emerged from the Barcelona Declaration in 1995. The second part addresses the late implementation of ICD. An analysis is offered of the objectives, resources, and enforcement of the three programmes launched by the EU in the EMP context, and the extent to which the latter have contributed to advance the co-ownership of ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean area. Finally, by contrasting the consistency and contradictions between the formulation and the implementation of ICD, the conclusions of this chapter seek to evaluate the overall roles played by ICD in the EMP framework during this phase of emergence.

1. The actual and the 'latent' objectives of ICD in early 1990s EU Mediterranean policies

The concept of ICD (originally of 'dialogue between cultures and civilisations') was formally introduced in EUFP with the launch of the Barcelona Process in 1995 (EMP 1995a). More specifically, ICD was part of the third basket within the multi-dimensional framework of cooperation established by the EMP, which also included two other partnerships, one on political and security cooperation and one on economic issues and trade. The third basket represented the section of the EMP devoted to human,

social, and cultural affairs and included a variety of cooperation areas, policy instruments and objectives. In particular, the contents of this basket ranged from cultural cooperation, social rights, development, and civil society interaction to the management of migration flows, the fight against terrorism, organised crime, and illegal migration.

The definition provided for ICD in this framework was somewhat vague. The Barcelona Declaration simply recognised that 'the traditions of cultures and civilizations throughout the Mediterranean region, the dialogue between these cultures and exchanges at human, scientific and technological level are an essential factor in bringing their peoples closer, promoting understanding between them and improving their perception of each other' (EMP 1995a). Therefore, the EU and its MPCs introduced ICD as a tool for promoting mutual understanding and knowledge through cultural exchanges across the Euro-Mediterranean space. Besides being very abstract, however, this general goal left the actual scope of ICD – the 'what for?' – largely unspecified, which as will be elaborated later, derailed the implementation of ICD. This conception of ICD stayed in place until the beginning of the 2000s. Until then, no major efforts were made to better define roles, objectives and the added value of this tool in the context of the EMP. Yet the importance of ICD for the larger goals of the EMP was given unequivocal emphasis at all Euro-Mediterranean conferences during the period 1995-2000 – that is, at the periodic ministerial meetings deciding the advancement of the Barcelona Process (EMP 1997; EMP 1999). This apparent contradiction raises a simple yet fundamental question: were mutual understanding and cultural exchanges really an end to themselves or was ICD functional to more specific strategic goals which were omitted from EMP documents and practice?

The preamble of the Barcelona Declaration listed mutual understanding as well as measures to reduce poverty and to strengthen democracy, human rights, and social development as fundamental requirements for the promotion of peace, security and prosperity in the Mediterranean (EMP 1995a). From this angle, the role of ICD in the EMP appeared to be that of contributing, primarily through promoting mutual understanding, to the resolution of the set of security challenges that beleaguered the Mediterranean during those years. However, while rendering ICD more concrete by allowing the identification of at least some specific targets for its deployment, this consideration leaves the scope and relevance of this instrument for the EMP largely unspecified.

1.1 The precursors of ICD before the launch of the EMP

To understand whether EU policy-makers and officials had considered a more strategic role for the promotion of cultural exchange and mutual understanding in the Mediterranean, it is necessary to examine the contents of the policy-formulation processes that led to the establishment of the EMP. This section shows that, in the time span between the end of the Cold War and the launch of the Barcelona Process (1990-1995), the idea of ICD was already latently present in the broader response of EC/EU institutions and member states to the challenges emerging from the Mediterranean at the end of the Cold War. In particular, the analysis of these precursors of ICD identifies three main strategic targets behind the EU decision to introduce this tool in the framework of the incipient Barcelona Process: 1) the social tensions connected to rising migration into Europe from MPCs; 2) the growth of Islamic fundamentalism; and 3) the efforts to promote peace and build mutual confidence in the conflict areas of the Mediterranean.

Since, as shown in the previous chapter, the idea of the EMP originated primarily out of southern Europe's concerns with regard to the Maghreb, it is not surprising that two out of these three targets were primarily connected to the tensions emerging from that area. References to cultural exchange and mutual understanding in those matters, indeed, can be traced back to the early 1990s EC/EU cooperation initiatives with western Mediterranean countries (including, for instance, the then aborted 'Euro-Maghreb Partnership' in 1992) as well as in the alternative initiatives proposed by France, Italy and Spain in that period, such as the '5+5 Dialogue' or the project of a Conference for Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM). The third target behind the launch of ICD, on the contrary, was mainly derived from the opportunities provided by the Middle East, and emerged a few years later following the signing in Washington D.C., in September 1993, of the Declaration of Principles at the basis of the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO.

As elaborated in the previous chapter, legal and illegal migration from MPCs, especially into southern Europe, were on the rise in the early 1990s, causing concern in both EU institutions and member states (Giubilari 1997; Calabrese 1997). Responses were directed both to reducing or at least mitigating the causes of this phenomenon, and to managing the economic and social consequences of the growing presence in Europe of these migrants (European Council 1992e, 42). Within this broad context, the main function that EU policy-makers expected from the promotion of mutual understanding

in the area was to contribute to a reduction of increasing social tensions between European citizens and immigrants from the Mediterranean area, especially from the Maghreb. In particular, as confirmed by the *ad hoc* Eurobarometer surveys of 1997 and 2001, the growing presence of migrants in Europe, exacerbated by difficult economic and labour situations in some EU countries, was feeding a feeling of racism and xenophobia toward migrants and cultural minorities in Europe. In some cases this led to worrisome episodes of xenophobic violence towards them. Some analysts considered this rise in xenophobia as among the most alarming social problems in post-Cold War Europe (Baumgartl and Favell 1995; Stolcke 1995; Calabrese 1997).

The first input toward building mutual understanding in order to address the problems of xenophobia against migrants from MPCs came from the Commission, which was already aware of the potential relationship between migrants, cultural exchanges, and mutual understanding when it first reviewed the European policies towards the Mediterranean in 1990. In that context, migrants were valued as 'a bridge between the Community and its Partners' (European Commission 1990, 11). Yet, that group was not targeted specifically by any decentralised cooperation programme promoted by the EC in the framework of the Renovated Mediterranean Policy (RMP), which from 1990 to 1995 represented the official framework of cooperation between Europe and the Mediterranean countries. European policy-makers confined themselves to stating their concern about the increase in xenophobic violence against migrants and their resolve to use any means at their disposal to preserve the human dignity and the peaceful co-existence of all citizens in the EU (European Council 1993a, 23; and 1994b, section on the European Union's external relations). Few years later, when presenting to the other EU institutions its proposal for the EMP, the Commission was more explicit on the possible contributions of ICD on this matter: it portrayed the promotion of mutual understanding between the culturally diverse people of Europe and of MPCs as one of the factors that could reduce the negative social effects of mass migration, which were considered among the most dangerous effects of instability in the area (European Commission 1994, 8).

With regards to the second challenge – the consequences of spreading Islamic fundamentalism – the primary European objective for pursuing mutual understanding was to weaken the hold of religious extremists on Muslim populations across the Euro-Mediterranean region by providing a more balanced view of the 'other' through the establishment of direct exchanges at the civil society level. In 1990, Italian and Spanish

politicians had identified a return to 'ancient religious legacy' in some Mediterranean countries among the challenges for regional stability that the CSCM should have addressed. In this context, they stressed the potential contribution that dialogue between civilisations[22] could have brought in this context (Fernandez-Ordoñez 1990). However, the CSCM remained at the stage of a proposal at governmental level. The initiative was followed up by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an international organisation of Parliaments working for peace and co-operation among peoples and for the establishment of representative democracy. In 1992, the first Inter-Parliamentary Union's attempt to elaborate the CSCM devoted one of the three proposed areas of cooperation, to human rights and dialogue between civilisations (IPU 1992). In this framework, the latter was conceived as a tool to support a process of mutual appreciation between the two shores of the Mediterranean and to help to prevent or curb the development of conflicts driven by religious extremism. Indeed, in the perspective of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, these conflicts were directly connected with the generation of intolerance and terrorism that contributed to 'destabilising the good neighbourly relations and broadening the cultural gap' (IPU 1995, item 92).

Although focused on Euro-Mediterranean relations, however, the CSCM was not a specific EU project and its influence on the EMP, although glaring in some respects and especially with regard to the multi-dimensional approach to security building exemplified in the three-basket structure of both initiatives, cannot be verified. Within the EU institutional framework, the relation between efforts for mutual understanding and threats of religious fundamentalism in the Mediterranean was originally established in 1992 with the proposal of the 'Euro-Maghreb Partnership', which would form the embryo of the EMP. The main thrust of that initiative was to reduce the causes for European instability rising from the western Mediterranean. Religious fundamentalism and 'integralism' were claimed to be at the heart of European concerns therein (Council 1992, 38). In that context, the EU aimed to put its relations with Maghreb countries on a better footing across a number of different areas of cooperation, including the promotion of tolerance and coexistence between cultures and religions through exchanges between young people, university students and staff, scientists and those in the media (European Council 1992b). A couple of years later, the Commission,

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22 As mentioned in the Introduction, the concept of dialogue of civilisations developed in parallel as a synonym to that of ICD, the two sharing the same objective of facilitating interactions between 'units' (individuals, groups, communities, or 'civilisations') which are characterised by some degree of cultural and/or religious diversity.

endorsed by the Council and by the European Council, was more specific: it recognised that the promotion of mutual understanding would have helped to reduce the negative implications of fundamentalism, extremism and terrorism on both European and Mediterranean societies (European Commission 1994, 8).

The third and last context in which the EU expected these mutual understanding initiatives to play a role before the launch of the Barcelona Process derived not from a particular challenge but from one of the opportunities that were emerging from the Mediterranean in those years. The objective in this context was to foster exchanges to help build confidence and sustain reconciliation efforts between populations involved in situations of conflict. Although the Mediterranean was dotted with old and new conflicts, the EU initially only considered this possibility in the Israeli-Palestinian context, following the signing of the Declaration of Principles between the Israeli Government and the PLO in September 1993 (European Commission 1994, 6).

The EU had committed to establish confidence-building measures and to support the advancement of the MEPP since at least the Madrid Conference of 1991 that formally started this process (European Council 1992e, 108). However, those measures were explicitly inspired by the experience of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe and, as such, they mainly encompassed such activities as exchange of information, dissemination of data, and notification of military movements and communications. In this context, the proactive role recognised by some analysts for the so-called 'track 2 talks'[23] in the negotiation of the Oslo Accords (Agha et al. 2004) may shed some light on why the EU explored the opportunity of fostering mutual understanding and exchanges as a confidence-building measure only after the signing of the aforementioned Declaration of Principles. This prospective function of ICD was also discussed in the ensuing literature on the political-security dimension of the Barcelona Process (Spenser 1997; Soltan 2004) as it complied with the view of some scholars that the third basket was in fact the part of the EMP which aimed 'at building the conditions for the future development of a security community in the Mediterranean' (Adler and Crawford 2006, 26).

1.2 From a potential strategic instrument to a resource with a vague scope

Before the EMP was launched, EU member states and institutions gradually

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23 Agha et al. 2003 defines 'track 2 talks' as 'discussions held by non-officials of conflicting parties in an attempt to clarify outstanding disputes and to explore the option to resolve them'.

conceived ICD in pursuit of the three strategic objectives discussed in the sub-section above. However, as anticipated, the Barcelona Declaration remained vague about the scope of ICD, and EMP ministers were silent with regard to these objectives during the first years of the Barcelona Process.

For instance, the approach adopted in the EMP framework toward managing the alarming economic and social consequences of the growing presence in Europe of migrants from Mediterranean countries was primarily based on a common pledge to develop cooperation initiatives in support of vocational training and job cooperation in the MPCs (EMP 1995a). The need to combat xenophobia and racism was only mentioned among the objectives of the first basket devoted to political and security dialogue among EMP partners, without any reference to the existing link between these alarming manifestations in Europe and the growth of migratory flows from MPCs.

Following the inputs of the Commission in 1994, also EU member states officially reiterated this European interest in pursuing ICD to fight intolerance, racism and xenophobia within the first EU Common Strategy on the Mediterranean in 2000 (European Council 2000, art. 7). Although often dismissed on the grounds that it merely restated what the EU had already engaged upon through the EMP (see Smith 2008a, 44), the Common Strategy, a CFSP act, was in fact the first binding document adopted after the launch of the EMP in which the EU affirmed a tangible strategic objective for the promotion of ICD in that area. However, despite the aforementioned references in official EU documents, the relation between the promotion of mutual understanding and the problems connected with xenophobia was not formulated at all within both the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 and the ensuing EMP ministerial conclusions, nor it was put into practice through any concrete policy action or programme during the time span of reference.

Within the broader EMP framework, the only actors that explicitly lobbied for a more intense employment of ICD in connection to these issues during the 1990s were civil societies from both shores. In particular, the 'Civil Forum' of Malta (the gathering of CSOs from the region which anticipated the EMP ministerial meeting of 1997 in that country) claimed that an approach that considered the causal link between mutual understanding and xenophobic attitudes would have provided ICD with more legitimacy and credibility (Euromed Civil Forum 1997). This input, however, went unheeded. The ensuing ministerial conference of 1997 ended up with a call for waging a determined campaign against racism and xenophobia and intolerance, and an agreement to

cooperate to that end, without references to ICD or specifications on how this campaign should have been enhanced (EMP 1997). This event showed that, despite the alleged fundamental relevance of CSOs to establishing a permanent and lasting dialogue between the two shores of the Mediterranean (EMP 1995b), governments of the area were not particularly interested in the inputs of these actors on sensitive matters. Moreover, it marked from the outset a contradiction in the EU's rhetoric on the promotion of ICD, which was launched as a tool to engage and bring together the people of the whole Euro-Mediterranean area, but whose promotion was not based on the requests of its expected beneficiaries.

EMP cooperation on issues related to the concerns for the proliferation of (Islamic) fundamentalism and connected terrorism in the Mediterranean and in Europe was as well to be supported primarily by other instruments than ICD. Specific efforts, in particular, were to be devoted to strengthening cooperation among the law-enforcement, judicial and other authorities (the so called JHA sector). In fact, the five-year action plan annexed to the Barcelona Declaration envisaged the possibility of employing ICD towards this target, holding 'periodic meetings of representatives of religions and religious institutions with the aim of breaking down prejudice, ignorance, fanaticism and fostering cooperation at the grassroots level' (EMP 1995a). This possibility, however, was not reiterated or followed up by the EU and EMP ministers in the period under analysis. Euro-Mediterranean meetings just listed scattered conferences or projects promoted or envisaged in individual countries of the EMP that made some reference to religious issues in the annexes to their outcome documents (see, for instance, EMP 1997, Annex III; EMP 1998, Annex).

Also the employment of ICD to build confidence in the context of Israeli-Palestinian relations was not followed up during the period between 1995 and 2001. An attempt to revive the hoped confidence-building function of ICD was made, however, at the end of the 1996 Euro-Mediterranean meeting of the ministers of culture. In their effort to provide some substance to the concrete implementation of ICD, the ministers hinted at its employment as 'an ingredient for reconciliation' (EMP 1996). Yet, this insight remained isolated also due to the progressive failure of the MEPP at the political level. Indeed, the change in the Israeli leadership in 1996 following the assassination in November 1995 of PM Yitzhak Rabin, one of the architects of the Oslo Accords, and the reluctance of the new right-wing government led by Likud's Benyamin Netanyahu to push forward with the peace process had negative, if not fatal, implications for the

overall progress of the EMP (Asseburg 2003; Ünver Noi 2011, 55).

In fact, the consequences of these dramatic events in the Middle East gradually affected all the components of the Barcelona Process. In particular, as already discussed in Chapter 2, they affected the first basket, devoted to political and security cooperation, where ministers were involved in the delicate negotiation of a Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability (Aliboni 2000). In the third basket, however, these tensions were behind the reported trend among Arab governments to forbid their CSOs and experts to participate in multilateral cooperation projects with any Israeli counterparts for fear of normalising the relations with Israel (Bouquerel and el Husseiny 2009, 61). The opportunities for employing ICD as a post-conflict confidence-building measure were therefore almost immediately scuppered by the escalation of tensions between Arab leaders and the newly elected Israeli government following the murder of Rabin. As the next chapter will elaborate in more detail, these problems were further exacerbated after 2000, notably by the failure of the Summit of Camp David and the outbreak of the second Intifada, hampering, among other things, also any renewed effort by the EU to propose ICD as helpful to fostering confidence-building and mutual trust among the civil societies of the Mediterranean, and specifically between Israeli and Arab ones.

Therefore, in the outlined framework the lack of explicit references to these three objectives in the Barcelona Declaration undermined the strategic potential of ICD and, as will be shown in the second part of this chapter, slowed down the overall implementation of this policy instrument. With reference to the significant effects of this silence, why were these specific objectives neglected during the phase under analysis?

The chapter has put forward a plausible explanation for the absence of references to the third objective – building confidence between civil societies in the MEPP context – by looking at the impact of the worsening relations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This, however, is no explanation for the disappearance of the other two objectives.

In this context, the literature on Euro-Mediterranean policies associates the vagueness surrounding ICD with the problems connected to the whole third basket of the EMP. As has been argued, all the components of the human, social, and cultural partnership, including ICD, were subordinate to the gains pursued, or rather expected, through improved cooperation in the political, security, and trade spheres (Jünemann

2003b). As a result, not much attention was initially given to the functioning, viability, and correlation of its contents (Gillespie 2003; see also Schumacher 2007). This hypothesis is empirically valid, but the premises stated at the outset cannot be fully accepted. The inextricable interconnection between the objectives set for mutual understanding initiatives and the political, security, and socio-economic priorities of the EU in the Mediterranean before the launch of the Barcelona Process suggests that the introduction of ICD in the EMP was no secondary afterthought for Europe, although not as strategically relevant as, for instance, the creation of a free trade area in the region.

An alternative explanation can thus be found in the reluctance of MPCs, especially Arab and Muslim ones, to give much credit to initiatives concerning cultural and religious issues within the EMP cooperation framework. As documented in the literature, the Arab countries were interested in the 'preferential access to European markets and development aid and resisted the idea of convergence' prompted by the EU (Adler and Crawford 2006, 27). Most of them only agreed to participate in the EMP with great scepticism and for a lack of viable alternatives, since to them, accession into the EU was denied (Joffé 1997). On the other hand, Turkey (like Cyprus and Malta) was in fact seeking EU membership, for both economic and political interests. Lastly, Israel was interested in the benefits of increased trade and financial cooperation and regarded the opportunity to have 'a voice in the Euro-Mediterranean process in order to promote regional co-operation and security' in a positive light (Tovias 1998).

For all MPCs joining the EMP in 1995, the strategic potential of cultural exchange and mutual understanding for the sake of regional stability was therefore considered, at best, an irrelevant waste of resources. Moreover, Arab countries tended not to trust initiatives based on cultural and religious exchanges as they raised the spectre of neo-colonialism (Adler and Crawford 2006, 20) and, along with it, an attitude of cultural relativism with regard to Europe and the West (Aliboni and Said 2000, 213). This clearly had the opposite effect of what ICD was meant to achieve in EU's expectations and could have thus suggested the EU to avoid putting too much relevance on this tool. After all, Europe was perceived by some MPCs as responsible for a number of major economic and social ills as well as cultural intrusion and violent xenophobia against their migrant citizens (Biad 1997, 57).

Such general suspicion on the part of MPCs, however, explains just in part the vagueness attributed to the concept of ICD and to its objectives when the EMP was launched. Indeed, there were other sensitive issues on the table at Barcelona in 1995,

such as the promotion of democratic reforms and human rights. In this case there was again a general opposition or suspicion by MPCs towards committing with Europeans to the promotion and protection of these principles, notably because the latter contrasted with the domestic political interests of some Arab rulers. Indeed, the introduction of objectives related to human rights and democracy in the Barcelona Declaration reportedly caused friction during the EMP negotiations (Edis 1998). However, the EU managed to introduce them, apparently without limitations, at least on paper.

The special treatment applied to ICD can thus be also explained by the still-restrained sense of urgency within Europe for the specific issues ICD was meant to address. In fact, certain security threats of the kind brought about by religious fundamentalism and terrorism could have given much corroboration to Samuel Huntington's theory of the 'Clash of Civilisations'. As shown in the previous chapter, southern European countries and EU institutions were indeed concerned by the possible domino effect of the threat of religious fundamentalists from the Maghreb (Calabrese 1997; Biad 1997; Kepel 2003, 466-471), as well as by the growth of other religion-based groups in the Middle East, an area from which tens of terrorist incidents had affected Europe already from the late 1980s (Pluchinsky 1991). Among these groups, Hamas, from the time of its establishment in 1987, conferred an Islamic meaning on its version of Palestinian nationalism and envisioned a Palestinian state coming into being through a 'holy war' (Mishal and Sela 2006, 15). In this context, moreover, the fact that 29% of Europeans considered that the religious practices of migrants threatened their way of life (Eurobarometer 1997) suggests that by the mid-1990s, the EU might have considered the possibility of an outburst of serious culture- and religion-based conflict in European societies.

As shown above, during the early 1990s the EU had indeed developed ICD to intervene directly on what Huntington claimed to be the root of the problem: the (allegedly irreconcilable) cultural differences between the Western and the Islamic civilisations (Huntington 1993). However, if the EU had understood those risks as a vital European priority, it would have probably pushed for the introduction of a more strategic conception of ICD in the EMP despite the reluctance or suspicion of MPCs. The EU, however, did not make this choice during the 1990s. As already noted in Chapter 2, in those years the issues connected with fundamentalism and terrorism were still 'part of a growing trend of concern toward the Mediterranean and of the debate about "what to do" with it' (Bicchi 2007, 143). From this perspective, despite the

alarming rhetoric following Islamist terrorist incidents in France in the early 1990s, the eventual European choice for that moment was to reject Huntington's thesis, on the basis that the Islamists 'may have threatened certain Mediterranean regimes but did not constitute a direct threat to Europe' (Gillespie 1997, 68). Indeed, as Fred Halliday noted (2005, 158), yet, 'pervasive and violent as this global jihadi–west conflict was, and with uncertain long-term consequences, it did not constitute a strategic fissure in international relations, on the scale of colonial rivalries of the nineteenth century or the two world wars or the Cold War of the twentieth century, nor did it unite all, or even most, Middle Eastern and Islamic states in a bloc confronting the west'.

The discussion above shows that ICD started emerging in the post-Cold War EU policy framework for the Mediterranean as a strategic tool to defuse social and political tensions in the long term. In light of the reluctance of MPCs to acknowledge the relevance of an intercultural dimension to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, and of the growing but still restrained perception of urgency for the emerging issues this tool was designed to address, ICD was introduced in the Barcelona Declaration, albeit with a vague scope and objectives. In his interview with the author, Romano Prodi, European Commission President between 1999 and 2004, has observed that 'in the dialogue itself there is no policy; the dialogue is the precondition to avoid mistakes and give an engaging content to the future policy' (Interview, no. 14, 2015, *my translation*). From this perspective, the launch of ICD in the EMP, though rendered toothless by the omission of specific objectives, was in fact a foresighted move on the part of the EU. ICD was introduced in the Barcelona Process as a flexible resource at the hand of European institutions to progressively compensate the limits of traditional political, diplomatic and economic tools, particularly in addressing the strategic targets of the proliferation of Islamist fundamentalism, and the social consequences of migration and other challenges that were emerging globally and with particular intensity around the Mediterranean.

2. The late contribution of 'Euromed' regional programmes to ICD implementation

The attribution of a broad scope to ICD in the Barcelona Declaration had important repercussions for the implementation of this instrument during the early years of the EMP. In particular, the absence of well-defined objectives led experts, officials and politicians from the whole region to enter an open-ended debate concerning how

and in what fields ICD could have actually been employed. In other words, if, as noted above, in the dialogue itself there is no policy, the social-cultural basket was the only area of the EMP where it proved necessary to raise a number of means to articulate EU objectives following the adoption of the Barcelona Declaration, and 'this was mostly because there was no content to the policy itself' (Interview no. 5, Joffé, 2013). The outcomes of this paradoxical situation were stalemate and discontinuity. Implementation began late and the selection of areas of cooperation was, to a large part, inconsistent with even ICD most general goal.

The difficulty of rendering this new tool less vague and more substantial was already clearly visible in the five-year action plan adopted at the Barcelona Conference. The document shows that Euro-Mediterranean ministers deliberately postponed any decision on how to implement ICD. While the political, security, and economic dimensions of the EMP were supported from the outset by precise objectives and activities, the Barcelona action plan did not provide any specific indication for the cultural dimension. The action plan merely identified a broad list of fields with potential for cooperation: cultural and creative heritage, cultural and artistic events, co-productions in the media, translation, and other means of cultural dissemination and training activities. The plan also considered a small number of target groups that were to be involved in cooperation activities, including CSOs, young people, and religious representatives and institutions. These references, however, were just broad directions since, as stated in the plan, concrete proposals for action should have come directly from officials and experts during *ad hoc* meetings (EMP 1995a). Consequently, the first programme set up to implement ICD, *Euromed Heritage*, was only launched in 1998, though it was discussed by officials and endorsed by the Euro-Mediterranean ministers of culture as early as in 1996 (EMP 1996).

2.1 The three ICD Euromed regional programmes

By the autumn of 2001, experts and officials agreed to also promote ICD through other two programmes besides *Euromed Heritage*: *Euromed Audiovisual* and *Euromed Youth*. These three programmes were conceived as financial grants funded by the European Commission and disbursed through periodic calls for proposals open to CSOs and cultural institutions across the whole Euro-Mediterranean area. The EU provided the necessary financial resources under the MEDA instrument (short for *Mesures D'Accompagnement*), established in 1996 to support all regional and bilateral efforts

undertaken by MPCs 'to reform their economic and social structures and mitigate any social or environmental consequences which may result from economic development' (Council 1996). To discuss how these three 'Euromed' programmes have contributed to the implementation of ICD in the early years of the Barcelona Process, it is necessary to briefly illustrate, for each, both general and specific objectives, the nature and logic of the allocation of financial resources, and the typology and compositions of the projects.

Euromed Heritage was endorsed in 1996 by the Euro-Mediterranean ministers of culture who met for the first time in Bologna, Italy, to follow up on the Barcelona action plan and to discuss practical possibilities for the development of ICD. On that occasion, the ministers recognised cultural heritage 'as a custodian of the collective memory, an instrument for a policy of peace, a guarantor of diversity and a generator of employment' (EMP 1996). The programme was only launched in 1998, and it was centrally managed by the Commission, specifically though its DG Aid. The first edition, *Euromed Heritage I* (1998-2002)[24] focused on material heritage. It was specifically aimed at starting a process of identification and mapping of historical sites and cultural phenomena in partner countries, sharing and exchanging conservation and preservation techniques, developing financial and marketing skills as well as fostering networking activities among museums, cultural institutions, teachers, and students in the area of heritage conservation. *Euromed Heritage I* received a total of EUR 17 million from the MEDA instrument and funded 16 projects[25]. All of them involved partners from the whole Euro-Mediterranean space, except for a couple of projects which were devoted to very localised activities and concerned only a few coastal countries. For instance, the 'IPAMED project' was aimed at creating a map-based Geographic Information System showing heritage sites in relation to the threats faced in Tunisia and was presented by a project partnership comprised of experts from 5 countries (Algeria, France, Italy, the Palestinian Authority, and Tunisia). The provision of funding for each project varied significantly, from EUR 97,000 for 'Museomed', a training course on modern museum technology and management, to more than EUR 3 million for the 'PISA' project. The

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24 Some projects were extended up to 2004. This chapter considers only editions of the programmes that were prepared and launched before the end of 2000. The expression "edition" is preferred to that of "phase", which is the one normally employed by European institutions to differentiate between periodic thematic calls, in order to avoid confusion with the phases identified in this research for the promotion of ICD.

25 'Corpus', 'Corpus Levant', 'Euro-Mediterranean Heritage Days', 'Expo 2000', 'Fêtes du Soleil', 'Ipamed', 'Maghreb Heritage Training Courses', 'Manumed', 'Museomed', 'Islamic Art in the Mediterranean I/II', 'Pisa', 'Rias', 'Salambo', 'Unimed Audit', 'Unimed Herit', 'Unimed Symposium', 'Saving Cultural Heritage Exhibition', 'Encyclopedia of the Mediterranean'.

latter was principally aimed at showing policy-makers and business leaders the potential social and economic benefits of an integrated management of archaeological sites.

Euromed Audiovisual was proposed in 1997 during an intergovernmental conference on regional audiovisual cooperation in Thessaloniki, Greece. Ministers of culture officially endorsed the programme during their second meeting held in Rhodes in 1998. *Euromed Audiovisual I* was eventually launched in 2000 (for the period 2000–2005). Its general goal was to contribute to mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe and the Mediterranean, by emphasising their common values and the richness of the region's cultural diversity in the fields of radio, television and cinema (EMP Info Note 2000). The EU, specifically, even came to consider *Euromed Audiovisual* a platform for pursuing an effective peace prospect on both shores of the Mediterranean (Council 2008a). The specific objectives of the first edition of this programme were to preserve and distribute documentaries and feature films concerning Mediterranean people's lives and cultures, by means of practical exchanges of knowledge about working methods and technology, workshops in script writing and co-productions between independent film production companies. The Commission committed EUR 18 million for the programme under the MEDA instrument, which were employed to fund 6 macro projects[26] for a period of 5 years, ranging from the production of animation and documentary series, to activities for the conservation and the development of the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual industry. Almost all the projects involved partnerships composed by production companies and professionals from all the countries involved in the EMP. Five out of six projects received very significant amounts of funding, from EUR 3 to 4 million. 'Cinemamed', devoted to creating Euro-Mediterranean contemporary film festivals, restoring films, and implementing a training programme dedicated to scriptwriting, was the smallest project funded under *Euromed Audiovisual I* and received EUR 1.2 million.

The third ICD regional programme, *Euromed Youth*, was launched in 1999. In suggesting young people as a target group of future cooperation in the third basket, the Barcelona action plan of 1995 envisaged sharing the level of experience already reached by the EU in that field, while still accounting for the specific needs of MPCs (EMP 1995a). In line with these guidelines, the definition of this programme was slightly different to the other two. The Commission conceived *Euromed Youth* as a continuation

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26 'Euromediatoon - Viva Carthago', 'Europa Cinemas', 'Capmed', 'Women...Pioneers', 'Cinemamed', 'Medea'.

of *Youth* (then *Youth in Action*), a successful programme involving young people, mainly within European borders. The Mediterranean extension of that programme was managed centrally by the European Commission, DG Education and Culture and was based on three main actions: fostering youth exchanges, voluntary service, and support measures. The financial resources committed for its first edition (1999-2001) were EUR 9.7 million (6 under MEDA and 3.7 under the EU-only *Youth* programme). Three general objectives established for *Euromed Youth I*: 1) to improve mutual understanding among young people; 2) to contribute to integrating young people into social and professional life and 3) to democratise the civil society of Mediterranean partners 'by stimulating active citizenship within local communities, by promoting the active participation of young people, in particular young women and young people's associations, and by developing the employability of the young people involved' (European Commission 2004d). The total number of projects funded in three years amounted to 211 and involved more than 3,157 young participants from the whole Mediterranean, mostly in the first action of the programme: youth exchanges (ECOTEC 2001). Moreover, to further reinforce regional cooperation among young people, the Commission established the *Salto-Youth EuroMed platform* in 2000, as an extension of the *Youth* programme network devoted to support advanced learning and training opportunities for young people in Europe.

2.2 Evaluating the implementation of ICD during the 'phase of emergence'

The above overview of the three programmes provides sufficient data to advance a few analytical considerations with regards to the overall implementation of ICD in the period between 1995 and 2001. The following analysis investigates the objectives of the programmes, their consistency with the goals of ICD, and the amount of resources allocated among all the funds committed by the Commission to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. Finally, it explores if and how the three programmes: 1) were coordinated between each other, and 2) have contributed to making ICD a co-owned instrument.

As concerns the objectives, all the programmes were developed under the conceptually broad and unspecified umbrella of ICD that emerged from the Barcelona Conference. They aimed primarily at fostering mutual understanding, either in a specific cultural cooperation sector or within a target group. Unsurprisingly, none of these programmes was launched in a field – such as the interreligious exchanges proposed in the Barcelona action plan – that could be specifically connected to one of the strategic

interests of the EU for this tool. Given the small inclination of some MPCs to foster cooperation on cultural and religious issues and the parallel need of the EU to give more substance to this part of the third basket, experts, officials and politicians in the region were more likely to find agreement either in less sensitive sectors or by drawing on past cooperation experiences.

Table 1. Overview of the programmes implementing ICD during the 'phase of emergence' (from the launch of the EMP)

Programme/ Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Euromed Heritage				EMH I (EUR 17 M) > 2002 (approved in 1996)			
Euromed Audiovisual						EMA I* (EUR 18 M) > 2005	
Euromed Youth				EMY I (9.7 M)			

* the launch of this programme was decided in 1997, at the Thessaloniki Conference
> indicates the beginning/closing year of the edition, when it does not coincide with the period of reference.

In this context, it should be noted that the model on which these 'Euromed' programmes were conceived followed the one used for the decentralised cooperation programmes promoted since 1992 within the RMP framework. Although beset by all manners of shortcomings and finally suspended in 1996 (Committee of Independent Experts 1999), these programmes were generally appreciated by beneficiaries for the economic and technical contribution they brought to the social development of the MPCs involved. Some of them, such as the *MED Media* programme[27], were also evaluated positively for the intercultural contribution they promoted between participants (European Commission 1997, 53-54). Unsurprisingly, the experience of these decentralised cooperation programmes came to provide a safe platform for the first implementations of ICD. On one hand, under the regional approach championed by the EMP, the launch of revised programmes for cooperation on similar professional sectors was expected to bring to the whole Euro-Mediterranean space the positive experiences of mutual understanding achieved by the bilateral MED-Programmes. On the other hand, these programmes were also supposed to ensure new resources for the development of economic, cultural, and social sectors, as requested by the MPCs. In light of this, the *MED-Media* programme (1992-1996), which was aimed at supporting

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27 The other three 'MED' programmes were *MED Campus*, *MED Urbs* and *MED Invest* devoted, respectively, to cooperation among university staff, local authorities and enterprises.

the transfer of experience and know-how, in terms of media management, norms, and working conditions, to the MPCs, served as a precursor and blueprint for *Euromed Audiovisual* and its promotion of ICD.

Although helpful to kick-start the implementation of ICD, the choice of very technical fields of cooperation also meant, in practice, less adherence to the general goal of this policy instrument. In this perspective, there is a notable difference between *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual* on one hand, and *Euromed Youth* on the other. *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual* showed a very marked propensity for supporting the development of cultural production sectors in the MPCs while, at the same time, tending to implement ICD 'as a confidence-building measure at the level of professionals and experts' (Reinhardt 2002, 8). These programmes were evaluated as a generally positive example of regional cooperation (ARS Progetti and GHK 2004). However, from a specific ICD perspective, they were criticised precisely for having chosen a specialist professional sector and, in so doing, they contributed little to bringing 'the people' of the Mediterranean together and improving mutual perceptions (Schumacher 2007, 6). In fact, projects funded under *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual* were aimed at preserving and promoting the cultures and traditions of all the peoples of the Mediterranean area, while encouraging mutual knowledge also through the outcomes of the various funded projects. Implicit in these programmes from the outset, therefore, the EU had a general expectation of indirectly affecting the people of the region through films, festivals, documentaries, radio shows etc. However, aggregated data about the indirect impact of these projects are difficult to collect and, in the specific case of these early editions, they are not available. In this light, it is understandable that, while taking note of the potential indirect impact of these programmes as well, their record in terms of ICD continued to be largely considered 'patchy and elite-oriented' (Philippart 2003, 12).

In contrast, the launch of the *Euromed Youth* programme in 1999 marked a notable shift in the implementation record of ICD in the Mediterranean. From a qualitative perspective, the targeting of young people from both shores of the Mediterranean, rather than a professional sector, secured the programme more opportunities to reach out to the general public and 'permeate the social fabric' (RHLAG 2003, 26). From a quantitative perspective, *Euromed Youth I* funded many other (smaller) projects and involved a larger number of people while employing, on average, the same amount of resources as that devoted to other programmes. On the

contrary, *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual*, due as well to the expensive technical equipment required to operate in those sectors, preferred a limited number of macro projects, which involved smaller groups of experts and institutions. Moreover, as pointed out by Giovanni Buttigieg, Malta National Coordinator of the *Euromed Youth Programme* between 1999 and 2013, 'due to their required high level of co-financing and the relatively small number of projects financed, [*Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual*] were practically accessible only to the institutions that were already converted to interculturalism, by virtue of being cultural-specific institutions. On the contrary, *Euromed Youth* provided a direct experience of people co-habiting and attempting a project together, with an age-group that might be considered more likely to present an open mind towards the "other", the "other way" and the "other side of the coin"' (Interview no. 10, 2014).

The evaluation report commissioned by the European Commission on *Euromed Youth I* showed a constant increase in the number of projects funded in the first edition of the programme (26 in 1999, 77 in 2000 and 108 in 2001) and, equally, in the number of beneficiaries involved. Drawing on data from interviews and questionnaires with stakeholders and beneficiaries, the report demonstrated that the activities supported by the programme had contributed to promoting active participation of young people and to opening them up to new cultures and ideas (ECOTEC 2001, 40–44). On these grounds, *Euromed Youth* has been widely considered by analysts the only of these three regional programmes that, since its establishment, has actually managed to implement ICD and build a level of mutual understanding between the two shores of the Mediterranean, by fostering confidence-building, empowering young people with the acquisition of intercultural competences, and mobilising thousands of young people from the EU and the MPCs (Pace 2005; Schumacher 2007).

A brief analysis of the financial resources that the EU allocated to these programmes can also give an idea, with some degree of approximation, of the absolute and relative amounts of money destined for ICD. The various editions of the Euromed programmes and the EU regulations establishing the financial instruments, however, do not match chronologically with the periods into which this research is split. With that in mind, the total funds allocated by the Commission to the implementation of *Euromed Heritage I*, *Euromed Audiovisual I* and *Euromed Youth I* in the phase under consideration amounted to about EUR 42 million. This sum equated to less than 1% of the overall EUR 5.2 billion committed in the same period to support both bilateral and

regional cooperation under MEDA instruments[28].

In absolute terms, therefore, ICD really appears to have been a 'small thing' in this early phase, especially if compared to the macro financial efforts invested in other sectors of cooperation with MPCs. Still, it should be mentioned that the rough calculation above excludes the money allocated by the EU for initiatives promoted under the bilateral association agreements, which may have also included specific cultural cooperation activities aimed at fostering mutual understanding between the EU and each partner country, from the total count of ICD funding during this period. Indeed, although these types of projects have actually also been envisaged on the bilateral track of European relations with MPCs (EMP 1996; EMP 2003a), the EU had conceived and promoted ICD from the beginning according to a rationale of collective cooperation. As a consequence, over the years, it has deployed the latter primarily as an instrument with a region-wide scope of application. From this perspective, the percentage calculation of ICD funds amounted to about 9% of the total resources devoted solely to regional cooperation, which, during this period, ranged from 10% to 12% of the overall MEDA budget (EuropeAid Co-operation Office 2001).

These rough data allow two interconnected considerations, one concerning the EMP design in itself, and one more specifically about ICD. First, although European institutions presented the inclusion of a regional dimension to cooperation as one of the most relevant innovations brought about by the Barcelona Process, the amounts of money devoted to bilateral cooperation continued to represent, in fact, the bulk of the EU budget, especially with regard to the promotion of national projects under the second basket. For instance, the bilateral economic development project for Egyptian industrial modernisation received, on its own, a budget of EUR 250 million (European Commission 2002c). Therefore, even before the substantial shift to bilateralism ushered by the launch of the ENP in 2003, the core of the EU's commitment to promoting a collective and multi-dimensional cooperation through the EMP was in fact circumscribed to just a few tools and targeted areas. From this perspective, ICD turned out to be poorly funded in absolute terms, but not in relative terms, especially when compared to other allegedly more strategic dimensions of Euro-Mediterranean collective cooperation. For instance, the *MEDA Democracy* programme, launched in

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28 This amount is the approximate calculation of the funds committed under MEDA for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the period 1996–2001 and is derived from the sum of the total funds committed under the MEDA I (EUR 3.4 billion, for the period 1996–1999) with the first two years covered by MEDA II (EUR 5.35 billion, for the period 2000–2006).

1996 to support grassroots democratic reforms and human rights in MPCs in the framework of the first basket of the EMP, received only EUR 4.6 million for its first (and only) edition (EMHRN 2000).

In this overview of the implementation record of ICD, the last two aspects for analysis are the level of coordination among parallel programmes and their overall contribution to the construction of a feeling of 'co-ownership' for ICD. On one hand, as stressed in the previous chapter, co-ownership was from the outset a major objective pursued by the EU for the advancement of all the aspects of the European policies in the Mediterranean. In this context, consistent with its rhetoric about the regional scope of the Barcelona Process and with the innovative focus on cooperation among non-state actors, the EU has often identified ICD as a preferential tool to gradually build up a feeling of shared 'Mediterraneanness' among the participants in the Barcelona Process. On the other hand, given the fragmented implementation of this instrument, that is, by means of regional programmes in different fields of action and with different targets, the level of coordination between the former gives an idea of the overall consistency of ICD implementation and of the actual determination of the EU to get the best out of this policy instrument. Both co-ownership and coordination efforts are therefore interesting indicators of the overall commitment to ICD implementation as well as of the extent of the 'rhetoric-performance' gap in the promotion of this tool into EU Mediterranean policies.

Given the empirical findings of this chapter, however, it is unsurprising that none of these aspects emerged to any significant degree during the 'phase of emergence' of ICD. On one hand, the Commission, though managing these programmes centrally, did not envisage specific mechanisms to coordinate the efforts and the resources invested in the implementation of ICD. Documents, evaluation reports, and info notes concerning the three Euromed programmes show that they operated in parallel. If the actual contribution of some programmes to the promotion of ICD was considered too low, efforts to coordinate the outcomes of all the projects could nonetheless have enhanced the overall impact of each programme by integrating the different sectors in which this tool was employed.

On the other hand, there was no evident commitment to achieving a true sense of co-ownership of this policy instrument. As already discussed, in the context of Euro-Mediterranean relations the concept of 'co-ownership' denotes the sharing of responsibilities, achievements, resources, as well as a sense of belonging and equality

among participants (DRN and ADE 2009, 31). The implementation of ICD, however, started as a regional upgrade of bilateral decentralised cooperation programmes that were, almost by definition, recipients of aid disbursed unidirectionally by the EU. Although the areas of action for the new Euromed programmes were discussed and, ultimately, officially decided by all the EMP participants, their management was unilaterally entrusted to the Commission. The latter, indeed, is the institution which is ultimately responsible both for allocating EU budget and for implementing and coordinating external relations tools, including the MEDA financial instrument under which EU cooperation with MPCs was funded during this phase. These three ICD programmes, thus, responded primarily to EU needs, evaluations, and requirements. It follows that there was very little sharing of responsibilities and resources in the early stages of ICD implementation.

As far as issues of belonging and equality are concerned, the regional scope of Euromed programmes succeeded, in fact, in ensuring a considerable degree of participation from the whole Euro-Mediterranean space from the outset. Yet, in these contexts, high levels of participation are often more indicative of the appeal and impact of EU-funded programmes than of a widespread sense of belonging. Moreover, regional cooperation programmes were initially conceived without much consideration for the specific needs of partners. For instance, the languages used in the early calls for applications were English and French while Arabic was excluded. This aspect contributed to confining access to these programmes only to those institutions or CSOs that either had partners in Europe or were 'versed in EU language and complex form-filling techniques' (Pace 2014, 979). Moreover, the strict eligibility criteria of early call for proposals, which demanded advance payment to co-finance the projects, discouraged the participation of smaller organisations from the south, especially in the framework of *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual* (Reinhart 2002).

The result of these obstacles was a vertical rather than a horizontal tie between southern and northern CSOs (Feliu 2007). For instance, it was reported that all calls for proposals for *Euromed Heritage I* were won by groups of institutions led by a partner from the north and, although the activities in the programme were well received, the partners from the south felt they could not fully express themselves through the programme (DRN and ADE 2009, 32). This is a perfect illustration of failure in pursuing co-ownership in cultural heritage programmes, and more generally in ICD during this early phase.

This analysis of the three Euromed programmes, taken both separately and as a whole, shows that the employment of ICD during its initial phase was severely hampered by the vague language and commitment with which the EU and MPCs together defined its scope within the EMP. However, although deprived of a specific strategic orientation, the slow, piecemeal and, at times, contradictory process of implementation, as promoted by the European Commission in particular, helped ICD to gradually gain a foothold among EMP partners. By the end of this phase, the outcome of this process was a progressive increase in the influence and reach of ICD that finally began, if still only to a limited extent, to constitute a resource for the goals of the EU in the Mediterranean.

Conclusions: the roles of ICD during the 'phase of emergence'

This chapter has addressed how and why the EU has promoted ICD as an instrument of its external action on the Mediterranean during the 1990s. The literature tends to neglect this early phase of ICD, concurring that the latter initially took a back seat to other political-economic priorities in the EU agenda for the EMP and was thus just an appendix of that initiative (Jünemann 2003b; Schumacher 2007). The chapter, however, has provided a broader context to this claim, framing the early years of ICD in the Barcelona Process within a longer and piecemeal process that characterised the emergence of this foreign policy tool throughout a full decade (1990-2001). In this context, the analytical perspective adopted in this chapter has enabled a more contextualised perspective of why, in fact, the EU gave ICD a secondary role during the early years of the EMP, taking into account both European and MPCs' preferences vis-à-vis the promotion of this tool.

The emergence of ICD, in particular, was characterised by three stages. In the first one (1990-1995), the EC/EU formulated specific strategic objectives for the promotion of mutual understanding among the culturally different people of the Mediterranean. ICD did not formally exist as a policy instrument; however, it was latently present in the EU discourse on incipient Mediterranean policies as potentially helpful in addressing some challenges connected with the regional milieu emerging following the end of the Cold War. These challenges concerned, in particular, mounting xenophobic attitudes in Europe against migrants from MPCs, and an alarming spread of Islamic fundamentalism with adverse consequences for both shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The second stage was the launch of the Barcelona Process in 1995. In this context, ICD

was formally introduced within the EMP framework, but it was formulated vaguely without referring to any of the specific targets for which the EU hoped to build such understanding. The chapter has shown that this result was favoured by both a general suspicion for a potential new form of European cultural imperialism on the part of MPCs, and by the fact that, at that time, the EU was concerned for the emerging issues ICD was designed to address, but it did not yet fear an imminent outburst of tensions based on cultural and religious misunderstandings. The vague formulation of ICD contributed to make this tool almost impalpable in the context of the Barcelona Process and to delay its implementation. The third stage of this phase was thus represented by the launch of the first three regional programmes on heritage (1998), youth exchange (1990) and audiovisual (2000), which eventually gave some substance to the slow and patchy process that from 1990 characterised the formulation of ICD scope and objectives.

This patchy emergence makes difficult to identify the overall role, or roles, that ICD played in the EU efforts towards the Mediterranean during this early phase. Drawing from the different approaches to cooperation that the EU put in place through the early ICD programmes, however, it is possible to ascribe three specific roles to this tool in the EMP framework. On one hand, through *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual,* the EU employed ICD as a decentralised cooperation instrument. In this sense, the main contribution of this tool to the EMP lay in the strengthening of the Mediterranean museum and audiovisual industries rather than in the direct promotion of mutual understanding among the people of the whole area. At the same time, if one considers that these two programmes indirectly contributed to promoting a positive idea of Europe in the eyes of professionals from the southern neighbourhood, the implementation of ICD can be seen also as a timid early effort to deploy a EU-wide 'cultural diplomacy strategy'.

On the other hand, *Euromed Youth* employed ICD from the outset as a forward-looking tool aimed at building mutual knowledge among a target group that, in the long term, was likely, and indeed expected, to make a difference in the management of the political, social and security challenges faced by European and Mediterranean countries alike. In this context, although the number of young people involved through this programme was still limited, ICD started to contribute to the construction of the grassroots conditions that the EU claimed to be necessary for the prospective stability of the Euro-Mediterranean region and thus to complement the efforts made by the EU in

other cooperation sectors, such as political and security dialogue, to pursue some of the general goals of the Barcelona Process.

In general, considering the European interest in the employment of ICD before the launch of the EMP, the difficulties encountered in consistently developing this instrument in Barcelona, and the slow process which characterised its early implementation, it is possible to conclude that the overall role played by ICD during this long 'phase of emergence' was one of 'capacity-building'. Although patchy, insufficient and limited, the gradual implementation of this policy instrument paved the way for the emergence of new networks and structures of 'intercultural' expertise in regional cooperation and for further steps in the co-ownership of this process among civil society from both shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

Chapter 4

The Consolidation of Intercultural Dialogue (2001-2010)

Introduction

This chapter continues to analyse why and how the EU promoted ICD in the framework of its Mediterranean policies. It focuses on the period from the 9/11 2001 terror attacks in New York and Washington D.C. to the eve of the December 2010 protests in Tunisia, which sparked the Arab uprisings.

This chapter argues that, following a long and patchy emergence, the period 2001-2010 marked a 'phase of consolidation' for ICD as a foreign policy instrument of the EU in the Mediterranean. Such consolidation was achieved through significant EU efforts concerning both the formulation and the implementation of ICD during this period. Indeed, from late 2001 ICD rapidly achieved a priority position on the Euro-Mediterranean agenda with particular emphasis on its potential for attenuating the challenges for the stability of increased fundamentalism and xenophobia in the region. On the initiative of the European Commission, EU member states and MPCs agreed on the necessity of bolstering ICD within the EMP framework, and committed to set clearer objectives for its promotion, with a proclaimed commitment to expanding the participation into this process of civil society on both shores of the Mediterranean. In support of this reinvigorated formulation, the EU also managed to multiply the number of programmes and initiatives to implement ICD in the area, also creating an *ad hoc* institution: the ALF.

This chapter explains the consolidation of ICD through the combination of two main factors. On one hand, the tragic events marking the beginning of the new millennium – the 9/11 2001 attacks in particular, but also the ensuing 'War on Terror' and the outbreak of violence between Israel and the Palestinians from late 2000 – contributed to an increase in the relevance of tensions and misunderstandings among the people of the area, especially vis-à-vis Muslim communities in both Europe and in MPCs. In this context, the dramatic scenario resulting from the mentioned events created a 'window of opportunity' to firm up the expectations that the EU had when it started considering the development of ICD in the early 1990s. On the other hand, in this same period the EU was driven by a President of the Commission, Romano Prodi (1999-2004), and by a few pro-Mediterranean states both strongly convinced of ICD's potential contribution toward solving the problems of this area. ICD was thus

consolidated because these actors were able to seize the opportunity created by the emerging international scenario to put forward their strong vision for this tool in the EMP.

The argument of this chapter is primarily substantiated through an analysis of the outcome documents of EMP conferences, the policy documents produced by the Commission and the priorities of the member states holding the Presidency of the EU Council during the period of reference (2001-2010). The analysis is integrated with data collected from speeches of EU officials and programme managers in this phase, and from research interviews with European leaders, ICD programme officers and experts who contributed to the consolidation of this tool, with specific reference to the process that led to the launch and development of the ALF.

Similarly to the previous one, this chapter is split into two main parts. The first provides an analysis of the processes that led to strengthening the role of ICD in the context of the political framework under discussion. This part also provides an account of how both EU institutions and EMP ministers reformulated and negotiated the objectives and the rationale of this tool in the period of reference, including the scope of the ALF. The second part of the chapter addresses the implementation of ICD. Analysis is offered of the objectives, resources, and enforcement of the several programmes managed by the EU and of the extent to which they have jointly contributed to the advancement of ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean space and to its co-ownership. By contrasting the consistency and contradictions between the formulation and the implementation of ICD, the conclusions seek to evaluate the overall role played by this tool in EU policies towards its southern neighbours during this phase of consolidation.

1. The formulation of ICD in the 2000s: new opportunities, old objectives and compromised outcomes

As anticipated in Chapter 2, ICD was one of the policy tools on which, in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks, the EU developed its multi-dimensional response to the rising threat of international terrorism for the Euro-Mediterranean space. In particular, the motivation for focusing on this instrument was identified in the concern, made explicit by the Commission, to avoid the possibility that the echoes of possible clashes between European and MPCs' 'civilisations', fostered by 9/11 events, could contribute to create a fault line along the Mediterranean (European Commission 2002b, 2).

Without a doubt, the 2001 terror attacks played a significant role for the consolidation of ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean space. However, the former cannot be understood as the only *explanans* of this process. Indeed, just as the attacks were not the only event directly affecting Euro-Mediterranean relations during the 2001-2010 time frame, so the enhancement experienced by ICD in this same period cannot be simply explained as a 'post-9/11 syndrome' (Silvestri 2005, 395).

On one hand, the connections between ICD and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the region were not a novelty. As already stressed, from the first episodes of violence in Algeria in 1992, European institutions and politicians considered that promoting mutual understanding initiatives, including the promotion of exchanges among religious representatives, could have reduced the socio-cultural causes feeding religious fundamentalism and potential terrorist spillovers in the area (European Council 1992b; IPU 1992; European Commission 1994; EMP 1995a, annex IV). An intention to scaling down the outreach of fundamentalisms through ICD was therefore latently present in the EMP framework long before 2001 although, up to then, the only effort made by ministers from the region on this matter was to acknowledge the organisation of conferences on topics related to Islam and Europe in individual EMP countries (see, for instance, EMP 1997, annex III; EMP 1998). On the other hand, the concerns connected with the upsurge of international terrorism following 2001 were just the tip of an iceberg constituted by a larger-scale set of 'soft' security challenges affecting the Euro-Mediterranean space. Similarly to the risks and causes of religious fundamentalism, some of these challenges had already been taken into consideration by the initiators of ICD. In particular, the previous chapter has shown that the alarming racist and xenophobic attitudes versus an increasing presence of legal and illegal migrants from MPCs especially into southern Europe – a phenomenon tracked in the opinion polls of the period (Eurobarometer 1989; and 1997) – had been another cardinal reason for considering the introduction of ICD in the Barcelona Process.

The previous chapter has also demonstrated that the EU decided not to urge the advancement of ICD on these specific matters within the EMP during the late 1990s. A few years later, however, the tragic resonance of the events of 9/11 showed unequivocally to everyone, within and outside the Euro-Mediterranean space, that the neglected challenges connected with migrations, the socio-economic and development gaps between the two shores and the spread of fundamentalisms had grown exponentially and were giving even greater cause for alarm than they had done in 1995,

as the President of the Commission acknowledged in a 2002 speech (Prodi 2002a, 3).

In the late 1990s, in fact, some EU officials, including the Commission President, and a group of policy evaluators had already referred to the need to bolster the cultural dimension of the Barcelona Process to contribute to addressing the mounting problems of fundamentalisms, conflicts and social tensions in the area (European Commission 1999b; EuropeAid Co-operation Office 2001). Also the European Council officially recognised ICD as a tool helpful to combat racism and xenophobia within its 2000 Common Strategy for the Mediterranean. However, these indications fell mostly on deaf ears until the events of 2001. In this perspective, the main implication of the 2001 terror attacks for ICD was not, as the several policy documents pairing this tool with 9/11 could imply, that of suddenly providing the rationale for its implementation as an urgent antidote to possible clashes between European and Arab/Islamic 'civilisations' (see for instance, Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum 2001; European Commission 2002a; 2002b, 5; EMP 2001; Prodi 2002a; EMP 2005c). The events of 9/11 had rather the primary function of exposing European and MPCs' leaders and people to an alarming socio-political scenario that predated the 2001 terror attacks, and within which most of the concerns that the EU expected to target with ICD since the early 1990s had further worsened. The 2001 attacks, therefore, created the conditions and the opportunity for those who, from the outset, had seen in ICD a potentially effective response to the above-mentioned challenges, to advance the promotion of this tool in a firmer and more resolute manner.

1.1 From the window of opportunity of the events of 2001 to the consolidation of ICD

This opportunity to advance ICD further was first seized at the *ad hoc* Euro-Mediterranean Conference held in Brussels in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. In this context all EMP governments showed a broad support of any strong initiative fostering ICD in the emerging scenario (EMP 2001). Additionally, the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum (2001) adopted a resolution in support of a reinforcement of ICD initiatives and started to work on these issues. Another noteworthy step was made by the European Council in rubber-stamping the promotion of diversity and of respect for others' languages, cultures and traditions as an integral part of the DNA of Europe's new role in a globalised world in the 'Laeken Declaration on the future of the European Union' (European Council 2001b). However, the main factor to account for the shift from rhetoric to practice in promoting ICD was the assertiveness of the Commission

and its President, Romano Prodi. As will be shown, in his capacity of leader of the institution most directly responsible for the formulation and conduction of EU's external relations with third countries, Prodi managed to set his personal convictions about the usefulness of ICD in the Mediterranean right at the top of the Commission's agenda, feeding into a serious debate on the relevance of this tool among all the governments of the region.

From the beginning of his mandate in 1999, Prodi had brought a strong outlook to the Commission concerning the relevance of the Mediterranean for Europe and the importance of developing culture as a peace vector in this region. This approach probably derived in part from Prodi's political background, rooted in the long established Italian Christian-Democratic vision of the role of Italy in Europe and in the Mediterranean and, in particular, of his personal appreciation for Giorgio La Pira[29] (see Silvestri 2006, 96). One of the fathers of the Italian Constitution in 1945, La Pira was considered, among several things, a 'prophet of a Mediterranean and of a world of reconciliation and peace, strongly rooted in a vision that is currently capable of inspiring a real Mediterranean policy' (Frontera 2011, 141, *my translation*). Prodi, moreover, already from the beginning of his academic studies was concerned by the demographic and economic forecasts concerning the future of that area (Interview no. 14, Prodi, 2015).

In his 1999 remarks at the European Parliament as President-designate of the Commission, Prodi stressed enlargement and neighbourhood relations as one of the main challenges for the future of the EU. In that framework he also mentioned the need to 'include a "Partnership of Cultures" [...as a] new and much more ambitious commitment towards the Mediterranean, where we Europeans are dedicated to promoting a new, exemplary harmony between peoples of the three religions of Jerusalem. A resounding "No" to the need for conflict between civilisations' (European Commission 1999b). The depth of Prodi's personal belief in the potential of ICD was confirmed following the end of his term at the Commission, when as Prime Minister of Italy, he stressed before the UN General Assembly the danger of cultural clashes and the need for dialogue on these issues, in particular by building new policies with the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean (Prodi 2006, 457).

Between Prodi's 1999 remarks at the European Parliament and the events of 9/11,

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29 A profile of La Pira's Mediterranean vision is given in: Pirro 2010.

however, the Commission did not materialise in any specific action or recommendation in support of ICD. For instance, in the 'Communication on reinvigorating the Barcelona Process' of September 2000, the Commission did not include any reference to ICD and mutual understanding among the fields where significant steps ahead were recommended to EMP partners. On the contrary, it kept the focus on other priority fields such as the improvement of trade relations, a better management of aid resources and a commitment to promoting human rights, democracy and security cooperation in the area (European Commission 2000). Only following the attacks in 2001 did Prodi manage to bring his vision for the Mediterranean back onto the EU agenda, promoting a set of initiatives within the Commission that involved the organisations of symposia and conferences on this matter, gathering experts and academics from both shores of the Mediterranean. Through these elite initiatives, Prodi was able to translate his firm belief that the 'Mediterranean question' was mainly a 'cultural question', into a call for the development of 'a certain idea of belonging together, which in essence already exists within the processes already underway but needs to be bolstered with firmness and vision'. He was so resolute on this position as to present it as the only real way to ensure peace, stability and mutual understanding in the Mediterranean (Prodi 2002a, 3-6).

While the actual contribution of Prodi and his experts in terms of formulation and, then, implementation of ICD during this period will be analysed below, his assertiveness within the Commission in the post 9/11 scenario undoubtedly played a major role in taking ICD out of the background of European institutions' rhetoric and raising it among Euro-Mediterranean ministers, who were finally in charge to decide and advance the EMP agenda.

The turning point for the re-launch of ICD was achieved in the context of the fifth Euro-Mediterranean meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs, held in Valencia under the Spanish Presidency of the EU, in April 2002. On this occasion, the spirit of initiative of the Commission met with the voluntarism of some EU countries, Spain and Sweden *in primis*, which had been pioneers in the promotion of ICD in the Mediterranean (Gillespie 2002; Johansson 2015). Spain, in particular, had been among the first countries to consider the potential of ICD in the area, at least since the 1990 proposal to establish, together with Italy, a Conference for Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (Fernandez-Ordoñez 1990). Sweden, although geographically distant from the Mediterranean, had attached a particular priority to intercultural relations

between Europeans and Arabs since the late 1990s (Schumacher 2001, 95). In 2000, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh consolidated this process by inaugurating the Swedish Institute in Alexandria, Egypt, devoted to fostering ICD and exchanges with the countries of the area[30]. Generally speaking, such a peculiar commitment of a northern EU member to the Mediterranean, and to ICD specifically, has been explained as 'stemming from a Swedish role conception as being supportive of the EU's common foreign policy toward all neighbouring areas without distinctions [and] as an attempt by Sweden to altercast its fellow EU member states into becoming further involved […] to the EU's Baltic Sea policies' (Johansson 2015).

In the Communication for the preparation of the EMP Conference of Valencia, the Commission pushed significantly, among other priorities, for a new approach to promoting cultural dialogue and exchange in the Mediterranean and suggested the creation of a cultural foundation 'to respond with sufficient flexibility and efficiency to facilitate dynamic, timely exchange' (European Commission 2002b, 7). As reported, there was considerable consensus between the document prepared by the Commission and the programme proposed by Spain, at least as far as ICD was concerned (Gillespie 2002, 106). The main priority of Spain was to promote the JHA agenda in the Mediterranean, with specific regard to the problems of illegal migratory flows and the new risks of international terrorism. Yet, Spain proved also particularly determined, with the support of Sweden, to enhance the Commission's inputs concerning ICD (Gillespie 2003, 24-26). The two countries, in particular, cooperated to compile an inventory of existing and new EU, national and other activities in the domain of ICD, which constituted the concrete basis for discussing future steps for ICD among ministers in Valencia and for advancing this instrument as a shared EMP priority (European Commission 2002b, 7).

The consensus between the position of the Commission and those of these two countries made the Valencia Conference a relatively successful step in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, although the security-political dimension of the EMP had stalled due, in particular, to the worsening situation between Israel and Palestine. The rising tensions between the latter had already been at the root of the failure of the previous EMP Conference in Marseilles in 2000 due in particular, to the absence of

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30 The decision taken by the 2004 EMP ministerial conference to name the newly created Anna Lindh Foundation after the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, assassinated in 2003, underlines the recognised commitment of Sweden towards the promotion ICD in the Mediterranean.

Syrian and Lebanese representatives protesting against Israel participation (Hutchence 2001, 181). In this perspective, according to Gillespie (2002; and 2003), the ability of Spanish organisers to move the focus of the Valencia Conference onto cultural and JHA issues managed to shift the attention of participants off the first basket. This ensured a positive advancement for the EMP agenda, despite the continued absence of these two Arab countries, and provided a political basis for the development of the cultural component of the Barcelona Process.

In particular, EMP ministers took two crucial decisions in Valencia. Firstly, following the input of the Commission, they agreed to set ICD at the centre stage of negotiations, adopting a specific action plan based on three fields: youth, education and media. Secondly, EMP ministers accepted the principle, proposed by the Commission in its 2002 communication, of the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the promotion of dialogue between cultures. This decision set in motion a process which formally ended three years later, in 2005, with the official inauguration of the ALF in Alexandria, Egypt, as a central EU initiative to promote ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean space.

Despite the success achieved in Valencia, however, the process leading to the re-formulation of ICD objectives and principles and to the establishment of the Foundation was not automatic. Other ambitious initiatives launched in the EMP framework, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Charter on Peace and Stability, started with a shared commitment and failed against the deterioration of events in the area (see Aliboni and Saaf 2010, 14). The possibilities that the 'Valencia agenda' might have stalled, in fact, were very high in that period. The EU vision for the Mediterranean as a 'regional community' was also increasingly obfuscated, as mentioned above, by some of the highest peaks of violence between Israelis and the Palestinians, with bloody episodes such as the 'battle of Jenin' in 2002 or the suicide bombing at the Maxim restaurant in Haifa in 2003. Also the incoming enlargement in 2004, which was mostly directed toward the east of Europe, started diverting the EU focus away from the Mediterranean. In particular, as shown in Chapter 2, the ENP policy scheme, under preparation in those years, focused on the heterogeneity of single neighbours rather than on the commonalities among them. In other words, the window of opportunity opened by the events of 9/11 for re-launching ICD as a tool to bring together all the people of the Euro-Mediterranean area in a resolute and collective effort was rapidly closing.

The successful implementation of the 'Valencia Agenda' can partly be explained

by President Prodi's personal determination about this cause, which even extended beyond the end of his mandate in 2004. However, the process could also be advanced because, excluding a six month period in which the EMP *de facto* disappeared from the EU agenda in conjunction with the Danish Presidency semester (July-December 2002), the rotating guidance of the EU was to be held by Greece and Italy. These were two countries that had a strong traditional pro-Mediterranean outlook and had set, among their priorities for the respective semester, those of furthering cooperation and dialogue in the area. In particular, the Greek government (2003, 27) included among its priorities for the European semester (January-June 2003) those of promoting dialogue with its Mediterranean partners and of fulfilling the Valencia Action Plan, which was considered 'a suitable framework for promoting the Barcelona Process and a more active involvement of Mediterranean partners'. For its part Italy stressed a strong commitment to establishing the envisaged Foundation during its semester (June-December). Speaking at the Italian Defence Ministry, Foreign Minister Frattini (2003) made clear the intention of the Italian government to launch the new ICD institution at the Naples Euro-Mediterranean Conference of December 2003, in response to a strong request by Arab and Maghreb countries and to the need 'not to limit to political elites these nice reflections on dialogue between cultures, but to expand it towards the youth, students and academics'. Also his successor, Gianfranco Fini (2006), confirmed the relevance of the commitment of Italy to promote ICD and to establish the ALF during those months.

This combination in EU leadership allowed governmental representatives within the Euro-Med Committee, composed of the senior officials of EMP countries and chaired by the EU rotating Presidency, to work with a certain continuity on the decisions taken in Valencia and to keep the momentum on the Mediterranean and on ICD. It was indeed in Crete, in May 2003, that EMP ministers agreed a list of 'Guiding Principles for Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations' (EMP 2003b) and a first outline of the future Foundation (EMP 2003c), and it was in Naples that the Foundation was formally set up, providing ICD with 'a catalyst for all initiatives aiming at increasing dialogue and common understanding on the basis of the guiding principles' (EMP 2003d, items 56-57).

With these three EMP conferences (Valencia, Crete and Naples), therefore, the new Euro-Mediterranean vision for ICD was substantially defined. This period of intense formulation, however, was followed by a general disengagement of the EU from

the idea of creating a 'Mediterranean community'. As has been discussed, this stance certainly derived from the new EU priorities enumerated above, dictated by enlargement and incoming external challenges. Moreover, it may have been also reinforced by the lack of southern EU countries in the rotation schedule of the EU Presidency, as well as by the appointment of the new Commission that, as better elaborated in the next chapter, developed different priorities to Prodi's. Also the fact that, as Prodi himself has stressed, it had become increasingly difficult to develop European policies that were not lobbied by the dominant country, Germany, reduced the possibilities for the supporters of ICD within EU institutions – as seen all from southern countries, with the exception of Sweden – to further strengthen the role of this policy tool in relations with the Mediterranean.

Indeed, the few new efforts to further consolidate and expand the role of ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean agenda in the second half of the 2000s emerged in the run-up of the French Presidency in 2008. On that occasion, the Mediterranean vocation of Europe temporarily re-emerged due to the stubborn commitment of French President Sarkozy to reinvigorating regional cooperation through the establishment of the UfM. High-level meetings such as the third regional Conference of the ministers of culture held in Athens in 2008 to form the basis for a fully-fledged Euro-Mediterranean strategy on culture (EMP 2008), may have complemented the new momentum with vision and ideas. However, as far as ICD was concerned, these efforts ended with a substantial confirmation of the relevance of this tool in Euro-Mediterranean relations and with a loose commitment to further implementing it, especially through the ALF.

1.2 The internal dimension of ICD and its contribution to boost Euro-Mediterranean ICD

In order to further grasp the reasons which allowed the EU to consolidate ICD from a patchy resource of its external action during the 1990s into a priority of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, a brief reference is now made to a separate but interconnected process: the parallel development of an internal, that is intra-European, dimension of ICD since 2001.

The socio-political context of the early 2000s, besides providing the conditions to promote a stronger ICD in the EMP context, had also, and perhaps primarily, domestic implications for the EU. As already mentioned, social tensions, stereotypes and xenophobic attitudes towards minorities, and especially migrants had been a growing

concern for the EU since the 1990s (see Allen and Nielsen 2002; Taras 2004; Bicchi 2007; Stavridis 2001). However, the proclaimed commitment of the EU toward combatting these phenomena through both education and legislation (European Council 1992e, 9-10) had not yet been framed under a broader policy vision such as the one promised through the enhancement of ICD.

Even in this case, the Commission's spirit of initiative was fundamental in advancing the idea that 'dialogue between cultures takes place primarily in our European cities, where we must find ways to live in multicultural societies and derive the full benefit from the experience' (Prodi 2002a, 7). In particular, the European interest in the development of a EU policy on ICD embracing both its internal and external dimensions emerged during a major European symposium on the matter organised by the DG Education and Culture of the Commission, mostly focused on the internal dimension of EU policies on these sectors, and the European Community Studies Association (ECSA) in March 2002, a few days before the EMP Valencia Conference (European Commission 2002a).

Some saw a stimulus for the development of a specific dimension of ICD within EU borders in the preparations for the 2004 enlargement, which would have brought new cultures and religions into the EU, especially from Eastern Europe (RHLAG 2003, 8; Topić and Sciortino 2012, 23-24). EU institutions for their part made specific reference to the consequences in European societies of increased mobility resulting from the single market and old and new migratory flows (EP and Council 2006). Having these topical motivations at its basis, ICD quickly gained momentum as a horizontal and trans-sectoral priority of European policies until it was proposed and chosen as the theme of the 'European Year' for 2008 (European Commission 2005; EP and Council 2006). Since EU institutions traditionally decide 'European Years' as campaigns to make European citizens and national governments aware of particularly important problems emerging in the continent, this decision constitutes a good indicator of the relevance acquired by ICD within Europe in the span of few years. The relevance of this topic, moreover, was strengthened by the EU's improved competences to promote cultural cooperation both among member states and with third countries following the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007 (Gordon 2010; Isar 2015). In that context, the Commission also advanced a proposal for an ambitious 'European Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World' that considered internal ICD as one of its pillars (European Commission 2007b).

Despite the differences in terms of scope and objectives, which are, however, irrelevant within this sub-section[31], the efforts of the Commission to develop internal ICD between 2002 and 2008 also played a role in supporting the process of consolidation underway in the Mediterranean context. First, the above-mentioned 2007 European Agenda for Culture of the Commission very much stressed the role of culture as a strategic factor of political, social and economic development in the EU's relations with the rest of the world (European Commission 2010b, sec. 3). Although the external dimension of ICD was not made explicit in the document referred to, the Agenda provided more legitimacy for the employment of all EU cultural policy tools in its external relations.

Secondly, and probably unexpectedly, EU member states' attention to internal ICD provoked a larger interest for this tool among MPCs compared to the reluctance and suspicion shown in the previous years, maybe dictated by an anxiety to see one of the features characterising Euro-Mediterranean relations from the outset transformed into something exclusively European. Indeed, the year 2008 was first chosen as European Year of ICD in 2006. Only later, following up on their widespread criticism of Eurocentric attitudes due to this choice, ministers from MPCs required and obtained the formal recognition of this period also as Euro-Mediterranean Year of Dialogue between Cultures (Schoefthaler 2007a, 18). Moreover, as will be shown in the second part of this chapter, some of the better resourced initiatives to implement ICD in the Mediterranean during this phase were initially successful programmes, such as *Erasmus* and *Tempus,* which had originally been designed to be promoted within EU borders, and whose expansion to MPCs was strongly supported by EMP partners.

Thirdly, all this sudden interest in ICD within Europe contributed to an increase in the concept's popularity among EU governments and peoples, drawing attention to the various initiatives promoted by the EU under this label. A 2007 opinion poll, for instance, showed that 63% of European respondents were either interested or very interested in the events that would have been promoted during the European Year of ICD (Eurobarometer 2007, 36), which, following the ministerial decision to expand its scope (EMP 2007a), would have also contributed to the celebrations of the same year at the Euro-Mediterranean level.

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31 For a comprehensive list of the objectives of the internal dimension of ICD see EP and Council 2006; Ericarts 2008.

1.3 ICD objectives, EU interests and compromises: the creation of the ALF

The main focus of the process analysed above, which consolidated ICD starting from the EMP framework, was primarily on a definition of the principles and objectives by which the future Euro-Mediterranean Foundation would be shaped. The outcome of this process – the establishment of the ALF – was considered the most ambitious and fascinating step made by the EU in the third basket of the EMP (Unver Noi 2011, 106; Bouquerel and el Husseiny 2009).

In fact, following the decision made in Valencia to create the Foundation, the process of defining and establishing this ICD institution followed two separate and at times overlapping paths which were finally merged into the final statutes of the ALF, adopted in 2004. One of these paths was followed mostly at the intergovernmental level, in particular within the Euro-Med Committee (senior officials). Its outcome in terms of ICD formulation was represented by the 'Guiding principles on dialogue between cultures and civilisations', adopted by EMP foreign ministers at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Crete in May 2003. The other path was initiated by Prodi himself within the European Commission and was characterised by an intensive involvement of independent experts and academics.

The 'Guiding Principles' were, as mentioned, one of the outcomes of the 'Valencia Agenda' and constituted the first effort made by EMP governments following the Barcelona Declaration to reflect on the possible applications of the concept of ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean policy framework. These principles were not expected to be connected to or implemented through any specific ICD programme or project; rather, they represented a shared framework of reference in order to develop this tool among EMP countries which should have guided the commitment made in Valencia and encompassed past and future initiatives promoted under the ICD label, including the future Foundation. From this perspective, together with the principles, the document also provided a list of general objectives for ICD that were then reiterated in ensuing EU and EMP documents with small occasional changes or additions.

In the 'Guiding Principles', ICD was defined as an appropriate instrument to achieve constructive interaction and effective cooperation among nations, to contribute to mutual understanding and to enrich common 'Mediterranean' values. It was also described as an efficient means of conflict prevention, 'which required the active participation of civil society, both by institutions and individuals distinguished in the fields of thought, culture and society'. Moreover, ministers agreed that ICD should

become an 'important instrument to fight fanaticism of any kind, extremism, racism and xenophobia' (EMP 2003b, items 15-16). Compared with the previous common effort to define it in the Barcelona Declaration, which vaguely described ICD as an important factor to bring the people of the Mediterranean closer and favour mutual understanding among them (EMP 1995a), the conception of ICD which emerged from these principles was therefore much more specific and target oriented. EMP officials thus gave a good reflection of the impetus, given by the Commission and supported by some EU member states, to provide ICD with a new firmness in the framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

Two further elements are worth discussing. First, the 'Guiding Principles' made explicit reference to the need to actively involve civil society, besides officials, politicians, and the cultural/academic elite, to reinforce the spreading of this tool. As shown in Chapter 3, the active involvement of the masses in ICD was envisaged by the Commission from the early 1990s but never truly pursued by EMP governments. It was strongly recommended also by analysts (Reinhart 2002; Soltan 2004, 6) on the basis of the perhaps not-so-evident assumption that an effective cultural dialogue can only be made by people and not by representatives or by abstract cultures (see Del Sarto 2007). Following a similar line of thought, the experts involved by Prodi also attributed a great deal of relevance to the participation of civil society from both shores in this process, considering it as the minimum condition for the effectiveness of any ICD (RHLAG 2003, 24). In this context, the above reference to engage civil society is particularly relevant because also governments came to formally sustain the role of these organisations and individuals as 'driving forces' of ICD, following up to the unclear position they advanced on the involvement of these actors in the Barcelona Process. Through this reference, moreover, governments confirmed the placement of ICD efforts, together with the EMPA and the Non-Governmental Platform, within the overall commitment taken by the Commission (2002b, 16) to increase the non-governmental participation in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and to contribute to a better co-ownership of the Barcelona Process at the level of the people.

A second insight which emerges from an analysis of the 'Guiding Principles' is that Euro-Mediterranean ministers agreed essentially the same objectives for ICD which the EU had had in mind in the early 1990s. As shown, however, EU officials resolved not to explicitly include them in the Barcelona Declaration, both because there were divergent perspectives on ICD between the EU and its partners, and because the EU did

not consider yet the concerns to which this tool may have contributed urgent. In this perspective, therefore, rather than showing vision, EMP countries just succeeded in applying explicitly the original rationale of the precursors of ICD to the current political milieu, where the need for intervention was much more urgent than in the past. In particular, the analysis of the relevant sections of the 'Guiding Principles' and of ensuing Euro-Mediterranean policy documents (see, for instance, EMP 2008b), identify, beyond the all-inclusive promotion of mutual understanding, two main sets of specific goals in this period.

The first group of objectives concerned the employment of ICD in reducing the social causes and consequences of fanaticism, extremism, xenophobia and racism, all of which were visibly growing during those years in the area. For instance, as indicated in a 2007 report by the Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU, racist and xenophobic violence and crime remained a serious social problem across the EU, and 8 of the 11 member states for which sufficient criminal justice data was available experienced a general upward trend in recorded incidents. For instance in France, the country with the largest community of people of Maghreb origin, reports of racist incidents or offences increased by about 26% from 2000 to 2006 (FRA 2007, 122-124). Major events as the terror attacks to Madrid and London in 2004 and 2005, and the outburst of violent protests in the Muslim world, including in some MPCs, following the Danish Muhammed Cartoon Crisis in 2005-2006 (The Guardian 2006) further fuelled these tensions. As discussed more widely in Chapter 2, these problems had their roots in the worsening socio-cultural relations, mixed with stereotyped perceptions, between Europeans and MPC citizens. This combination had, in turn, been magnified over the years by the widening socio-economic and developmental gap between the northern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean, as well as by the rise in transnational organised crime including terrorism and the smuggling of migrants. In this context, the EU also succeeded in pushing shared Euro-Mediterranean bodies to recognise this problem as a common priority. For instance, the EMPA (2005) recommended a special push for ICD especially in countries where immigration was having a greater impact.

The second set of objectives for ICD emerging from the 'Guiding Principles' was connected with the broad ideals of reconciliation, coexistence and conflict prevention in the Mediterranean. As in the early 1990s, the goal was essentially that of supporting or involving CSOs from areas of conflict where cultural or religious aspects were considered part of the undergoing tensions, in an effort to build bridges among

populations and support the settlement of conflicts from the bottom up (ALF 2010a). In principle, the main target for pursuing this objective remained that of supporting Israeli-Palestinian relations, although the commitment to dialogue of civil society groups from this area had received a major blow from the failure of the Camp David summit and the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000 (for an overview of civil society interactions in Israel and Palestine during this period, see Kaufman et al. 2006).

Indeed, specific references to a new opportunity to employ ICD in this conflict began only when a glimmer of peace opened following the formal acceptance by the Parties of the Quartet's 'Road Map for Peace' in April 2003. Despite the Israeli government presented 14 reservations which essentially altered much of the contents of the original peace plan (Ha'aretz 2003), the European Council (2003b) took the doubtful opportunity offered by the Road Map to encourage all sides in the region to immediately implement policies conducive to dialogue and negotiations and to welcome the ongoing initiatives from civil society on both sides. In particular, the European Council declared itself ready to further assist these organisations in their efforts 'to promote rapprochement, confidence building and a search for a lasting peace' (the same commitment was replicated at the Euro-Mediterranean level; see EMP 2003d).

In practice, however, as will be further discussed in the next part of this chapter, on implementation, the first practical initiatives to employ ICD in situations of conflict or post-conflict throughout the region were promoted by the ALF following, in particular, the crisis between Israel and Hezbollah in the summer of 2006. In 2008, perhaps in response to the multiplication of ICD initiatives in this sector, the EU reiterated the relevant function it attributed to this tool for conflict prevention and for the processes of reconciliation in regions facing politically precarious situations (Council 2008b). On their part, the Euro-Mediterranean ministers of culture, meeting in Athens in the same year, acknowledged the need to assess the impact of ICD as a contribution to conflict prevention (EMP 2008, item 33). The scope and contradictions of ICD initiatives aimed at peace-building in the Mediterranean are addressed in more detail in section 2.4 of this chapter.

The two sets of concerns discussed thus far therefore constituted the core of the objectives agreed by EMP countries for the promotion of mutual understanding through ICD in the following years, as well as for the imminent establishment of the ALF. As anticipated, however, EMP ministers developed these principles and goals while a group of high-level experts established on Prodi's initiative in 2002 was carrying out its

own reflections on the potential of ICD in the Mediterranean. This '*Groupe des Sages*'[32] had been gathered, in particular, to 'identify possible ways of opening up the debate [about ICD] to society as a whole, rather than restricting the discussion to the restricted circles of the European and Mediterranean elites' (Prodi 2002a, 8). An underlying task of this group of experts was, first and foremost, that of transforming ICD into an instrument for Euro-Mediterranean civil society.

By the end of 2003, the *Groupe des Sages* had published a report in which they provided an in-depth analysis of the challenges and opportunities offered for the Mediterranean by the current global scenario, as well as an articulated list of principles and fields of action for a more effective promotion of ICD in that space. The key challenge for Euro-Mediterranean relations was identified in the consequences of economic globalisation processes which 'intensified interdependence, caused destabilisation and thus brought new complexities' (RHLAG 2003, 15). The immediate regional stability challenges mentioned in this chapter, including mounting violence in the Middle East, the upsurge of Islamic terrorism and the raising episodes of xenophobia in Europe were all taken into consideration and interpreted as signs of the need of a return of politics in place of economic governance. According to this view, therefore, the main objective of ICD was to contribute 'to the emergence of an appropriate region-wide political response to the challenges of globalisation with the long-term objective of preparing the ground to integrate in daily life the principal complementarities of the two halves of the Euro-Mediterranean area' (*idem*, 3; 12).

To keep up with their ambitious vision, the *Sages* also proposed a set of co-owned institutions based, in particular, on the catalysing role of a Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, as already proposed by the Commission (2002b). The most relevant function identified for this institution was that of independently assessing cultural programmes and the cultural impact of other measures (such as privatisation, the opening up of trade, visa and immigration policy, and the prevention of discrimination) and drafting, on these bases, a programme of priorities for the Mediterranean (*idem* 2003, 23). However, although this report's contribution was well employed by the Commission in terms of visibility and communication, even so far as to contribute to giving the *Sages* the label of 'Founding Fathers' of the ALF (ENPI Info Centre 2011c),

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32 The *Sages* gathered by Prodi were: Assia Alaoui Bensalah, Jean Daniel, Malek Chebel, Juan Diez Nicolas, Umberto Eco, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, George Joffé, Ahmed Kamal Aboulmagd, Bichara Khader, Adnan Wafic Kassar, Pedrag Matvejević, Rostane Mehdi, Fatima Mernissi, Tariq Ramadan, Faruk Sen, Faouzi Skali, Simone Susskind-Weinberger and Tullia Zevi.

some of their most original recommendations, including the proposed policy-monitoring function, were not developed into the final structure and objectives of the Foundation[33]. Despite their visibility, thus, the *Sages* played a limited role in this process.

The reasons for this poor performance can be addressed through dual analyses. The first one considers the role of the experts within the Commission. As George Joffé, EU analyst and one of the experts gathered by Prodi, points out, 'although [the Commission] brought together committees of wise men to, in theory, consider how these initiatives should be pushed forward, in practice, the Commission designed and defined the way in which ICD should have to be managed' (Interview no. 8, 2013). A similar view also emerged from the testimonies collected by two experts who participated in the working group established by Prodi to assist and coordinate the other *Sages* in the preparation of their report. Léonce Bekemans, an expert in globalisation studies, noted that, from the very first meeting with Prodi, 'there was a clear mandate to come up with specific conceptual, functional guidelines and proposals' (Interview no. 4, 2013). Similarly, Raj Isar, a cultural policy analyst, confirmed this impression, adding that the main task given by Prodi was 'to create some kind of a structure that could be used as a tool. It was very clear that [the *Sages*] had a brief to recommend the creation of something' (Interview no. 7, 2013). In this light, as he later added, 'most of the drafting [of the report] was probably actually done by EU officials' (Isar 2015, 505).

These privileged testimonies show that the mandate for the experts was thus limited from the outset by the need to enclose their reflections within a frame that had been, to a large extent, predetermined by the Commission. As Bekemans emphasises, the 'ambitions at the beginning were very high, and they slowly became more moderate because we had to work with the Commission, and [the work] had to be concretised in a format that was congenial for them' (Interview no. 4, 2013). Why did Prodi decide to gather such eminent personalities if the direction and shape of ICD were already well defined in his mind?

The answer must be framed within the more general context of the Commission's practice of employing expert groups in policy consultation, which has been recognised as a prominent feature of the European governance system, although less frequent in the area of external relations (Gornitzka and Sverdrup 2008). As underlined in the academic literature on this subject, the general function of these 'expert groups' may range from

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33 Other differences between the *Sages'* proposal and the ALF will be discussed in the next section.

acting as technical-scientific problem-solving instruments to, in some cases, acting as tools 'to resolve political and inter-institutional conflicts and build legitimacy for EU policy making' (Gornitzka and Sverdrup 2011, 64).

In this light, the experience of Prodi's *Groupe des Sages* can easily be categorised into the second general function. The experts appeared to have been gathered to provide Prodi and its Commission with a base of strong expertise to legitimise the advancement of their vision for ICD in the Mediterranean among EMP countries; only subsequently were the *Sages* required to provide some original ideas to bolster this vision for ICD through the Foundation. This has been implicitly recognised by the Commission President who, nonetheless, claimed that what took place among the experts was a 'real dialogue' (Interview no. 14, 2015). Indeed, talking about Tariq Ramadan, one of the intellectuals pursued with more determination to participate in this group, Prodi has stressed that, for his intelligence and role, 'Tariq could have really been the element that made this dialogue publicly stronger, because he gave credibility to the fact that the experts were talking openly and frankly' (*idem, my translation*).

A second level of analysis to explain the limited contribution of the *Sages* in the final definition of the ALF considers the Commission's inability to have its comprehensive view on the matter embraced by EMP countries. Prodi's ambitions were, as seen, crucial to raise and sustain the issue of ICD on the mainly intergovernmental agenda of the Barcelona Process. However, during the creation process of the Foundation, the agency of EMP countries sidelined, in part, the input of the Commission.

This marginalisation of the Commission was evident in the various steps leading to the establishment of the ALF. In Valencia (2002) the Commission's idea to create a Foundation was approved by EMP ministers at approximately the same time that the *Sages* were appointed by Prodi. One year later, EMP ministers met in Crete where they adopted both the above-discussed 'Guiding Principles' and a further annex, which established the agreed structure, objectives, and activities of the incoming Foundation. On that occasion, reference was made to the need to also take the input of the *Groupe des Sages* into account. In parallel, however, ministers invited their officials in the Euro-Med Committee to continue work on the structure, functioning and financing of the new institution (EMP 2003b; EMP 2003c). In other words, between the first input in Valencia and the December 2003 Conference of Naples, where ministers formally welcomed the contribution of the *Sages* (EMP 2003d, item 58) and set up the

Foundation, the formulation of the objectives of ICD and the definition of the structure of the ALF had been already determined to a great degree at the intergovernmental level.

Such a strong governmental involvement in the formulation of ICD was non-existent in the previous phase. In that period, as seen, several partners of the Barcelona Process placed no specific interest in the possible relevance of ICD for EMP cooperation and objectives. The Commission, especially through its Spanish Commissioner on external relations, Manuel Marin, could thus easily advance this tool through the launch of few technical 'Euromed programmes' that, indeed, seemed to reflect the social profile of European bureaucrats rather than an attempt to achieve EU milieu goals in the area. On the contrary, the tense socio-cultural scenario exposed by 9/11 and ensuing events, combined with the Commission's ability to present ICD among the most proper tools to face that scenario, radically changed the view of EMP governments on this instrument. In particular, as the Foundation was meant to become the guardian and the catalyst of a new ambitious policy strategy for the future of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, EMP countries approached this process as they would any other political priority: lobbying to negotiate the structure and functions of the Foundation according to their national interests and granting some sort of control over the new initiative (see Del Sarto 2007, 43; Gillespie 2003). As a consequence, as stressed by Andreu Claret, ALF Director in the period 2008-2013, although the Foundation was able to implement some recommendations of the *Sages*, the proposal they made 'was not what [the ALF] is now; it was something by far better resourced, more autonomous in respect of the governments and capable of monitoring the policies of all Mediterranean countries concerning intercultural dialogue' (Interview no. 6, 2013).

Some analysts have critically pointed out that this growth of governmental attention on ICD eventually marked a strong 'politicisation' of this tool (Malmvig 2007, 76), especially compared to the previous phase. As will be elaborated in the next section, such attention resulted, in particular, in a contradictory approach to the proclaimed commitment to actively involving civil society as a driving force of ICD. Indeed, despite what was claimed in the 'Guiding Principles', the involvement of governments in the management of the ALF made ICD promotion increasingly dependent on national interests rather than on civil society inputs. In spite of this criticism, however, such an outcome appears implicit in the growing 'success'

characterising the consolidation of ICD as a foreign policy instrument. In fact, as incidentally indicated by the original rationale at the root of the EU conception of ICD in the 1990s, and as acknowledged by Adler and Crawford (2006, 16), it may be 'naïve to think that, across cultures, civilisations and states that have conflicting interests, processes of social communication free of power politics and instrumental consideration could easily develop'.

The differences between the position of the Commission and those of a few EMP governments even led to some frictions when the report of the *Groupe des Sages* was officially presented in Egypt for the inauguration of the ALF in 2005. The event was also reportedly undermined by some British officers in the Commission who had been mobilised by their government to mark the country's lack of agreement with the final outcome of the process that eventually brought to the establishment of the Foundation (Interview no. 4, Bekemans, 2013)[34]. After all, as shown, the position agreed by the ministers in the 'Guiding Principles' was essentially objective-driven and approached ICD as a priority instrument to stem some shared concerns for regional stability. This contrasted with the reflection produced by the *Sages* and driven by the Commission. Their reflection, indeed, was rooted in a deeper and long-term perspective and provided the Foundation with a much more independent and monitoring role which may have been perceived by some governments as an unwelcome intrusion in national affairs. When the ALF was presented, moreover, the Commission's strong input that had led to the consolidation of ICD and the launch of this initiative was weakened by the different priorities of the new Barroso Commission (2005-2010), which, as the next chapter will elaborate, had less interest in ICD than Prodi's.

In this context, the commitment of Sweden became particularly relevant to finding a compromise between these two views. As Prodi claims, 'luckily, the Foundation was supported by a Nordic country, otherwise it would have not started. I want to be explicit, I ran after that, and, I said, now that there is Sweden it will not be seen as a little play among Mediterranean countries; because this was the attitude I could see in the Nordic EU countries for the Mediterranean: "*mare vostrum!*"' (Interview no. 14, 2015, *my translation*).

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34 For more about the common practices of EU governments in seeking to mobilize coalitions of their nationals working in the Commissions DGs, cabinets, Council working groups, interest groups and EP to influence policy-shaping decisions, see Peterson 1995.

2. The proliferation of ICD programmes: improvements and contradictions

The renewed attention of both the Commission and EMP countries for ICD following 2001 did not result in a departure from pre-existing programmes. EU officials and EMP ministers, in fact, positively welcomed the latter and continued to build on their outcomes (European Commission 2002b; EMP 2005c; UfM 2008b, 16). The implementation of ICD during this phase was thus carried out through a mixture of new and pre-existing programmes and, mainly in the field of education, by the extension of successful domestic EU programmes to MPCs.

Within this rich menu, it is also worth mentioning the launch of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly in 2004 and of the Non-Governmental Platform for the Euromed Civil Forum in 2005. The two joint bodies, both intended to enhance co-ownership and the active participation of non-governmental representatives in all the areas of the Barcelona Process, demonstrated a specific interest in the promotion of ICD from the beginning. Their actual contribution, however, was mostly to recommend that the EU and MPCs secure their commitment to ICD implementation (EMPA 2005; Euromed Civil Forum 2003a; EP 2007c). As far as funding is concerned, with the launch of the ENP the EU also developed a new financial instrument – the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) – which, from 2007 (to 2013) replaced MEDA to cover the majority of European bilateral, multilateral and regional cooperation in the area (European Commission 2003b).

Three main fields of action were proposed to reinforce the implementation of ICD by EMP ministers: education, youth and the media. As stated above, these ideas were elaborated in the specific action plan adopted at the 2002 Valencia Conference (EMP 2002) and championed by the *Groupe des Sages*. The latter also made an effort to frame these fields of action into a broader strategic process. Education (formal and informal) was seen as the key element in establishing the conditions for a dialogue among equals; exchanges among young people, but also among other target groups and organisations, were viewed as the day-to-day operations needed to translate the results of an improved commitment towards education into practice. Finally, the media, which had played an increasingly significant role in the formulation of opinions and, very often, of stereotypes during this decade, were addressed as the main areas for the consolidation, support and diffusion of the process at the level of civil society (RHLAG 2003, 26).

EU officials also called in the media to contribute to solving issues related to the low visibility from which the Barcelona Process was suffering at that time (European

Commission 2002b, 8). This specific need led to the launch of a *Regional Information and Communication Programme* that, since 2004, contributed to boosting public awareness and understanding of the EU and its external relations in the neighbourhood through the support of journalists and media outlets. As a programme to improve visibility and co-ownership, it was initially presented as a further support to promote mutual understanding in the context of the Barcelona Process (EMP 2003a, item 46). However, neither institutions, officials nor CSOs ever proved that they further considered this programme part of their broader effort to advance ICD.

With these general coordinates in mind, the following paragraphs briefly illustrate the specific objectives, resources and some basic outcomes of the several ICD programmes implemented during this phase. For analytical reasons, the latter are regrouped into three larger 'blocks': a) regional programmes conceived in the framework of the EMP third basket (*Euromed Heritage*, *Euromed Audiovisual*, *Euromed Youth*); b) internal EU programmes extended (also) to MPCs (*Tempus*, *Erasmus Mundus*), and c) the ALF, which, as seen, has been invested with much more relevance than any other ICD programme[35]. Following the description of these programmes, the chapter will critically reflect upon whether, to what extent and how these programmes have actually advanced overall ICD efforts during this period.

2.1 The 'old' Euromed regional programmes

As far as the first block of programmes is concerned, in the 2001-2010 period the European Commission managed to launch the second, third and fourth editions of *Euromed Heritage*, the second edition of *Euromed Audiovisual* and the second, third and fourth editions of *Euromed Youth*. These programmes were a continuation of those launched by the Commission in the late 1990s, and introduced in the previous chapter. As a consequence they share their structure as, essentially, financial grants funded by the Commission and disbursed through periodic calls for proposals open to CSOs and cultural institutions and professionals across the Euro-Mediterranean area.

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35 At a macro level, the 'division of work' between the ENP and the UfM affected the implementation of ICD when the EMP was replaced in 2008. On one hand, regional 'Euromed' programmes were hosted under the ENP regional dimension. As a consequence, these ICD programmes became accessible only to the nine MPCs associated to that policy. Access was thus precluded to Mauritania and Albania, which accessed the EMP only at its latest stage (EMP 2007a), and to Turkey, a candidate country for EU accession since 2005. On the other, the ALF was associated to the UfM, which consisted of 43 members (27 EU + 16 MPCs). The number of non-European countries involved in this case was thus almost double those affected by the Euromed Programmes and, besides the ENP beneficiaries, comprised also the Balkans (Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Montenegro), Mauritania, Monaco and Turkey.

Euromed Heritage II (2002-2006) was funded with EUR 30 million under MEDA and mostly devoted to increasing Mediterranean countries' capacities in managing and developing their cultural heritage, with a special focus on intangible heritage. It supported 11 projects, for four years[36]; six of them received grants from EUR 2,5 to 3 million, while the disbursements for the other 4 projects ranged from EUR 600,000 to 1,5 million. As concerns the partner institutions involved, the total number oscillated from fourteen for 'Mediterranean Voices', a research programme focused on the collection and recording of memories and interviews, to six for 'Temper' concerning Mediterranean prehistoric heritage (PAI 2007). Four projects[37] selected under the same call for proposals started in 2004 under the label of *Euromed Heritage III* (2004-2008) which was essentially an extension of the second edition, sharing the same overall objectives with an additional funding of EUR 11 million under MEDA (see also Pace 2005, 62). Two of them were big projects, funded with about EUR 3.4 million each, for four years. 'Discover Islamic Art', aimed at developing the principle of organising exhibitions without moving the works of art, was the most funded and the one with more partners (14), while 'Byzantium Early Islam', an integrated project aiming to bring the region's Byzantine and Islamic heritage to the fore, was the smallest in this edition, with only five partners. Finally *Euromed Heritage IV* (2008-2012) received a budget of EUR 17 million under the new ENPI financial instrument. The general objective set for this edition was to facilitate the appropriation by people of their own national and regional cultural legacy through easier access to education and knowledge of cultural heritage. The Programme allocated, on average, smaller grants than in the previous editions, managing to fund twelve projects[38] with a smaller number of participant institutions. Except for 'MedMem', devoted to sharing a common Euro-Mediterannean audiovisual heritage and funded with more than EUR 2.5 million, all the other projects received less than EUR 2 million and involved between three and six participant institutions from the whole area.

Although in large part implemented during this phase, the first edition of *Euromed Audiovisual* (2000-2006) was decided in 1997 and has thus been discussed in the previous chapter as part of the last stage characterising the emergence of ICD. *Euromed*

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36 'Delta', 'Prodecom', 'Filières Innovantes', 'La Navigation du Savoir', 'Mediterranean Voices', 'Medimuses', 'Temper', 'Patrimoines Partagés', 'Ikonos', 'Unimed Cultural Heritage II', 'Defence Systems in the Mediterranean Coasts'.
37 'Discover Islamic Art', 'Rehabimed', 'Qantara', 'Byzantium Early Islam'.
38 'Athena', 'Elaich', 'Foundations for a strong future', 'Hammamed'. 'Manumed II', 'Mare Nostrum', 'MedLiHer', 'MedMem', 'Montada', 'Mutual Heritage', 'REMEE', 'Siwa & Tangier'.

Audiovisual II (2006-2008) was funded with EUR 15 million under MEDA. This edition funded twelve projects[39] divided according to the specific objectives of the Programme: seven in the training sector, two in development, two in promotion and one in distribution and exhibition. If the general goal stated for the second edition remained that of promoting mutual understanding in the region through films, the specific objectives contemplated a stronger commitment to structuring the audiovisual industry in MPCs. The main reason for this shift of focus, not so different from the one experienced by the *Heritage* programme during this same period, may be that, as explained by a Commission programme manager, 'in 1997 the idea was to have co-production and to show Arab films to Europeans, but they [at the Commission] realise that you need quality movies... so you can do intercultural dialogue in some small specific topics when you make people met together but when you are in big topics as cinema or culture you cannot oblige Europeans to watch a movie which is not well written or produced. [...] So, maybe, the first objective [of the Audiovisual and Heritage programmes] is to support the development of those sectors, without forgetting ICD and that's why we have the ALF' (Interview No. 9, Lucas, 2013). Still, EMP ministers persisted in considering *Euromed Audiovisual* among ICD 'success stories' (EMP 2005a, item 44).

Euromed Youth II (2001-2004) was established over the successful experience of its first edition, with a 40% increase in funding, that is with a total budget of EUR 14 million (10 million from MEDA and 4 from the EU *Youth in Action* programme). The goals of this edition were both to increase the number and quality of youth exchanges and voluntary work projects to support the Mediterranean NGOs by giving priority to training activities, and to develop the just established Euro-Mediterranean Youth Forum (European Commission 2001b). The thematic priorities set for the projects included combating racism and xenophobia, and promoting active citizenship, the development of civil society, and the role of women in society. The ensuing *Euromed Youth III* (2005-2008) had a budget of EUR 5 million. It aimed at fostering mutual understanding and ICD between young people, promoting their citizenship and sense of solidarity and contributing to the development of youth policies. This edition funded a total of 86 projects, each involving from 20 to 40 participants (Regional Capacity Building and

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39 'Audiovisual Financing and Commercialisation', 'Mediterranean Film Business School', 'EurodocMed', 'Mediterranean Films Crossing Borders', 'Génération Grand Ecran', 'Berlinale Talent Campus', 'Insight Out', 'Meda Films Development – MFD', 'The Greenhouse Med Screen', 'The Caravan of Euro-Arab Cinema', 'Euromed Cinemas'.

Support Unit 2008) divided, as in the previous editions into three actions (exchanges, support measures, voluntary service). In total, *Euromed Youth III* provided services to 2,339 people including 1,689 young participants (aged between 13 and 25) and 650 youth workers (DRN 2013, 65).

With the third edition, the Programme undertook a decentralisation process which consisted of the creation of 'National Euromed Youth Units' in all partner countries to guarantee a greater proximity to the final beneficiaries, shared responsibility and an improved sense of co-ownership (European Commission 2006). The decentralisation process was then consolidated with *Euromed Youth IV* (2010-2013[40]), launched with a budget of EUR 5 million under ENPI and, broadly speaking, the same objectives and actions of the previous editions. The Programme awarded 86 of the 275 proposals received, the majority of which involving training and networking projects (ENPI Info Centre 2013c). Besides the various editions of *Euromed Youth*, young people were also gradually involved in other regional initiatives. These included some ALF campaigns, the launch of the *Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament* in 2007 (EMP 2007, item 43), the *Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform*, which was established in 2003 in Malta to contribute developing regional co-operation in the youth sector, and the extension to MPCs of other European initiatives such as the *Youth in Action* programme or the *Salto-Youth* resource centre.

2.2 The expansion of EU higher education programmes to EMP countries

As far as the second 'block' of ICD implementation is concerned, the main European programmes which EMP ministers explicitly asked to extend to MPCs concerned generally exchanges between higher education institutions: the *Tempus* and the *Erasmus* programmes. The first proposal to the Council to extend *Tempus*, aimed at the modernisation of higher education systems, was made by the Commission in 2002 and welcomed by EMP ministers at the Valencia Conference of the same year (EMP 2002, item 20). According to the Commission, participation of MPCs in *Tempus* would have 'opened new horizons for students and teachers on both sides of the Mediterranean and the new networks and links which it would have developed, would have contributed to an enhanced mutual understanding in the area' (European Commission 2002b). A similar stance taken by the Council saw the extension of *Tempus* as an essential tool to

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40 The conclusion of this edition was extended to 2016 (ENPI Info Centre 2013)

promote ICD in the region (Council 2002b). To ensure access to higher education institutions from Mediterranean countries, the Commission allocated EUR 81 million under MEDA for *Tempus III* (2003-2006) and EUR 141 million under ENPI for *Tempus IV* (2007-2013), of which EUR 62 million up to 2010 (EACEA 2013a, 2). In the period 2004-2010, *Tempus* funded a total of 268 joint projects between Europe and Mediterranean countries and a number of structural measures in support of higher education institutions in the southern neighbourhood (*idem*, 67-69).

The opportunity to extend the *Erasmus* programme to MPCs' students and academics opened in 2004 when the EU launched *Erasmus Mundus* to provide opportunities for post-graduate experiences in the EU to institutions and students of third countries and to contribute to intercultural understanding through cooperation with these (EP and Council 2003). Within the new initiative, the Commission opened a specific 'external cooperation window' in 2006 to respond to the lack of a broader scholarship programme for the ENP region. The overall funding devoted to *Erasmus Mundus I* (2004-2008) was EUR 230 million (EP 2003). A second edition, *Erasmus Mundus II,* was launched in 2008 (for the period 2009-2013), with increased ambitions and overall budget (about EUR 950 million – EP and Council 2008). The main novelties for ENP countries were the introduction of exchange opportunities for PhD students as well, and the integration of the external cooperation window within the programme, under 'action 2', devoted to the creation of partnerships between higher education institutions in the two shores (European Commission 2009).

It is difficult to find disaggregated data concerning the part of the budget devoted specifically to the Mediterranean sector of this programme. Indicatively, the larger amounts were those envisaged for the external cooperation window/action 2. This action received about EUR 53 million between 2007 and 2010 and provided mobility grants for about 4,000 students and 753 staff from MPCs. The other main action of the programme provided scholarships to about 445 students and 147 academics to participate in *Erasmus Mundus* master courses from 2004 to 2010 (EACEA 2013b, 6-14). The relevance of these higher education programmes for both the promotion of ICD and the development of a dynamic research area in the region were further supported at the first EMP Conference on higher education and scientific research held in Cairo in 2007 (EMP 2007b) and, indirectly, through the launch of a joint Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) in Slovenia as one of the six big cooperation projects agreed when the UfM was established in 2008.

2.3 The Anna Lindh Foundation

The establishment of the ALF represented the most remarkable achievement of the complex process that led to the consolidation of ICD during this phase, although the Foundation proved less independent than had been recommended in the report prepared for the Commission by the *Groupe des Sages*. In particular, as will be elaborated later in the next sub-section, the main shortfalls of the ALF derived from the EMP countries' decision to provide the Foundation with a powerful intergovernmental Board of Governors (initially constituted by the Euro-Med Committee itself) and to allocate comparatively very few resources for the several activities envisaged. However, despite the downgrade of the *Sages*'s proposal*,* the resulting ALF mandate was still that of a comprehensive and ambitious initiative. A glance at its statutes, adopted in 2004 and revised in 2009, is illustrative. The main objective set for the Foundation was that of promoting ICD and contributing to the visibility of the Barcelona Process through intellectual, cultural and civil society exchanges. The specific objectives ranged from promoting knowledge, recognition and mutual respect between the religions and beliefs, cultures, and values which prevail across the region to identifying, developing and promoting areas of cultural convergence between the Euro-Mediterranean countries and peoples, with the particular aims of promoting tolerance, cultural understanding and avoiding stereotypes, xenophobia and racism, and of promoting the human dimension of the EMP, as well as the consolidation of the rule of law and of basic freedoms in the area (EMP 2004c).

In analysing its activities, it should be primarily emphasised that although the ALF is structured as an institution, it actually works on the basis of three-year grants allocated jointly by the Commission and by EMP/UfM members. This status of precariousness, protested by its Directors, has limited both the planning of more strategic initiatives from the outset, due to the actual short term programming capability (ALF 2010b, 6), and, as will be further elaborated below, the Foundation's independence. Still, this status as an institution/programme allows the ALF to be approached as another periodic Euromed programme, although much more ambitious, complex and far reaching than the ones previously considered.

Despite programming limitations, throughout the two three-year programmes implemented during the period of analysis the ALF succeeded in establishing the overall features of its action, in particular the management and coordination of a

national network of CSOs in each EMP/UfM country, which gave the ALF the peculiar function of 'network of networks' (EMP 2004c, art. 13). The creation and management of these national networks was indeed one of the proposals of the *Sages* maintained in the final structure of the ALF. This function, indeed, was expected to allow the Foundation to directly integrate the participation of CSOs into ICD initiatives as well to help them coordinate their needs and expertise both at the national and at the transnational level (RHLAG 2003, 30-31). From the outset, the organisations that became part to the ALF networks were quite heterogeneous in terms of both typology and fields of activity. According to the ALF review of its first six years of activities, the 3901 involved members included NGOs (53%), foundations (13%), private organisations (9%), public institutions (9%), local authorities (2.4%) and individuals (2.8%). The primary fields of action on which these members work are extremely varied; from arts and cultural cooperation (27%) and youth and education (16%), to sustainable development (7%), heritage (6%), gender issues (5.5%), and religion (2%) (ALF 2011f, 11-13). This variety can be partly explained through the fact that the only formal requirement to be accepted in the ALF networks is simply to be engaged in the promotion of ICD. Given the broad meaning attributed by both the Commission and the EMP to this label, this criterion essentially opened participation in the ALF to any possible form of human interaction in the area.

From this perspective, the noteworthy number of members of the national networks may not have been entirely determined by these associations actually sharing the mission of the Foundation to any great extent. For instance, according to the head of the Israeli network of CSOs, in her country 'the only reason to join [the ALF] was the possibility of receiving money' (Interview no. 13, Lapidot, 2015). For Italy, in the author's opinion and based on personal experience in this national network, the gathering of hundreds of members was at least in part the result of the stubborn determination of the very active national head, Michele Capasso, President of *Fondazione Mediterraneo*, to include as many associations as possible, arguably in the hope of making the Italian network larger than any other and thus increasing the representational force and weight of his own organisation within ALF activities.

Other features of the ALF established during the initial phases were: the launch of region-wide campaigns for the enhancement of ICD; flagship initiatives, such as the gathering of a periodic CSOs forum and the monitoring of regional intercultural trends dynamics; *ad hoc* initiatives, prizes and periodical calls for proposals. The latter, in

particular, allowed the ALF to directly support, with maximum EUR 30,000 for each grant, 416 small projects jointly proposed by European and Mediterranean CSOs from 2005 to 2011 on the various areas of action of the Foundation (ALF 2011f, 11).

More specifically, the first three-year programme of the ALF (2005-2008) had a budget of EUR 11 million (5 from the Commission, the remaining pledged by EMP countries) and focused on young people as the main target group of its actions. The main initiative was 'Our Common Future', a regional campaign aimed at reaching out to the largest possible number of young people, inviting them to share experiences and work together without frontiers. Several other projects were approved and implemented during this edition (see ALF 2005a). However, the work of the Foundation during its early years was reportedly hampered by administrative and management problems as well as by various delays (ALF 2005b). Notwithstanding, according to one of ALF's former Executive Directors, Andreu Claret, this early stage of the ALF had some positive results (ALF 2010b, 5-6): firstly, by 2008 the ALF had asserted its existence alongside other institutions working for ICD with which it signed cooperation agreements, such as with the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations or the Council of Europe. Secondly, this start-up phase was functional to establish the national networks of CSOs in all EMP countries.

When the second three-year programme (2008-2011) was adopted, with an increased commitment of EUR 14 million (7 from the Commission), the ALF could already rely upon its civil society networks which became immediately involved through another major regional campaign called '1001 actions for dialogue', to celebrate the European and Euro-Mediterranean Year of ICD. This campaign was aimed at involving CSOs and individuals in a common programme of action at the local and regional level, creating a critical mass of activities. It had a significant outreach, engaging about 1,030 CSOs from the whole area and over 30,000 people during its closing event (ALF 2011f, 16).

The ALF programme for 2008-2011 was based on six specific priorities which were expected to foster the convergence of all the activities and thus avoid dispersal: ideas and ideologies; education; cultural production; media; religion, spirituality and values; cities and diversity (ALF 2008a). The number of target groups was expanded to include women and migrants considered, as such, potential human and cultural bridges among the cultures and identities of the Mediterranean (*idem*, 8-9) and reaffirmed the focus on young people. By the end of 2008, however, the crisis created by the escalation

of tensions between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip (operation 'Cast Lead') led to a quick amendment of the programme, raising co-existence, peace and tolerance activities as a new priority area of action. A major initiative called 'Restore Trust-Rebuild Bridges' was launched in cooperation with the UN Alliance of Civilisations with the purpose of supporting a series of actions devoted to reconciliation and a culture of peace in Israel and Palestine. It financed 13 regional actions and 48 local actions that involved a total of 5,910 people (ALF 2011f, 11, 38). The shared objective of this joint ICD endeavour was that of facilitating the restoration of trust in social, political and cultural dialogue 'as the only effective way to solve tensions and conflicts in the Euro-Mediterranean space by raising awareness about intercultural actions for non-violent conflict resolution, fostering mobility of youth and civil society players, and providing communities affected by conflicts with means of cultural and artistic expression and relief' (ALF 2010a, 2). The move towards this specific field of action for ICD had already been addressed following the 2006 Israeli-Lebanon war with the project 'Build a Bridge', which developed a cross-border arts project and touring exhibition with Euro-Med artists and civil society groups in Lebanon, Palestine and Israel (European Commission 2008a, 12; ALF 2011f, 35). This idea of ICD as a peace-building tool was further supported through other initiatives of the ALF, including the awarding of the annual ICD prize, voted by networks members, to joint Israeli-Palestinian CSOs[41].

2.4 Evaluating the implementation of ICD during the 'phase of consolidation'

The above overview of the three 'blocks' of programmes may be not exhaustive of the wealth of specific ICD activities and projects promoted in the Mediterranean during this phase. However, it provides sufficient data to advance a few analytical considerations with regard to the overall implementation of ICD in the period 2001-2010. As in the previous chapter, the following analysis discusses the consistency of the programmes with the overall goals of ICD and the number of resources allocated. Finally, it explores if and how the mentioned programmes 1) were coordinated with each other, and 2) have contributed to making ICD a co-owned instrument.

As far as the consistency of objectives is concerned, a common thread linking the formulation path of ICD followed by the Commission and its *Sages* and that pursued by Euro-Mediterranean officials in the 'Guiding Principles' has been the explicit reference

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41 In 2009 the award was given to Combatants for Peace (Israel-Palestine), History in Action (Bosnia-Serbia- Croatia) was second; in 2010 to Friends of the Earth-Middle East (Israel-Jordan-Palestine).

to the need to extensively involve the masses, with a view, in particular, to creating a better co-ownership of this tool (EMP 2003c; Prodi 2002b). The capacity of a programme to involve significant parts of European and Mediterranean civil societies together is thus, in principle, an important indicator for evaluating the programme's consistency with the renewed approach at the root of the consolidation of ICD during this phase. The three priority fields of action sustained by both EMP ministers and the Commission – youth exchanges, education and the media – were in fact well selected among areas that are particularly conductive to this endeavour. Education in particular, as underlined by the Prodi's expert group, was particularly helpful to ensuring that ICD suffused civil society and permeated the social fabric (RHLAG 2003, 26). In this context, all the above-mentioned ICD programmes, no matter their specific sector, target or objectives, made considerable use of education/training activities.

Table 2. Overview of the programmes implementing ICD during the 'phase of consolidation'

Programme/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Euromed Heritage		*EMH II* (EUR 30M)						*EMH IV* (EUR 17M) > 2012		
				EMH III (EUR 11M)						
Euromed Audiovisual	[EMA I]*					*EMA II* (EUR 15M)				
Euromed Youth	*EMY II* (EUR 14M)				*EMY III* (EUR 5M)			*EMY IV* (EUR 5M) > 2016		
Tempus			*T III* (EUR 81M)				*T IV* (EUR 141M) > 2013			
Erasmus Mundus				*EM I* (EUR 230 M**)				*EM II* (EUR 950 M**) > 2013		
Anna Lindh Foundation					*ALF I* (EUR 11 M)			*ALF II* (EUR 14 M) > 2011		

The launch of this programme, in 2000, was decided in 1997; EMA I is thus considered in the previous phase of ICD.
** These figures refer to the overall committed by the EU for all Erasmus Mundus partners.*
> indicates the beginning/closing year of the edition, when it does not coincide with the period of reference.

In principle, programmes could pursue the involvement of civil society in ICD both directly and indirectly. For instance, as has already been underlined in the previous chapter, in the majority of projects targeting the media, the actual potential to create mutual understanding and reduce the causes of extremism and xenophobic attitudes should also be evaluated in consideration of their possible indirect impact on the people. In this context, *Euromed Audiovisual* can be taken, once again*,* as an example, with the additional benefit of few aggregated data about both the direct and indirect impact of its second edition, which by contrast, were not available for its first incarnation. Under

Euromed Audiovisual II (2006-2008) some 500 professionals from MPCs were trained in this sector, 115 films were produced from European and Mediterranean countries and about 870,000 viewers (in 2008) were able to enjoy Arabic and Mediterranean films on both shores of the area (Council 2008a). In terms of direct involvement of civil society, as the Commission reinforced on purpose the focus of this Programme on practitioners and experts in very technical fields, only very small elites of Euro-Mediterranean societies were affected. Also in terms of indirect involvement, however, the outreach of the Programme was not so impressive. If the referred figures in fact represent a strong incentive for the media industries in the southern countries and certainly a positive contribution to promoting mutual understanding in the Mediterranean area, when compared to a population of more than 750 million, the indirect outcome of this programme does appear of little significance in quantitative terms.

On the other hand, programmes as the ALF, *Euromed Youth* with related initiatives involving young people, and the extension of *Tempus* and *Erasmus* to a few thousands of students and academics from MPCs, fostered a much more direct involvement of large segments of the Euro-Mediterranean population in several fields. These fields, as mentioned, included education, media and exchanges, but also activities involving research, cultural production, the promotion of equal opportunities and debate opportunities concerning such controversial issues as diversity and migrations. The ALF, in particular, especially through the involvement of its national networks of CSOs, brought a noteworthy contribution to such direct engagement. Indeed, in six years of activities the Foundation involved almost 29,000 civil society representatives, funding 416 regional projects proposed by transnational consortia of its members that directly benefited about 96,000 people in the whole Euro-Mediterranean area (ALF 2011f, 11). The focus on young people shared by all these programmes and claimed as the target of their activities by 16% of ALF members also demonstrated a commitment to promoting ICD within a long-term perspective, as stressed by Prodi's expert group in their analysis of the deep rooted socio-cultural challenges that this tool was called to address in the area (RHLAG 2003). Furthermore, the fact that the programmes that enabled significant participation from civil society were, in large part, new, shows a positive increase in the consistency of ICD implementation with some of the claims made in the EU and in the EMP, in particular that of strengthening the participation of civil society and single individuals in the process.

Besides these positive comments, however, three critical considerations should be

put forward concerning the ALF in particular. First, despite the proliferation of activities with civil society as the key actor, ICD initiatives often resulted in the involvement of solely (several) elite representatives, leaving the broad population almost unaffected (ALF 2010b; Pace 2005, 66). As noted by Gianluca Solera, ALF Networks Coordinator in the period 2005-2012, the Foundation's intensive commitment to involve CSOs in the initiatives often risked increasing the 'trap of professionalism' whereby 'you create a sort of privileged group of organisations or individuals participating in international exchange experiences: so you have the same organisations going to the same meetings' (Interview no. 5, 2013). A similar risk, moreover, was also underlined in the context of other ICD programmes by a *Euromed Youth* top official (Interview no. 10, Buttigieg, 2014). In fact, the issue of 'professionalism' as defined by the two interviewees, or, alternatively, of civil society 'elitism', is not a peculiarity of ICD. On the contrary, this is quite a common trend in different sectors of civil society engagement, such as, for instance, the environmentalist movement (see Parking and Sinclair 2014). It is also related to a more general challenge concerning the accountability of CSOs working in transnational/global networks and to the difficulty for these organisations, especially the largest ones, to manage the 'tension between the free riding of uncommitted members and tendencies towards elite control by core activists' (Anheier and Themudo 2002, 211).

Secondly, although EU information media have often praised the active contribution of hundreds of CSOs through the national networks (ENPI Info Centre 2010) in the formulation of ALF strategy, the Foundation is controlled by an intergovernmental Board. The ALF Board, in particular, retains powers over both the appointment of its Executive Director and the adoption of the budget and work programmes. This intergovernmental backbone of the ALF has made its actions increasingly dependent on specific national interests rather than on civil society input (Del Sarto 2007, 43). Additionally, prospective ALF members have to be accepted by the concerned national heads of network, which, as the statutes of the Foundation make clear, are also identified and appointed by national governments (EMP 2004c, article XIII), further inhibiting the networks from formulating their own goals and priorities (Malmvig 2007, 82). This paradox emerged most noticeably when some governments chose entities within ministerial offices to act as the heads of their national civil society networks within the ALF, as did Lebanon with the appointment to this position of the National Commission for UNESCO, hosted by the Ministry of Culture (ALF 2005b). In fact, this paradox can be further observed within most of ALF's civil society networks,

which occasionally include members that are either part of the state, or not clearly independent from it, such as the State Institute for Culture to the MFA of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Morocco, and other National Commissions for UNESCO which, according to the 1945 Constitution of this organisation, represent an intermediary of the country's foreign cultural and educational policy with the agency of the UN.

The third critical consideration about the ALF's consistency with the overall goals of ICD concerns a problematic absence of moderate Islamic organisations from the civil society engaged by the Foundation during this period. As some have emphasised, this neglect constituted a serious limitation and a contradiction for any ICD ambition since, in many MPCs, moderate Islamic groups represent an integral part of the social fabric and might thus play a considerable role in ensuring the success and especially the legitimisation of such initiatives among the masses (Jünemann 2003b; Malmvig 2007). In part, this limitation derived from the wider opposition of some MPCs' governments to the inclusion of religious issues into the main priority areas of action of the Foundation. Indeed, while some conferences and meetings were organised in European countries during this phase which reflected on the dimension of dialogue with religious representatives (Silvestri 2005, 392-393), Arab and Muslim countries developed a different view of this component of ICD. In particular, as exemplified in a document prepared by a joint Arabic-Islamic group of cultural experts, the position embraced by these countries was that of separating interreligious dialogue from ICD 'so that religion would not be used as a means for pursuing political interests' (ALECSO/ISESCO 2007).

This generalised opposition in MPCs also provides an explanation for why, in spite of the role played by religious-based tensions in boosting ICD's stock in EUFP during this phase, no major region-wide programmes were specifically devoted to inter-faith dialogue. The controversial interreligious component of ICD was only put forward through some small projects launched by the ALF and its networks, and not without encountering some obstacles. For instance, the first ALF Director had to reassure Egypt and other Arab countries that 'politicised' projects involving religious issues would also be avoided through the introduction of the term 'Culture of Religions' instead of 'inter-faith dialogue' in the Foundation's first three-year programming (ALF 2005b). On similar grounds, the Egyptian authorities hindered an ALF-supported project about religious diversity in Upper Egypt in 2009 (Soliman 2011, 22). These attitudes

displayed by MPCs, when added to the amount of influence governments had in the choice of the members of their national networks, explains why by 2011 only 2% of ALF members claimed that their primary focus of action was on religious issues (see ALF 2011, 13).

With specific regard to the potential of ICD in conflict prevention and trust-building, one of the main objectives envisaged by EMP officials for this tool, very few initiatives were explicitly developed. Although, in principle, all the above-mentioned programmes could contribute to such an objective in a long-term perspective, specific projects were only promoted by the ALF as a reaction to serious crises, such as with the already mentioned 'Build a Bridge' (2006 Israel–Hezbollah War) and the 'Restore Trust, Rebuild Bridges' campaign ('Cast Lead' operation in Gaza, 2008/2009). Some ALF officials considered these actions to be very powerful examples of the potential of ALF (ALF 2010b). However, strong criticism has come from some ICD practitioners, according to whom initiatives of this kind 'emphasized the political aspect of the ALF [and] made the cultural dimension less credible' (Bouquerel and el Husseiny 2009, 64), as well as by some partners. For instance, the Israeli network, led by the Van Leer Institute, threatened on several occasions to withdraw from the ALF because of the 'so-called practising of politics rather than social and cultural cooperation that it was established for' (Soliman 2011, 20).

This stance was adopted following the publication by the Foundation of a statement condemning the 'Israeli aggression of Gaza' in December 2008. As the Head of the Israeli network in that period puts it 'the way [of the ALF] to work with the Palestinians was by sending all these political declarations about Israel violating human rights, and of course I could not sign them a) because I needed the consent both of the Government and of the [member] organisations; and b) I thought this was not sustainable. What if tomorrow a Cypriot-Greek administration decides to issue such a thing about Turkish violations of human rights … so the next thing is a slippery road as these declarations are not sending a message of "we are very worried about the violence in the region and we encourage everyone to think about positive dialogue"... and the reason why they were not articulated like this is that they are sitting in Alexandria and there was a lot of pressure. So in order to legitimate ALF activities in Alexandria and in Morocco, Israel has become a sort of scapegoat' (Interview no. 13, Lapidot, 2015). In a similar perspective, however, the ALF was also criticised and occasionally boycotted, especially by Syria and Lebanon, on the grounds of its alleged efforts to normalise

relations with Israel (Soliman 2011, 21-22).

As far as the financial resources are concerned, as in the previous chapter, it remains difficult to make an accurate calculation of the overall funding allocated for ICD during this period. During the phase under analysis, moreover, two financial instruments, each with different schemes and groups of beneficiaries, have followed each other: MEDA II (2000-2006) and ENPI (2007-2013). Furthermore, while the alleged region-building spirit championed by the EMP was gradually replaced by ENP 'differentiated bilateralism' approach, the percentage of funds allocated by the EU to collective regional cooperation in the Mediterranean was also reduced: MEDA II came to provide up to 18% of its budget (DRN and ADE 2009, i); ENPI only up to 14% (European Commission 2014a, 74).

That being said, the rough sum of funding provided for all ICD programmes (considering that, for *Erasmus Mundus,* data are partial) amounted to approximately EUR 325 million for ten years (EUR 42 million in the period 1996-2001). The sum corresponded to about 3.5% of the overall funding allocated by the EU to support all types of cooperation in the Mediterranean basin in the same period (2001-2010)[42]. This figure can be seen as an improvement, compared to the less than 1% of the previous phase and also in absolute value, since the EU had increased the overall total funding devoted to MPCs under the ENPI. However, the percentage remains very small, especially if compared to the declared relevance and ambitions attached by the Commission and EMP governments to ICD in those years. These data, therefore, show a very marked 'rhetoric-performance' gap concerning the promotion of ICD and supplement Stefania Panebianco's findings concerning the existence of a similar divide in EU promotion of democracy and human rights in the same area (Panebianco 2006). As in the previous phase, however, when the total funding for ICD is compared to the section of the overall EU budget devoted to regional cooperation, the perspective changes significantly. ICD resources in this context amount to about 23%[43] of the total budget (9% in the previous phase), and transform ICD into a stronghold of decreasing EU efforts to sustain forms of regional cooperation in the Mediterranean.

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42 This amount is the approximate calculation of the funds committed under MEDA II and ENPI for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the period 2001-2010 (EUR 9.1 billion) and is derived from the sum of the funds committed under MEDA II (EUR 4.4 billion, for the period 2001–2006) with the first four years covered by ENPI (EUR 4.7 billion, for the period 2007–2010).

43 This amount is the approximate sum of 18% of MEDA II funds during the period of reference (about EUR 800 million) and 10% of ENPI (about EUR 600 million), for a total of EUR 1,400 billion.

Another consideration to be made is that almost 50% of the overall resources allocated for ICD in this period were represented by *Tempus* funds (about EUR 150 million). As seen, the extension of this programme to MPCs was intentioned to increase mutual understanding through cooperation in higher education, but primarily responded to a European interest in improving the scope of its higher education system abroad. By contrast, the most dedicated ICD programme for the Mediterranean – the ALF – received only 'peanuts', especially when the sheer number of activities needed to cover a huge population of 750 million is taken into consideration (Interview no. 6, Claret, 2013). Furthermore, only 14 of the total EUR 25 million committed to ALF during this period under analysis were committed and disbursed by the Commission. The remaining voluntary pledges were to be covered by EMP/UfM partners. No transparent data are available on this matter. Some interviewees have acknowledged that the general trend among the states involved in Euro-Mediterranean initiatives, both in the north and the south of this area, has been that of not honouring commitments except for rare exceptions (Interview no. 5, Solera, 2013; see also Suliman 2011, 20). Italy, Sweden, Spain, Germany, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel would represent these exceptions (Interview no. 13, Lapidot, 2015). The contradiction created by this situation appears even bigger if one considers that Prodi's *Groupe des Sages* set the economic independence of the future Foundation as a *sine qua non* condition for its establishment (RHLAG 2003, 36).

With regard to coordination among the listed ICD programmes, no new efforts to mutually reinforce the effectiveness of all the resources and opportunities offered by each single programme were particularly visible in this period (see Pace 2005, 67; Bouquerel and el Husseiny 2009, 29). If, as explained by internal programme managers, the same unit within the Commission was tasked to manage both the ALF and the other Euromed programmes (Interview no. 9, Lucas, 2013), the proliferation of ICD initiatives in this phase showed some puzzling overlapping in the EU's effort to manage these programmes without, moreover, explicitly recognising existing cross-references among initiatives in the same fields. Some examples emerged, as seen, in the fields of media (ALF, *Euromed Audiovisual* and *Regional Information and Communication*) and in the initiatives involving young people (*Euromed Youth* and the ALF). Better-coordinated action among all the referred EU programmes could have reinforced the visibility, the co-ownership and the effectiveness of the resolute commitment of the Commission in these fields. Besides limiting the (potentially high) effectiveness of the proliferation of ICD initiatives, the persistent lack of a strong coordination mechanism

appeared as another contradiction and gap between the formulation and implementation of ICD, since officials had repeatedly stressed the need to avoid duplications of efforts in the same fields (EMP 2003c, item 2).

Finally, as concerns the co-ownership of ICD – that is the sharing of responsibilities, achievements, resources, as well as a sense of belonging and equality among participants (DRN and ADE 2009, 31) – some notable steps were made, also in accordance with the increasing relevance attributed to this principle for the advancement of both the EMP and the UfM processes (Prodi 2002b; EMP 2005b; UfM 2008a). Yet the overall result remained partial. In particular, despite some steps in making calls for proposals and information more accessible to Mediterranean participants, the responsibility and the funding for the implementation of Euromed programmes remained fully in control of the sole Commission. This latter finding, however, still fails to surprise. As has already been mentioned in the context of the extent of co-ownership during the previous phase, the Commission is the ultimate institution responsible for the management of the EU budget, and for implementing and coordinating external relations tools, including the financial instruments under which the Euromed programmes have been funded since their launch (MEDA and ENPI). As a consequence, despite increasing EU rhetoric during this phase about the co-ownership of ICD, the financial burden and thus the definition of the overall scope of implementation of this tool in this area was not at all intended to be shared through these three programmes. The Commission, nonetheless, made some notable attempts to enhance other dimensions of co-ownership among participants during this phase. For instance, the decentralisation process which began in 2005 for the management of *Euromed Youth* constituted a significant attempt to share the responsibility of ICD implementation, in addition to the sense of belonging, already considerable, and of equal access among participants which had been generated by this programme from its first edition (ECOTEC 2001, 41). However, these initiatives continued to be hampered by visa problems, particularly for disadvantaged young people across MPCs (European Commission 2009, 20-21).

The ALF, which was explicitly conceived as a pillar of the unchanging EU commitment to the co-ownership of the Barcelona Process (EMP 2002, item 20) took a number of both substantive and symbolic steps to put this principle into practice. Choices such as co-financing the project (Commission + EMP countries), setting the headquarters of the ALF in a southern country (Egypt) and appointing a President from

an MPC and a Director from a European country, were all evidence of this effort. Other moves to increase co-ownership were represented by the region-wide scope pursued by its campaigns and flagship initiatives, the measures adopted to grant a broad accessibility of information and calls for proposals (Bouquerel and el Husseiny 2009, 64) and, clearly, the involvement of thousands of CSOs from the whole area, through the coordination and management of national networks, considered by some a very successful aspect of the Foundation action. According to the former Israeli representative at the ALF, otherwise extremely critical of the whole ALF functioning and management, the bi-annual meetings of the heads of national networks did not mean to be a project, but turned into the best project of all (Interview no. 13, Lapidot, 2015).

A measure of the effectiveness of these steps towards co-ownership, or a perception of co-ownership, may be gleaned from some of the criticism received by the ALF which was also accused of being 'an appeasement policy towards Arab and Muslim claims, betraying the so-called "European values"' (Schoefthaler 2007, 2). This is significant as, generally speaking, all ICD initiatives had been rather criticised by MPCs as too Eurocentric. Still, even this initial achievement of the ALF in promoting co-ownership remained limited. In fact, although co-financing and even the participation of national officials in the powerful Board of Governors of the Foundation were in principle major steps towards sharing ICD responsibilities among EMP/UfM partners, the above-outlined lack of respect of many countries for their financial pledges left the Commission as the only actual institution responsible for supporting the functioning of this ambitious programme. Moreover, the special commitment to the ALF of some countries, such as Spain, Italy, France, Sweden or Egypt, which provided significant infrastructure, resources and high-level staff to the Foundation, may also have led the ALF to be more owned by some of its members and less by others. For instance, in 2011 France reached a total of 410 national members and Italy 402 (ALF 2011f, 13). This led to just two EU countries comprising almost 21% of the ALF's overall membership and potential beneficiaries.

Conclusions: the roles of ICD during the 'phase of consolidation'

The proliferation of references in EU and EMP policy documents, initiatives and fields of action analysed in this chapter gave much more visibility to ICD compared to the previous phase and attracted, accordingly, the criticism of analysts. As discussed,

some scholars argue that just as in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks the EU raised culture-based tensions to the point of transforming them into existential security threats, so ICD was urged as a priority instrument to tackle such threats, favouring, among other approaches, tighter governmental control over its promotion (Malmvig 2007; Gündüz 2007; Del Sarto 2007). This argument posits that such interferences distorted the genuine ideal of social communication upon which ICD was originally conceived, orienting the tool towards the promotion of security rather than to enhancing cultural exchanges and mutual understanding (Malmvig 2007, 80). This chapter, however, has demonstrated that this phase did not mark either a large transformation or a distortion, because the scattered list of objectives making up the precursors of ICD in the early 1990s and the vague reference to it in the Barcelona Declaration did not constitute in fact any 'original conception'. Rather, what went on during the 2000s was the consolidation of a process that started about a decade before.

The reasons that allowed a movement from emergence to consolidation of this policy instrument lay primarily in the outlook of EU leadership, in particular in the deep-rooted conviction of the then President of the Commission Prodi, later shared by some EU member states (Spain, Sweden, Greece, Italy and France), that ICD could be used to tackle some of the challenges to regional stability characterising that period. These challenges, which include social tensions on both sides, fed by stereotypes, cultural misunderstandings, growing extremism and xenophobic violence in fact pre-existed the period under study. Events such as the attacks of 2001 or the failure of the MEPP, however, magnified them. In this context, the supporters of ICD within the EU took the opportunity to move ICD from a potentially helpful resource to a strategic region-wide instrument to be employed in several sectors pertaining to the political, social and cultural instability of the region. Due to this emphasis, the supporters of ICD were eventually able to draw the interest of all MPCs towards this tool. From this perspective, the strong governmental control over some dimensions of ICD, which particularly materialised as a limitation to the expected role of CSOs in advancing the ALF, was thus implicit in the consolidation of ICD as a foreign policy tool. Nonetheless, the involvement of EMP governments denotes an evident contradiction to the claims of the EU and its MPCs, which continued to present ICD during this entire phase as a process defined by, open to and based on interactions among the civil society of both shores of the Mediterranean.

In this evolving framework, the gap between the rhetorical formulation with

which Prodi and some EU countries heralded a new era for ICD following 9/11, and both civil society engagement and the actual allocation of resources to regional programmes was therefore significant. This 'rhetoric-performance' gap in ICD promotion also existed in the previous phase, as set out in Chapter 3. In that instance, however, the gap was not so evident because, in fact, aside from the original move of formally introducing ICD in the 1995 Barcelona Declaration, there was very little EU rhetoric on this instrument during that period, and the EU had not created any particular expectations among either European or Mediterranean people.

The consolidation of ICD also meant an increase, both quantitatively and qualitatively, of the role played by this tool in the broad framework of EU policies. In particular, the motivations that created the opportunity to boost ICD following the 9/11 events and the unprecedented interest showed by EMP governments in the possibilities of this tool for addressing tense scenarios suggest that EU institutions managed to employ ICD in the role they had expected when they developed the precursors of this tool in early 1990s. This role was that of a (soft) security-building instrument.

In fact, the term 'security' was rarely paired explicitly to ICD in the official EU documents, and new ICD initiatives were mostly presented under a positive or constructive lens. However, as shown in this chapter, the tool was substantially expected by the EU to encourage a response at the grassroots, which allowed the causes and consequences of some of the most worrying threats affecting the human, social and cultural security of European and MPCs' citizens to be partly addressed. The expected contribution was, through the organisation of campaigns, projects and region-wide initiatives, to reduce the basis of misunderstanding on which the alarming trends of xenophobia, fanaticism, and terrorism were developing throughout the Euro-Mediterranean space, and to contribute to a change, especially through the media, in negative perceptions developing among the countries of the area. This (soft) security-building role for ICD was envisaged in the precursors of this tool in the early 1990s and was clear in Prodi's mind before 9/11, but was only put in practice in the early 2000s, also due to the increased interest of some EMP governments.

This role of ICD was mostly to have been played out in the long-term, as shown by the decision to shape the Valencia Agenda for ICD on education, youth and media. Complementary to this more 'strategic' approach, ICD appeared also to be wielded 'tactically', at least in EU rhetoric, as a 'rapid reaction' tool. This happened when ICD was presented as a consistent complement to delivering an immediate response to the

major peaks of crisis for Euro-Mediterranean relations: from the need to stem the terrorist threat in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 attacks, to the outbreak of conflicts among MPCs. In these cases, EU and MPCs often presented ICD as a sort of 'magic wand' although, as seen, rarely did rapid implementation follow up to rapid declarations. This possible application of ICD resulted, however, in a general interest in ICD activities among Europeans, as reported in the aforementioned opinion poll on this matter (Eurobarometer 2007). At the Mediterranean level, by contrast, when ICD was employed in this rapid reaction function, such as with ALF initiatives following the Israeli-Gaza crisis in 2008, the promoters of this tool were harshly criticised by the parties involved, and accused of conducting ICD for political ends.

Chapter 5

The Professionalisation of Intercultural Dialogue (2010-2014)

Introduction

This chapter concludes the analysis of why and how the EU has formulated and implemented ICD in the framework of its Mediterranean policies during the time frame of 1990-2014. These pages, in particular, address what is a distinct but still open phase in the promotion of ICD, which broadly coincided with the beginning of the Arab uprisings in Tunisia in December 2010. The cut-off point has been identified as the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the ALF, which were held in Naples on 27-30 October 2014. The event, attended by EU officials (including former Commission President Prodi), politicians, NGOs, and experts from the whole area, was also used to present the 3-year programme of the ALF for the period 2015-2017. Since, as this chapter will show, during this period the EU came to equate the promotion of ICD primarily with its support to the activities of the ALF, the launch of this new and still open programme represents an opportunity to take stock both of this specific phase and of 24 years of EU efforts to promote ICD in the Mediterranean.

This chapter argues that following the consolidation of ICD among EU priorities and the connected proliferation of programmes and initiatives in the 2000s, the short time frame under discussion marked a period of professionalisation for ICD. From 2011, the EU transferred the full responsibility for the conceptualisation and advancement of ICD to the experts leading the ALF and increased the investment in the Foundation as the only EU programme accountable for the implementation of ICD in Euro-Mediterranean relations. The chapter claims that the shift from consolidation to professionalisation was, in fact, partly already underway in the late 2000s, as European policy-makers were already considering the ALF as the only meaningful element of an exhausted European interest in promoting ICD among the current priorities of EUFP in the Mediterranean neighbourhood. In this context, the chapter argues that the opportunities provided to the EU by the outbreak of the Arab uprisings – particularly in terms of engaging MPCs' civil societies and advancing human rights and democracy therein – gave a meaningful boost to this process. In the newly emerging Mediterranean milieu, the EU preferred to develop tools other than ICD to pursue its new policy priorities in this region, but continued investing in the ALF, especially because it

recognised capability of the latter for direct engagement with CSOs in the area. In the wake of the uprisings, moreover, the ALF leaders managed to advance their conviction of the need to link ICD to the promotion of human rights, citizenship and democracy at the level of civil society. The ALF could thus demonstrate to EU policy-makers that it was a key resource to address, through its ICD activities, the type of engagements and demands that were emerging from Mediterranean civil societies.

The argument of this chapter is primarily substantiated through an analysis of the priorities of EU policy-makers on the Mediterranean, including the Commission and countries holding the six-monthly EU Presidency, and of ALF leaders and programme managers in the period of the outbreak of the Arab uprisings. This analysis is drawn from EU policy documents and policy evaluation reports, speeches and research interviews with concerned EU officials and ALF leaders. Data are complemented by an analysis of the action plans, reports and documents produced by the ALF.

Similarly to the previous two, this chapter is split into two parts. The first part investigates how and why the EU transferred the primary responsibility for ICD to the ALF during the period 2010-2014. The first two sections analyse the changed preferences of EU policy-makers vis-à-vis both ICD and, specifically, the ALF before and immediately after the outbreak of the Arab uprisings. The third section investigates the strategy formulated by the ALF for this period, and how the latter managed to take advantage of the uprisings to pursue its own conception of ICD. The second part of the chapter addresses the implementation of ICD and analyses the objectives, resources, and enforcement of the ALF as well as of the pre-existing ICD programmes that the EU temporarily maintained for few years. By contrasting the contradictions and consistency between the formulation and implementation of ICD, with particular regard to the work carried out by the ALF, the conclusions seek to evaluate the overall role played by ICD in EU policies versus its southern neighbours during this phase of professionalisation.

1. From EU policy-makers to the ALF: the professionalisation of ICD

Following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, the concept of ICD was not explicitly mentioned in the two joint communications by the High Representative and the Commission that framed the revision of the ENP priorities in 2011, and was only occasionally referred to in ensuing EU policy documents regarding the Mediterranean. In fact, the rehashed strategy of the EU vis-à-vis the southern neighbourhood considered some of the main insights that had made up the consolidation of ICD during the

previous decade. For instance, allusions were made to the relevance of 'cultural diversity' in the area and to the commitment by the EU to further develop cultural initiatives with the southern Mediterranean region. In relation to mobility issues, people-to-people contacts were also mentioned as important tools to promote mutual understanding and business with a view to benefitting 'the cultural and economic development of the entire Mediterranean region and the integration of migrants' (European Commission and HRFASP 2011a, 6). Moreover, the two joint communications referred to the relevance of some of the programmes that the EU had long considered useful for promoting ICD in this area, such as *Erasmus Mundus, Tempus* and *Euromed Youth*. In this context, the field of education, one of the three pillars (together with youth and the media) on which ICD was re-launched at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Valencia in 2002, was highlighted in communications as 'a key focus to promote democracy as well as to ensure a qualified workforce to help modernise the Southern Mediterranean economies' (European Commission and HRFASP 2011a, 10).

The omission of explicit references to ICD from the European foreign policy discourse of the early 2010s did not, therefore, mean a total disengagement of the EU from the long-standing commitment to promote this policy tool overnight. Some concepts, programmes and fields of action that had contributed to putting together and consolidating the broad and fuzzy picture of ICD during the last decade were, as seen, confirmed in the strategy launched by the EU for the Mediterranean in the wake of the uprisings. However, these elements started to be referred outside the conceptual frame of this tool. Programmes on education, culture, and youth exchanges promoted by the EU following the uprisings were not intended primarily, as was the case in the recent past, as the bases of an effort to building mutual understanding and bringing Euro-Mediterranean people closer. The Commission and the High Representative preferred to stress the prior contribution of these cooperation programmes and fields of action toward the creation of skills and opportunities to advance socio-economic development and political reform in the Mediterranean south, that is, to achieve the core objectives of the revised EU policy framework for the area.

Moreover, although it was also not mentioned in the joint communications of 2011, the ALF – which the EU had conceived from the outset as the future 'guardian of the dialogue' (RHLAG 2003, 16) – emerged as a very active programme during this period. In 2010, the Commission had already committed funding for the next 3-year

programme of action of the ALF, and had asserted its wholehearted support for the Foundation, praising the capacity of the latter to work in difficult circumstances (Füle 2010b). The EU commitment toward sustaining the ALF following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, however, was not limited to honouring previously-made financial commitments. In February 2011, several EU countries directly asked High Representative Ashton for a major commitment to the promotion of dialogue via the ALF, with a view to improving regional cooperation in the emerging Mediterranean scenario (Government of France et al. 2011). Furthermore, as will be elaborated below, besides confirming their commitment for the new programme of action of the Foundation, the Commission and single EU member states took additional steps to reinforce the initiative of the ALF and to increase the relevance and visibility of this institution to achieve EU policy objectives during the same period.

The Foundation, therefore, became the only EU forum in which politicians, officials and civil society representatives were actually to debate the role and objectives of ICD in the new socio-political context, and it eventually became a synonym of ICD promotion in the minds of EU policy-makers. Significantly, when the expression 'ICD' occasionally resurfaced in EU policy documents and reports adopted between 2011 and 2014, it was directly to make reference to the activities of the ALF (European Commission and HRFASP 2013, 9; European Commission 2013c, 3). Member states, too, made this equation. For instance, some cautious efforts to explicitly place ICD back in the frame eventually came from Italy a few years after the outbreak of the Arab uprisings. As an Italian Under-Secretary of State for Culture claimed, Italy expressed a commitment to transforming the Italian Presidency into 'a unique opportunity to put cultural dialogue in the Mediterranean at the heart of the agenda of EU external relations' (ENPI Info Centre 2014a). However, all these intentions materialised only in Italy hosting the event for the tenth anniversary of the ALF, as part of the Universal Forum of Cultures in Naples in October 2014.

It can be said, therefore, that in the period immediately following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings a significant shift was visible in the EU's overall approach to the promotion of ICD compared to the recent past. During the 2000s, the consolidation of ICD was marked by a proliferation of references in EUFP documents and by a strong commitment to the promotion of this tool by EU institutions and member states. This commitment was put into practice through the launch of several programmes and initiatives, which included the creation of the ALF as one of its most meaningful

outcomes. In the period 2010-2014, European policy-makers continued to promote ICD at the Euro-Mediterranean level. However, they did it indirectly and primarily through an increased and almost exclusive support to the activities proposed and advanced by the ALF. ICD thus underwent a process of 'professionalisation' during this period, as the EU moved from a consideration of ICD as a priority tool of its external action on the Mediterranean, to be implemented in part through the ALF, to the indirect promotion of ICD as the outcome of its support to ALF experts' initiatives in this area.

As the next sub-sections will elaborate, this shift was strongly favoured by the challenges and opportunities which emerged for the EU in the wake of the Arab uprisings, which substantially affected both EU policy-makers' approach to ICD and to the ALF, and the latter's ability to advance a plan of action suitable for the emerging context. However, this shift was in part already underway when the uprisings took place. It was rooted in the different set of preferences of the EU officials in charge of external action during this period vis-à-vis MPCs, and in the capacity of the ALF leadership to anticipate the demands of Arab societies in their conception of ICD.

1.1. ICD and the ALF in the preferences of EU policy-makers before the Arab uprisings

Already before the uprisings broke out, policy-makers in charge of EU external action did not consider the promotion of mutual understanding among the policy objectives that the EU should be prioritising in its southern neighbourhood. On the contrary, few months after the celebrations of 2008 as European and Euro-Mediterranean Year of ICD, European discussion about the relevance of ICD in this area seemed to be suddenly exhausted. The EU commitment to implementing this tool in the southern neighbourhood was however ongoing, particularly due to continuing support to the ALF. Overall, the latter was considered a valuable EU programme in enhancing a basis of cooperation and dialogue, especially at the civil society level, within the Euro-Mediterranean space.

From the outset, the main European institution concerned with the advancement of ICD was the Commission and (especially during Prodi's term) its President, who is tasked with the determination of its agenda. This involvement is consistent with central role of the Commission in formulating and coordinating EU's external relations with third countries and (later) the ENP. During the uprisings, the post of President of the Commission was held by José Manuel Durão Barroso (in charge between 2004 and

2014). Before being appointed at the Commission, Barroso had been Prime Minister of Portugal and leader of the Portuguese centre-right party. Commentators of the time did not consider him a visionary politician, but a strong and resolute leader who, in his own country, had been able to implement tough economic reforms. This had made him a good candidate 'to rekindle the Lisbon agenda and bring the difficult debate on the financial perspective to a good close' (Euractive 2004a). In particular, Barroso was said to have impressed the European Commission with his 'dogged commitment to comply with the EU's growth and stability pact when he was Portugal's Prime Minister' (Euractive 2004b). Barroso's priorities for the EU were indeed built from his appointment on economic and development considerations, including with reference to the European Neighbourhood. In his first speech as President-elect of the Commission in 2004, Barroso had already made clear that the EU should have placed growth at the heart of its activities and that he believed that Europe had a much greater chance of lasting peace in the area with an enhanced policy of stability in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean countries, and giving an essential role for development 'to invest in greater cooperation with the parts of the world that need European support and assistance' (EP 2004).

Barroso had acknowledged of the process started by Prodi to promote ICD in the Mediterranean. Moreover, during his first mandate, some of the work previously carried out by the EU on ICD came to fruition, including the celebrations of the European (and Euro-Mediterranean) Year of ICD in 2008, for which the EU allocated EUR 10 million (ECOTEC 2009). The ALF itself was officially launched in 2005, when Prodi was no longer in office, and was considered by Barroso (2008) an important milestone of the overall EMP advancement. Barroso's approach to ICD did not seem to reflect any personal opinion on the matter, and was limited to a repetition of some of the basic rhetorical arguments fundamental to ICD consolidation during the early 2000s. In a 2008 interview, for instance, he acknowledged the key importance of ICD for external relations, recognising that 'from the ignorance, intolerance and the lack of respect that generate tension and clashes between cultures, a deep sense of insecurity has emerged in a significant sector of society' (IeMed 2008, 18). In this context, on one hand the priorities of his Commission were gradually moving the reflection of the EU on the neighbourhood away from the need of attenuating social tensions throughout the Euro-Mediterranean space by creating mutual understanding among the people of this area. On the other, Barroso initially showed to be aware of the work made by his predecessors, and of the potential contribution to regional stability that the

implementation of ICD, especially through the ALF, could have brought to EU external action.

At the beginning of his second term (2009-2014), however, Barroso increasingly oriented the action of his new Commission along socio-economic priorities, transversally affecting all policy competences of this institution, including cultural issues. This orientation was certainly dictated by the worsening economic and financial crisis in Europe, which urged a stronger focus on growth and on creating jobs. However, this was also the outcome of Barroso's outlook on cultural matters, traces of which were already visible at the end of the previous mandate. Indeed, in its 2007 Communication on a European Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World, the Commission had already proposed cultural cooperation as contributing factor to improving economic and social development in Europe and in partner countries as well as promoting EU visibility abroad (European Commission 2007b). This effort was thus matched with a growing commitment, parallel to new competences on cultural cooperation acquired by the EU with the Lisbon Treaty, to make use of culture in EU external relations (Dony 2009; Smith M. 2011; Gordon 2010). Some analysts, in particular, have interpreted this commitment of the Commission as converging with an effort to give Europe greater prominence in the world (Isar 2015, 505), and with an attempt to develop soft power through an enhanced European cultural diplomacy strategy (Topić and Sciortino 2012). In the part of the Agenda devoted to culture in EU external relations, however, ICD did not feature. In fact, this concept also started to disappear from domestic priorities. In the 'Europe 2020 Agenda', the core of Commission planning for its second term, Barroso introduced the document claiming that the goal for Europe was to work decisively beyond the crisis and showing 'how Europe has the capability to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, to find the path to create new jobs and to offer a sense of direction to our societies' (European Commission 2010c, 2). Significantly, in this crucial policy document, ICD or the need for mutual understanding are not even mentioned, and the issue of cultural diversity is only referred to once, among the assets that 'will allow Europe to succeed in exiting the crisis' (*idem*, 9).

Barroso's increasing focus on growth and economic development priorities was in fact poles apart from the very basic idea of ICD promoted by the previous President of the Commission, whose efforts to advance mutual understanding and the respect for cultural diversity were presented as part of a much-needed political response to the

challenges of economic globalisation (RHLAG 2003, 12). To be sure, even Prodi in 1999 had seen securing economic growth, creating jobs and achieving sustainable development as one of the three main challenges for European external action (European Commission 1999b). Still, as has been shown, the growing relevance of socio-economic concerns did not prevent him from also calling for a major reflection on the alarming social consequences of the political, socio-economic and cultural divides in the area. It is thus unsurprising that in his 2014 interview with the author, Prodi has claimed he would re-propose a similar approach if he were still in charge of the Commission (Interview no. 14, 2015). By contrast, although his Commission continued to grant the resources for the ALF and the other ICD programmes launched in the Mediterranean, Barroso did not, in fact, share the rationale that was at the basis of the consolidation of this policy tool within EUFP in early 2000s. After all, the fact that while Prodi was pushing for the development of ICD in the Mediterranean, Barroso, in his capacity of Prime Minister of Portugal, was hosting the Azores summit with Bush, Aznar and Blair to plan the 2003 military attack on Iraq provides an indication of their different personal understandings of how socio-political stability in the Mediterranean and Middle East could be pursued. Prodi, indeed, recognised that dialogue and culture were key for Europe to reduce the causes of social and political conflict in the Mediterranean (Prodi 2002b). Barroso's decision to include Portugal among the few European countries supporting the controversial US-led military operation 'Iraqi Freedom', by contrast, suggested that he considered the use of armed force as at least as valid an alternative to dialogue in tackling the presumed sources of instability in the area.

With such a limited interest in ICD on the part of its President, the main responsibility for the promotion of this tool in the Mediterranean during this period lay in Štefan Füle, Commissioner for enlargement and the ENP between 2009 and 2014. As the UfM was stalled, indeed, the ENP had remained the only active European policy framework to manage the relations between the EU and MPCs, including the various tools developed under the Barcelona Process.

Füle came to this European post as an experienced diplomat from the Czech Republic, specialising in European affairs, international security and with a marked *atlanticist* perspective on international relations. In particular Füle had been deputy Defence Minister, and Permanent Representative at the North Atlantic Council of the Czech Republic from 2005 to 2009. Given these credentials, at the beginning of his

mandate (2009-2014), some commentators expected him to be more attentive to the eastern dimension of the ENP (EurActive 2009), a doubt that he wanted to immediately put to rest before the European Parliament, claiming that 'all of our neighbours are important for the EU and all are important for me' (Füle 2009). In any case, whether this position was merely a rhetorical pledge or an actual commitment, the sudden outbreak of the Arab uprisings forced Füle to engage primarily with the southern dimension of the EU's neighbourhood.

Füle's priority for this area was to enhance the effectiveness and visibility of the ENP, and to step up the efforts to bring stability and prosperity to all neighbours, drawing on the rich diversity of instruments available to support the development of more active partnerships with these countries (EP 2009). Despite his intention to make use of all existing tools, before the uprisings took place he rarely featured ICD in his speeches and policy documents about the Mediterranean. This certainly contrasted with the approach of his predecessor, the then Commissioner for external relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner (2005-2009), who had expended a significant deal of rhetoric to ensure that ICD remained at the top of the agenda of the European Commission for the Mediterranean following Prodi's term in office (see, for instance, Ferrero-Waldner 2006a; and 2007).

However, Füle had demonstrated some interest in the vision and activities put forward by the ALF, which, at least according to his rhetoric, promised to bring contributions to the other policy areas under his responsibility. In a speech of 2010, for instance, he claimed that the message of the Anna Lindh Forum in Barcelona, in which he participated near the beginning of his mandate, was highly inspiring. In particular, it showed him 'that intercultural dialogue was not just co-operation on culture: it also had its full place among the instruments of conflict prevention and resolution and it can also play an important part in our joint efforts to fight against poverty and to advance democratisation' (Füle 2010b). More pragmatically, however, the expertise built by the ALF over the years represented a significant entry point for a politician who, despite his initial pledges and due to his personal political background, may have not been particularly comfortable with the tools and peculiarities of the Mediterranean dimension of the policy area under his responsibility. Indeed, as will be elaborated in the next section, Füle on one hand increased the resources to support the ALF efforts in the southern neighbourhood during the Arab uprisings and, on the other, tended to draw from some of the positive achievements of the Foundation to advance the interests of

the Commission in other related sectors.

With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, most decisions concerning the development of EU Mediterranean policy began to be shared between the new post of High Representative and the Commissioner for enlargement and the ENP (see also Edwards 2013, 283). In this context, High Representative Ashton showed a similar position vis-à-vis the ALF and ICD to Füle's. In fact, the post of High Representative was primarily tasked with the sector of the CFSP and thus, conceivably, during the setting in of this new post, ICD did not emerge among Ashton's priorities. However, in her capacity of EUFP top official, she agreed to contribute to the introduction of the first Euro-Mediterranean intercultural trends report, published in 2010 as a flagship initiative of the ALF, and to provide her perspective on the matter. On one hand, the High Representative stressed that the experience developed by the ALF since 2005 had given the Foundation its presence as the hub of ICD promotion while its national networks, under a collective platform, had been the spokes for dissemination and implementation of these projects. On the other, Ashton advanced her belief that the recommendations included in the ALF report would help European policy-makers, opinion-leaders and civil society to address some of the challenges ahead, and in also help define new policies and instruments with respect to education, interaction, mobility, the use of new technologies, and the EU's further commitment towards young people and women (Ashton 2010).

As far as EU member states' preferences are concerned, their general approach to cultural issues and to neighbourhood relations during this period was consistent with the general priorities identified by the Commission on inclusive and sustainable growth and socio-economic development. Some specific inputs to activate the discussion on ICD in the Mediterranean might have been expected by those countries that had been central to securing the advancement of this tool within the Barcelona Process, including the formal establishment of the ALF and the adoption of the 'Guiding Principles' for ICD. Among these countries, Sweden and Spain held the EU six-month Presidency respectively in 2009 and 2010. However, in stark contrast with the strong dedication and sense of priority for ICD in the Mediterranean showed in 2002 in Valencia, these countries confirmed that the European reflection on ICD had been in large part exhausted and replaced by other, more stringent, priorities for the neighbourhood. For instance, Spain's stated goals for the Mediterranean mentioned efforts to re-launch the UfM, which has its headquarters in Barcelona and was in a situation of political

deadlock since its establishment in 2008, and to move forward on the Advanced Statute of Association with Morocco (Zapatero 2010). Sweden, while in fact ensuring strong support, logistics and resources to the activities of the ALF, whose offices are hosted at Swedish Institute in Alexandria, Egypt, moved its policy focus for the neighbourhood on the development of the Eastern Partnership, a recently established cooperation initiative with the eastern partners of the ENP (Government of Sweden 2009). As mentioned in Chapter 4, Sweden's assertiveness in the Mediterranean in the early 2000s was explained as stemming from its conception of its national role as being supportive of the EU's common foreign policy toward all neighbouring areas, without distinctions. In this perspective, as the recent establishment of the Eastern Partnership suggests, the EU at that moment needed this type of support primarily in enhancing the eastern dimension of the ENP.

1.2 The consequences of the Arab uprisings on the EU approach to ICD and to the ALF

The exhaustion of EU policy-makers' discussion on ICD outlined above was in fact embedded in a general downscaling of European interest for the Mediterranean. Indeed, as highlighted in Chapter 2, following the failure of the EMP and the launch and immediate deadlock of the UfM in late 2008, the focus on this area started to fade away from EUFP priorities. From this perspective, one of the immediate consequences of the outbreak of the Arab uprisings was to place a resetting of relations with MPCs to the top of the EU's agenda.

In particular, both the early declarations of EU officials (for instance: Füle 2011b; EP 2011a; Barroso 2011; Ashton 2011a) and the decision, in March 2011, to offer a new partnership for democracy and shared prosperity to the countries of the Mediterranean showed that the EU initially gave a rather benign reading to the wave of protests in the Arab world. European policy-makers indeed finalised their revision of the ENP around the immediate developments in those countries, such as Tunisia and Egypt, where the Arab uprisings had apparently brought major opportunities from a European perspective. These opportunities, in particular, included a demonstration of the existence of vibrant civil societies in MPCs, and a loud call for more democracy and human rights from the grassroots, which were among the core objectives that the EU had often claimed to pursue in that area since the launch of the Barcelona Process. As discussed, however, the Arab uprisings demonstrated that the EU had not made a tangible commitment to those goals. On the contrary, as some European officials

admitted in the wake of the protests in Tunisia and Egypt, the EU had rather preferred to pursue its stability interests in the area at the expense of European values (Füle 2011a). Therefore, the newly emerged Mediterranean milieu provided, among other consequences, an unexpected window of opportunity for the EU to address some of the contradictions and deficits characterising its past policies therein. Indeed, on the admission of the European Commission itself, the revised ENP was based 'on a clear assumption that the new leaderships [in the Arab countries] will respect democratic values, human rights, women's rights, freedom of speech and religious tolerance' (Füle 2012b).

From this perspective, the uprisings also provided EU policy-makers with an input to reconsider the promotion of several instruments and areas of cooperation which were at the core of EU past relations with Mediterranean countries and people but had not been pursued according to their expectation or had been neglected. As anticipated, the priority tools proposed by the EU for the newly-emerged policy milieu did not contain explicit reference to ICD. However, the EU increased the visibility and relevance of the ALF for its overall priorities. One explanation for this outcome is that while the new Mediterranean milieu did not provide EU policy-makers with any specific reason to reactivate their discussion on ICD contribution to EUFP, it gave them a very practical reason to strengthen the ALF as a EU programme.

On one hand, as seen during the 1990s and the 2000s, the EU had considered the advancement of ICD primarily to contribute, by directly working on cultural, religious and values divergences among the people of the Euro-Mediterranean area, to softening tensions connected to ineffective security policies developed in the areas of counter-terrorism, organised crime and illegal migrations. In this context, the EU's benign understanding of the early uprisings and, in particular, of the fact that Arab protesters were initially speaking the same human rights language in unison (Ashton 2011d), made the gap appear much reduced and less urgent than just a few years before. Indeed, as also the then Director of the ALF prudently hypothesised, in the wake of the uprisings there were palpable hopes that the protests in Tunisia and in Egypt could have marked 'the end of the Huntingtonian paradigm' (interview no. 6, Claret, 2013). Also the fact that the Commission and the High Representative decided to avoid referring the possible risks of fundamentalism and terrorism within the revision of the ENP showed that, for the then EU leadership, the long-standing socio-political concerns connected to those threats had been temporarily moved to the background in the emerging

Mediterranean context.

On the other hand, the EU had also employed ICD over the years with a view to indirectly advancing issues that were taboo or challenging for some MPCs' governments, such as respect for religious diversity, gender issues and the empowerment of civil society. However, the events in the southern neighbourhood suddenly made this function of ICD appear outdated, namely because the opportunities emerged from the uprisings provided new and more direct avenues for the EU to pursue those same objectives. As illustrated in Chapter 2, besides confirming the EU's strong commitment for socio-economic development, the joint communication revising the ENP of March 2011 revolved around the offer of unprecedented support for democratic transformation and institution-building with a particular focus on human rights (within the concept of 'deep democracy'), as well as a direct effort to establish a partnership with people and societies (European Commission and HRFASP 2011a). Through this lens, European officials could eventually make explicit that the best response to extremism and the best method to resist the manipulation of religion into a source of division – one of the long-standing targets of ICD in Euro-Mediterranean relations – was a 'united international front based on the universal standards of freedom of religion and belief' (Ashton 2011b). To be sure, this strong focus on universal human rights and human dignity did not fully replace, or subsume, ICD in this context. For instance, in a specific Declaration on 'Intolerance, Discrimination and Violence on the Basis of Religion and Belief' of 21 February 2011, European foreign ministers promised 'their support to initiatives in the field of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue in the spirit of openness, engagement and mutual understanding' (Council 2011c). The recourse to ICD, however, was no longer considered the best answer that the EU could give to address these types of concerns within its external relations.

As far as the interest in the engagement of the people and societies of the Mediterranean is concerned, the EU decided to invest large amounts of resources into new programmes that explicitly supported more active civil society participation in the democratic transitions which were underway in some MPCs. It did this primarily through the launch of a new *Civil Society Facility* (EUR 33 million in two years), which was followed by the creation of the *European Endowment for Democracy* in 2013 (with an initial budget of EUR 6 million). From this perspective, the ALF also represented an important resource towards this EU objective in the new socio-political milieu. Indeed, the Foundation had continued enlarging its network of CSOs from the whole Euro-

Mediterranean area to more than 4,000 and consolidating their engagement in several cooperation activities (ALF 2015f). Although, as shown in the previous chapter, not all these were primarily interested in actively supporting the ALF's mission, the massive engagement of these organisations undoubtedly represented a key resource in light of the new emphasis on a 'partnership with societies' put forward by EU institutions following the uprisings.

Indeed, the main motivation for the EU to continue supporting the ALF during the Arab uprisings (in spite of a general neglect of ICD in the priorities of its revised policy framework) was not to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation between the newly emerged Mediterranean and Europe. The EU was primarily interested in how the ALF had been able to develop and consolidate its capacity over time and, in particular, in the ability of the Foundation to actively engage and network hundreds of CSOs and individuals from the whole Euro-Mediterranean space.

The primary appreciation by the EU for this specific contribution of the ALF was made evident on different occasions following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings. Without any mention of ICD or mutual understanding, for instance, the Council (2011b, item 7) formally praised the ALF for its useful work towards the substantial stepping-up of the new partnership of the EU with 'societies', especially in Syria, Egypt and Libya. The ALF, indeed, succeeded both in establishing from scratch the embryo of a future national civil society network in Libya (ENPI Info Centre 2011d) and, although EU official cooperation with Syria had been suspended since 2011, in inviting and involving Syrian civil society representatives in its activities and supporting them 'in a non-formal way' (Interview no. 12, Aubarell, 2015).

Further evidence of the EU's strong interest in the ALF's bottom-up contribution in involving civil society in its policies originated at the fringes of the second ALF Forum, held in Marseilles in May 2013. In that context and in front of more than 1,000 civil society participants from the whole region, Commissioner Füle (2013c) advanced a proposal to create a 'mechanism for dialogue between civil society, governments and the EU and other donors'. This process was aimed at creating the necessary space, conditions, freedoms, trust and means of dialogue between all sides (Füle 2014a). It was granted EUR 1 million from the Commission for a pilot phase, after the outcomes of a twelve-month preparatory stage were discussed during an *ad hoc* 'Southern Mediterranean Civil Society Forum' in Brussels on 30 April 2014. This latter meeting was not a process centred on ICD; however, as the Commissioner admitted, the EU was

trying to move from rhetoric to reality, from assertion to action, and the ALF was central to this movement (Füle 2013b).

Besides granting funding to support the incoming three-year programme of the Foundation already pledged in 2010, the Commission, as mentioned, took additional concrete steps to reinforce the activities and visibility of the ALF following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings. In this case, the effort was primarily advanced to boost the ALF's capacity to engage CSOs and to achieve the new objectives of the EU in the area. In autumn 2011, Commissioner Füle hosted a gathering of the Foundation staff, including its advisory committee, some members of Prodi's *Groupe des Sages* and other experts in Brussels to develop an effective collaboration in the framework of the EU's recently launched policy instruments. The priority of the meeting was 'maximising ALF's experience to ensure that the new EU approach to civil society served its purpose and responded to the needs on the ground' (Walton 2012, 289). In practical terms, the outcome of this high-level gathering was the launch of a new programme, to be managed by the ALF, with a dedicated budget, aimed at mobilising and revitalising civil society in the southern Mediterranean countries and improving its capacities for participating in democratic transitions, as well as building capacities and spaces for exchange (Füle 2011e). The implementation of this new programme – labelled *Dawrak-Citizens for Dialogue* – will be described and discussed in the second part of this chapter, together with the other residual ICD initiatives implemented by the EU during this period.

1.3 The input from the ALF and the opportunities brought by the Arab uprisings

Besides the EU's interest in the well-established engagement of the Foundation with hundreds of CSOs from MPCs, another motivation for the consolidation of the ALF during this period lies in the capacity of the Foundation's leaders to make their institution grow in both relevance and ambitions in the EU's eyes. From 2008 to 2014 (that is, for two consecutive three-year terms), the ALF was driven by the same two managers. The Executive Director was Andreu Claret, a Catalan journalist who had formerly been the Director of the IeMed institute, a regionally-renowned think-tank set in Barcelona and devoted to Euro-Mediterranean civil societies and to the promotion of Spain's relations with North Africa, appointed by the Spanish government as the Head of its ALF national network. The President of the ALF during the same period was André Azoulay, a Moroccan political scientist of Jewish origin, who had been

counsellor of the late King Hassan II of Morocco and of his son Mohammed VI.

Through their professional background and experience, the two brought to the ALF a specific expertise in mediating between the expectations and interests of European and MPCs' governments, and the demands of the civil society from the area. This capacity may have also convinced the Commission and the intergovernmental Board of the ALF to confirm their mandate following 2011, which was in fact a crucial choice to strengthen the Foundation in the new policy context. As it will be shown, indeed, this continuity allowed the two leaders to gradually develop their own conception of how the ALF should advance its ICD mission and, when the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia broke out, to exploit the momentum created by these events to put this conception into practice.

The ALF's three-year programme of action adopted in 2011 (for the period 2012-2014) presented a substantial reformulation of the scope and rationale of ICD. In particular, this programme established an approach for the employment of this tool through four cross-cutting issues: dialogue, diversity, development and democracy (referred to by the ALF as the '4Ds strategy'). Within this framework, the Foundation promised to consider the possible interactions between ICD on one hand and the promotion of human rights and citizenship issues on the other. These avenues for the employment of ICD were expected to supplement the target groups and priority areas of action on which the ALF had built its support among regional civil society for the previous six years, in particular education and media, and with a view to engaging young people and women. The new '4Ds strategy' of the ALF conceived ICD as 'an action among the civil society ultimately aimed at valuing diversity, promoting social participation in building open and plural societies, and fostering human development and fundamental rights' (ALF 2012, 10). The specific objectives set out to advance this strategy were multiple. They ranged from improving mutual perceptions and promoting mutual understanding – the constant and fundamental goal of Euro-Mediterranean ICD since the introduction of the tool in the Barcelona Declaration (EMP 1995a) – to generating positive changes in intercultural relations and policies. The ALF, moreover, aimed to foster the role of the Foundation itself and to consolidate its visibility, besides reinforcing its national civil society networks to build their capacities, and providing skills for dialogue, citizenship and participation, in collaboration with governments and institutions (ALF 2011d, 10-11).

In fact, the objectives set by the ALF in its new programme of action were not

entirely 'new', either for the Foundation or for the promotion of this tool in general. As mentioned, ICD was employed overall with an underlying intention to promote taboo issues in MPCs, such as the respect of religious diversity, the rule of law and basic freedoms (see also EMP 2004c). Moreover, like other tools of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, ICD had been in the past occasionally associated with the promotion of human rights. For instance, human rights were mentioned among the possible areas of action of the first three-year programme of the ALF (2005a), while the possibility of promoting dialogue and mutual understanding in connection with respect for such rights was voiced in some Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conferences, including among culture ministers (EMP 1999, item 25; EMP 2008, item 15). In neither case, however, did these efforts lead to any concrete follow-up. On the contrary, as discussed in the previous chapters, some Arab governments resisted the promotion of human rights in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and were suspicious about the European use of culture for doing politics, especially within the ALF framework. From this perspective, this programme of action of the Foundation was the first time in which a EU-funded initiative for the Mediterranean area officially stated an explicit causal connection between the promotion of ICD and such sensitive issues.

In 2010, the need to link ICD and human rights was urged by the ALF Executive Director, speaking to the intergovernmental Board of the Foundation. According to Claret, respect for human rights was 'a precondition to the enhancement of dialogue while in the same way dialogue can contribute to strengthening and widening those rights' (ALF 2010b, 12). According to the ALF Director, therefore, even before the uprisings, the notion of ICD needed to be enriched and reviewed 'to include a global and dynamic approach which takes into consideration the interrelation which exists between ICD, human rights, development, environmental factors and peace' (ALF Secretariat 2011, 11). In a similar vein, the documents produced by the ALF before the new programme was approved argued that 'since ICD is an exchange among individuals and stakeholders within civil society, the issue concerning civil rights and citizenship participation and intercultural solidarity becomes unavoidable' (*idem*, 12).

When the uprisings broke out in Tunisia and Egypt, therefore, the ALF was already in a process of reconsidering the actual needs of Mediterranean civil societies and of laying out a set of possible answers through ICD. The programme of action proposed by the ALF in 2011 was the product of a comprehensive vision which was developed, considerably in advance of top EU officials, on the basis of analyses of

trends, dynamics and requests from the civil society of the region, collected by the ALF itself in the framework of its previous activities enhanced, since 2008, under the Azoulay-Claret leadership.

These anticipations were reportedly only made possible by the peculiar structure of the ALF, with civil society networks in any Mediterranean country which were particularly helpful to measure the 'pulse of the situation on the ground' as well as by the monitoring work conducted by the ALF on cross-cultural trends and values (Walton 2012, 282). Indeed, a key instrument in this strategic reassessment of the Foundation was recognised in the preparation, in 2010, of the first ever reports on intercultural trends based on a quantitative survey involving the people in eight European and Mediterranean countries and using qualitative analysis by experts (ALF 2010b, 7). The report contained a great deal of new data concerning mutual perspectives, stereotypes and values in the region. Two findings, however, were particularly relevant for the revision of the ALF mission. One was the empirically-based confirmation, which had long been hypothesised (RHLAG 2003; Ferrero-Waldner 2006a), of the existence of a real 'clash of ignorance' between the two shores of the Mediterranean (Claret 2010). This discovery was based, in particular, on the significant gap between self-perception and the perception of others in the section of the report dealing with values (Silvestri 2010, 45). The other major finding was that 'cultural values on both shores [were] not so different', a result which 'anticipated the convergence on universal values which are now at the core of the social mobilisation in many of the Southern Mediterranean countries' (Aubarell 2012, 522). Several of these insights were further consolidated during workshops of the 2010 Anna Lindh Forum, when hundreds of civil society representatives gathered in Barcelona to discuss the current situation and the future challenges of ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean space. As already mentioned, moreover, EU High Representative Ashton also recognised in her introductory contribution to the ALF report the prospective utility of its findings in defining new EU policies and instruments (Ashton 2010).

From this perspective, the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, and in particular the unprecedented engagement of young Arab citizens with their strong claim to human rights, democracy and justice provided further evidence to support those findings, leading to the rapid finalisation of a process that the ALF was already undertaking. The historic events in MPCs also helped the Foundation having its ambitious programme swiftly approved by its intergovernmental Board (representatives of 43 UfM countries

plus the Commission). In particular, the explicit causal connection made between the promotion of ICD, human rights and democracy would have likely continued to meet obstacles if some of the Arab countries represented in the Board, including Egypt, had not been temporarily overwhelmed by the political turmoil brought about by the uprisings, leaving the potential of governmental opposition to the ALF initiative at an all-time low. Still, it was the capacity to anticipate and elaborate the changes that were underway among the civil society of some Arab countries that made the ALF ready to act in a scenario that the EU was still struggling to understand and capture.

With the successful approval by the Board of its three-year programme for the period 2012-2014, therefore, the ALF leadership managed to set the conditions for advancing two of its main objectives in one. On one hand, it developed a framework of action which appeared different from the previous ones (discussed in Chapter 4) and allowed a response to what the ALF staff were already feeling as an urgent need to 'change the skin of the Foundation' that is, trying to give a new meaning to its policy in a changing socio-political milieu (Interview no. 5, Solera, 2013). This also allowed Claret and Azoulay to demonstrate to the EU that the ALF was a flexible programme, capable of adapting to deliver appropriate responses to the challenges unfolding in some Mediterranean countries during that period.

Furthermore, through the new programme, the ALF managed to further increase the benefits of its added value, made by a specific intercultural perspective and an established expertise in dealing with civil society of the area, for the general objectives set forth by the EU in its revised policy framework. Indeed, the orientation, fields of action and target groups of this ALF programme retraced, in many ways, the ideas envisaged in the two joint communications adopted in 2011 by the High Representative and the Commission to present the revision of the ENP, including the following objectives: promotion of human rights and democracy, empowerment of youth and women, improvement of education, culture, creativity and media opportunities. As seen, EU policy-makers did not see any specific motive to reactivate a general discussion about the role of ICD in the new Mediterranean policy context. The Foundation's leadership, by contrast, took advantage of the same challenges and opportunities to invert the traditional 'top-down' approach that characterised the formulation of ICD for large part of the 1990s and 2000s, and advance a bottom-up conception of ICD which resulted, in fact, key to addressing current EU policy priorities.

In this perspective, besides contributing toward fostering human rights,

democracy, development and to contribute to the engagement of civil society of the area, the ALF supplemented EU efforts, adding two very current topics that were missing in the revised ENP vision: citizenship and diversity. By supporting and increasing the visibility of the ALF, the EU could also indirectly promote these important themes in the broad framework of its policy action in the Mediterranean. The introduction of the former in the ALF programme was aimed at encouraging the active development of 'a sense of belonging to a common space with shared values, and a critical and responsible spirit among the youth' (ALF 2011d, 11). The concept of 'active citizenship' is explained in the literature as 'an active and inclusive citizens' participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterised by mutual respect and in accordance with human rights' (Hoskins and Mascherini 2008, 462). It is thus evident that pursing this participation at the regional levels would have constituted a further complement to EU's proclaimed effort to build democracies that aim to become 'deep', participatory and sustainable in the long-term (see, on these aspects, Bekemans 2007) and to create solid partnership with the societies of the area.

As far as the concept of diversity is concerned, this in fact complemented an issue that had been alluded to in the aforementioned joint communications of 2011, without any practical follow up. On this matter, the ALF could bring to the EU its first-hand perspective on ongoing changes, in large part derived from having its headquarters in a country directly involved in the uprisings, namely Egypt. In this context, Claret observed in 2013 that Arab societies were 'going through a painful process of recognising, later dealing with and trying to accommodate diversity' (Interview no. 6, 2013; see also ALF 2011a, 10). According to the ALF Director, an illustrative example of these difficulties was the decision of Moroccan authorities to rename a flagship initiative of the Foundation, labelled 'Young Arab Voices', as 'Young Moroccan Voices' (Interview no. 6, 2013).

In fact, diversity has always existed in the countries affected by the uprisings and has been generally suppressed rather than accommodated by national authorities, including after the Arab uprisings. In Egypt, for instance, President Morsi targeted the Coptic minority when he came to power in 2012. In light of the grave human rights violations that increasingly affected the diversity of Arab societies also during the last few years, the insights by the ALF on this supposed ongoing process of recognising diversity would appear to a large extent partial, not to say a gross misinterpretation. On one hand, this wrong perception might have been dictated by the already-mentioned

risks of 'professionalism' surrounding the ALF and its members: that is, the trend of always engaging with the same organisations and people that share the same ideals and perspectives. In this context, as better discussed in the next part, the ALF encountered increasing difficulties in involving people, especially from religious organisations and movements, who were not used to cooperating with these types of initiatives. On the other hand, a more pragmatic explanation of this apparent misinterpretation is that, once aware of the difficulty of reaching all sectors of society, the ALF decided to focus its resources only on those components where its action could make a difference, deliberately neglecting some of the more controversial problems emerging from the area of action. In showing an ability to at least partially address this topic, the ALF could thus bring to the Commission some tangible outcomes concerning the general promise made by the EU to promote the respect of cultural diversity in MPCs.

As shown, the capacity to anticipate and react demonstrated by ALF leadership in early 2011 allowed the Foundation to put forward an ICD strategy that was functional to new EU priorities, and, in parallel, was based for the first time on the insights coming from the bottom rather than from an alleged top-down understanding of how civil society needed to engage in dialogue. The ALF did not change its status as a result of this process. It did not become, for instance, an independent institution. As will be further shown below, despite being structured and presented as an autonomous international organisation, the ALF remained a programme of the EU. The Commission was its main financial sponsor, while, as seen, the Board retained the power to approve or veto the Foundation's programmes and initiatives. However, having been promoted for a few years as one among several programmes to implement an ICD vision negotiated by the EU and MPCs, the ALF eventually started to emerge and take responsibility in the debate about the promotion of this tool, within which it provided the strongest input.

In this context, in transferring the responsibility for ICD to the ALF, the EU eventually brought to an end a process that had in fact been partly envisaged since the early conceptions of the Foundation, as both Prodi and member states conceived the incoming institutions as the future reference and guardian for ICD in the Mediterranean. Only in the wake of the Arab uprisings, however, did this process eventually come to its conclusion. As the Director of the ALF observed, only with the new programme of action for 2012-2014 was the Foundation starting to carry out the ambitious tasks envisaged when it was defined by the *Groupe de Sages* (Interview no. 6, Claret, 2013).

2. The effects of professionalisation on overall ICD implementation

The shift in the EU's approach to the promotion of ICD investigated in the first part of this chapter was not immediately visible in terms of the overall implementation of this tool, at least in quantitative terms. Compared with the previous phase of consolidation, during which ICD was the major objective of six multi-annual programmes of the Commission in the Euro-Mediterranean space (including the ALF), the situation in the wake of the Arab uprisings appeared, in fact, quite similar. Only one of those six programmes, *Euromed Heritage,* was not re-launched following the end of its fourth edition in 2012 (started in 2008). By contrast, the EU either extended or reconfirmed the other five programmes for a last edition during this period, keeping substantially to their original objectives.

The first effects of the process of professionalisation on ICD implementation were, rather, visible only if a longer-term perspective is considered. Indeed, besides strengthening the ALF, during this time the EU started promoting cooperation with MPCs' civil societies through new programmes that were going to replace or subsume the remaining ICD activities still underway in the early years of the 2010s. For instance, a new programme entitled *Media and culture for development in the Southern Mediterranean* was launched by the Commission in 2012 with a total of EUR 17 million, and the task of building on and expanding the work which had been carried out until then in the sectors covered by two regional ICD programmes: *Euromed Heritage* (culture) and *Euromed Audiovisual* (media) (ENPI Info Centre 2013a)*.* However, differently to the original rationale of its precursors, this new programme was not at all concerned with fostering mutual understanding among the people living in the Euro-Mediterranean space, but with the capacity building and socio-economic development implications of working in these sectors, as a substantial contribution to the transition processes underway in some MPCs (European Commission 2013a). The distance of the new programme from ICD was incidentally acknowledged in the technical fiche prepared by the Commission, in which it was stated that *Media and Culture* would have complemented, among others, 'the intercultural dialogue programmes such as the Anna Lindh Foundation' (European Commission 2013c, 3). The EU also followed a similar approach for cooperation among young people. The Commission, indeed, launched with UNESCO a new regional programme called *Network of Mediterranean Youth (NET-MED Youth)* for the period 2014-2016. The stated objective of this new programme, supported by a EU budget of EUR 8.8 million, is 'to improve the access and effective participation of young people in politics and national planning in the Southern

Mediterranean' (European Commission 2013b).

In fact, as in any regional cooperation effort engaging the people of this area, mutual understanding and closer human exchanges could also arguably result from the implementation of these new programmes in a longer-term perspective. In particular, the political and socio-economic empowerment of the civil society of MPCs, especially when youth and the media are targeted, certainly constitutes an important asset to reach and connect with increasingly larger numbers of people across the two shores of the Mediterranean. Nonetheless, a shift in the EU's approach is evident compared to the regional cooperation advanced in the fields of audiovisual, cultural heritage and youth exchanges during the 2000s: with the launch of these new programmes in the wake of the uprisings, mutual understanding and closer human exchanges across the Euro-Mediterranean area no longer appeared among the primary expectations and aims at the basis of EU investment in these fields of cooperation.

Similar considerations can also be made of the *Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility* and the *European Endowment for Democracy*, two of the few genuinely new initiatives brought in by the EU with the revision of its agenda for the area in 2011. Although the two initiatives shared with ICD a strong focus on the active engagement of CSOs and representatives, they did not contain any specific aim of fostering mutual understanding or bringing the people of Europe and the Mediterranean closer. On the contrary, as demonstrated above, the EU employed the ALF and other ICD programmes to further contribute to the goals of those new programmes, that is, to enhance the capacity of southern CSOs to promote democratic reforms and political participation in Arab MPCs.

Having taken this transition into consideration, this part of the chapter discusses in detail what the implications of the remaining five ICD programmes for the overall implementation of this tool were during this short phase, starting with a brief description of the objectives and resources of each. For analytical reasons, these descriptions will maintain the classification provided in the previous chapter and the programmes will be regrouped according to three blocks: Euromed regional programmes, the EU higher education programmes extended to (*inter alia*) Mediterranean countries, and the ALF. Following the description of these programmes, the chapter will critically reflect upon whether, to what extent and how these programmes have actually advanced overall ICD efforts during this period.

2.1 The remaining Euromed regional programmes

As far as the first block is concerned, following 2011 the EU launched the third edition of *Euromed Audiovisual* and extended *Euromed Youth IV* (originally 2008-2012) until 2016. Nothing about how these programmes work has changed, which is, essentially, through grants funded by the Commission through the ENPI financial instrument and disbursed through periodic calls for proposals open to CSOs, cultural and media institutions as well as to youth groups across the Euro-Mediterranean area.

Euromed Audiovisual III received a budget of EUR 11 million for four years (2011-2014). It funded six major projects[44] in the ten south Mediterranean countries involved in the ENP. The focus of this edition was largely aimed at developing the film and audiovisual sectors in the southern neighbourhood, as a tool to enhance sustainable transfers of knowledge and best practices through a wide set of trainings, capacity building and networking activities. Each of the six funded projects under *Euromed Audiovisual III* lasted from 30 to 36 months and involved between a minimum of three institutions in different EU and ENP countries ('DocMed' and 'Med Film Factory') to a maximum of eight ('Terramed Plus', a project aimed at the promotion of Mediterranean audiovisual works among the general public of the Euro-Mediterranean region). A significant aspect of the six granted projects has been that, although all had at least one partner for the north and one from the south, four of them were proposed, coordinated and implemented by an institution from a neighbour country (Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and Morocco) and only two by an EU country (Italy and Spain), showing a perhaps unforeseen sense of co-ownership of this specific programme among its beneficiaries. Indeed, as has been observed in Chapter 3, the majority of earlier calls for proposals related to 'Euromed' programmes in the fields of heritage and audiovisual were won by groups of institutions led by partners from the north.

Although in the view of the Commission the film industry remained also a creative means of cultural expression and ICD (ENPI Info Centre 2013a), the scope of this edition of *Euromed Audiovisual* visibly leaned, again more than in the past, towards enhancing the socio-economic development of MPCs. Year after year, therefore, the EU has continued the process, critically addressed in the previous chapters, which brought *Euromed Audiovisual* from its intended purpose as a pillar of the promotion of mutual

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44 ACCESS - Access to Markets in the Digital Era; DOCmed, TERRAMED Plus, Mediterranean Film Factory (Med Film Factory), GREEN HOUSE – Development of Documentary Films by Southern Mediterranean Cinema Schools Graduates, DIA SUD MED - Développement de l'Industrie Audiovisuelle Sud-Méditerranéenne

understanding in the area to become a programme for creating trained professionals for the south Mediterranean cinema industry. As discussed just above, this process, ideally, has moved a step forward with the launch of the above-mentioned *Culture and Media* programme. The latter, in replacing both *Euromed Audiovisual* and *Euromed Heritage,* has confirmed that the Commission prefers to invest in these fields to foster development, primarily socio-economic, in MPCs, leaving the goal of creating mutual understanding between the two shores as a mere (but welcome) by-product of such investment in the long term. The only exception to this trend in EU Mediterranean policy has been the ALF. As will be further elaborated below, indeed, the Foundation has continued to build projects aimed at fostering the specific intercultural potential of cooperation in arts, heritage and new and old media.

As far as *Euromed Youth* is concerned, the EU considered its fourth edition (2008-2012) a particularly successful one (ENPI Info Centre 2013c) and it *de facto* extended the programme's calls for projects, managed autonomously by the national youth units created in each MPC during the third edition (2003-2007), until 2013. *Euromed Youth* was also mentioned in the joint communications revising the ENP in 2011 as one of the programmes of which the EU should make 'a fuller use and increase substantially the number of persons from Southern Mediterranean partner countries participating' (European Commission and HRFASP 2011a, 7). In particular, the focus in the last years of this edition was set on the development of a responsible and active role for young people in social, professional and political life. In the short period 2011-2013, over 1,400 young people benefited from the programme's activities especially in Palestine (20 granted projects and 358 young beneficiaries), Israel (19 projects and 331 participants) and Tunisia (17 projects and 327 participants), mostly in the area of youth training and networking (Euromed Youth 2013).

These figures are far from impressive compared to the huge young populations in the area, especially within Arab MPCs. However, considering them encouraging data about the active participation of this target group (ENPI Info Centre 2013c), and in line with the focus set on youth exchanges in the revision of the ENP, the EU decided to extend this fourth edition until 2016, promising to allocate new resources and the subsequent launch of new calls for each country involved. In total, the EU has committed a further EUR 6 million over four years. As this is an extension of an ongoing edition, neither the objectives nor the areas of action have changed. The main goals of *Euromed Youth IV* remain those of fostering mutual understanding and ICD

between young people, promoting their citizenship and sense of solidarity as well as contributing to the development of youth policies in three main areas: youth exchanges, voluntary service, training and networking.

Therefore, although in 2014 the EU has decided to invest primarily in the participation of youth in politics and national policy planning within MPCs through the launch of the new *NET-MED Youth* programme*,* young people of the Euro-Mediterranean space have continued to also benefit from the *ad hoc* exchange and training opportunities between the two shores offered by this long-standing ICD programme (since 1999), as well as from other regional initiatives developed over the years to favour mutual understanding and dialogue among the youth of this whole area. The latter included ALF projects (youth and women were the target groups of the programme 2012-2014), the *Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform* (established in 2003), the *Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament* (the last edition was held in Stockholm in June 2013), and other European initiatives with a Mediterranean dimension such as the *Youth in Action* programme or the *Salto-Youth* resource centre.

2.2 The boost to EU higher education programmes in the southern Mediterranean

As far as the second block of programmes is concerned, *Tempus* and *Erasmus Mundus,* extended to Mediterranean countries in the middle of the previous decade, joined *Euromed Youth* among the programmes praised by top EU officials when launching the revised ENP in 2011 (European Commission and HRFASP 2011a, 7; Füle 2011f). In the framework of the '3Ms' approach put forward by the EU vis-à-vis its neighbourhood (Money, Market, Mobility), spreading opportunities for exchanges in education for young people all over the Mediterranean represented a markedly direct way to integrate, with immediate effect, two of these 'Ms', namely mobility and money. Indeed, boosting the resources to improve the mobility of students in the Mediterranean through *Erasmus Mundus* and *Tempus* showed that, at least within a restricted target group of beneficiaries (students and scholars), the EU was serious about some of the promises made to its partners. Adding more resources was in fact the only immediate way to broaden the scope of these programmes since both editions were largely underway when the uprisings broke out, and were planned to close at the end of 2013: *Tempus IV* (2007-2013) and *Erasmus Mundus II* (2009-2013). The commitment to these programmes promised by the EU in the revision of the ENP was thus mainly visible in the significant increase of funding for their remaining three years of implementation.

In particular, *Tempus IV* had been run in the Mediterranean specifically with a budget running from EUR 13 million in 2008 and 2010, to a peak of 23 million in 2009 under the ENPI financial instrument. Following the uprisings, the EU channelled about EUR 70 million through *Tempus* for three years (EUR 24 million in 2011, EUR 25.3 million in 2012 and EUR 29.6 million in 2013). Despite this gradual increase in resources, there was not a great deal of immediate change in the action promoted under this programme. According to statistics, the total selected projects involving the institutions of Mediterranean countries (joint projects and structural measures) were 23 in 2010, went down to 16 in 2011, but rose to 34 in 2012 and only finally leapt to 53 in 2013 (EACEA 2013a). The participation of Mediterranean countries institutions in the last two annual selections ranged from a minimum of three projects accepted from Syrian institutions to 33 in Morocco (Egypt 28, Tunisia 25).

As far as *Erasmus Mundus* is concerned, the EU channelled a total of EUR 98 million for the implementation of the programme in the Mediterranean for the years 2011 (EUR 20 million), 2012 (43 million) and 2013 (35 million). The programme statistics for action 1 (joint programmes), shows a significant increase in students selected from MPCs: the total for joint master courses in 2011 was 28 students, 158 in 2012 and 170 in 2013 (EACEA 2013b). This significant difference in numbers was made up of students from the two countries where the uprisings had, at least initially, brought about the swiftest transitions, countries which received further bilateral incentives from the EU to participate in the programme: Egypt (10 students in 2011, 98 in 2012 and 64 in 2013) and Tunisia (1 in 2011, 25 in 2012 and 31 in 2013). The other countries remained more or less on the same average except for Syria which, in spite of the suspension of formal cooperation with the EU, experienced a gradual increase in the number of selected students: from 2 in 2010, to 7 in 2011 and 21 in 2012. This far from impressive growth may have been nonetheless a result of targeted communication efforts made by the EU through its delegation in Damascus to help Syrian youth find opportunities outside the area of conflict in which they are living (ENPI Info Centre 2012a).

Another overall improvement can be seen in regard to action 2 of *Erasmus Mundus*: 'partnership building'. Within this framework, the number of partnerships created with the task of managing mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels and of awarding scholarships doubled between 2010 (5 partnerships) and 2013 (11 partnerships). Moreover, planned mobility under this action tripled from

525 awarded scholarships in 2010 to 1,084 in 2011 and 1,491 in 2012 for southern Mediterranean citizens, and from 135 in 2010 to 322 in 2011 and 432 in 2012 for Europeans (setting a 3.5 to 1 ratio).

Since 1 January 2014, all initiatives devoted to capacity building support in the modernisation of higher education and awarding of mobility scholarships for students and scholars blurred into *Erasmus +*, the new all-inclusive programme of the EU for education, training, youth and sport. The choice of creating a single programme was officially motivated by the 'need to ensure greater efficiency, a stronger strategic focus and synergies to be exploited between the various aspects [which were to compose it]' (EP and Council 2013, 1). The other side of the coin was a loss in visibility and specificity for the programmes included, despite the many efforts and resources devoted to this goal in recent years. However, as far as the Mediterranean dimension of *Erasmus Mundus* and *Tempus* is concerned, this choice may have not been wholly regretted by European institutions, which had complained about a limited rise in numerical terms compared to the significant financial resources channelled to make a fuller use of these two programmes (EP 2013, item 58).

2.3 The Anna Lindh Foundation

The objectives of the 2012-2014 programme of the ALF have been already introduced in the previous part. The following paragraphs are thus limited to illustrating the resources allocated and the main initiatives carried out by the Foundation with the financial support of the European Commission and some UfM countries.

As anticipated, the programme approved by the ALF Board of Governors in 2011 derived from a pre-existing effort to realign the role of the Foundation six years after its launch, and to develop a stronger and more effective conception of the role of ICD, reinforced by the historic events underway (ALF Secretariat 2011). As a result, the ALF took the opportunity provided by the early uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt to expand the scope of ICD action to encompass human rights, development, democracy and citizenship issues. In terms of implementation, this ambitious formulation of ICD was delivered in those spaces 'where mutual perceptions are shaped and a culture of dialogue can be developed at the grassroot level' (ALF 2012, 4). This included the areas of cultural creativity, education and intercultural learning, urban spaces and citizenship, media and public opinion, and left out of the box other, older priorities of the ALF, such as those of 'peace and coexistence' and, as elaborated below, of 'interreligious

dialogue'. Compared to the past programme (2008-2010), the list of target groups was also reduced, concentrating only on women and youth. Migrants, by contrast, were dropped from this list because as an ALF's official points out, the Foundation is not formally tasked to deal with mobility; however, since migrants include many women and young people and since both integration and ICD do touch upon migrants' lives, the ALF is still dealing with this target group indirectly (Interview no. 12, Aubarell, 2015).

The original budget for the programme 2012-2014 was EUR 13.5 million, of which 7 million was committed by the Commission and 6.5 million pledged by UfM member states. Within this sum, the ALF managed to carry out the initiatives it had consolidated for its first 6 years, including the launch of periodic calls for proposals (with a total budget of EUR 2.7 million) and the annual ICD and Journalist awards. The Foundation also managed to carry out the second editions of its two flagship initiatives with more visibility than in the past: the second Anna Lindh Forum was held in Marseilles in April 2013 with the participation of more than 1,000 civil society representatives, members of parliaments and EU officials; the second *Anna Lindh Report on Intercultural Trends and Social Change* was published in autumn 2014 and officially presented at the ALF's tenth anniversary event in Naples. The report, based on a Gallup survey conducted with 13,000 people from 13 countries of the UfM[45], was presented as a significant empirical confirmation of the line followed by the ALF after the Arab uprisings, reporting a more positive and shared image of the Mediterranean and of the values characterising it, an increased optimism in the future among the youth, and 'a growing appetite' to know more about the Mediterranean other (see Spencer 2014).

Among the region-wide initiatives promoted under the three-year programme, 'Believe in Dialogue, Act for Citizenship' was launched in March 2011 as the 'first response to the historic events taking place in the southern shore of the Mediterranean' (ALF Secretariat 2011). This initiative was implemented through two main events, both held in June 2011. The 'Cairo Training Seminar' was the first gathering of the ALF Arab Networks and allowed an exchange of experiences of ICD and citizenship in the Arab societies, in the context of reforms and democratic transitions taking place in some countries; the 'Tunis Exchange Forum' gathered around 230 representatives of CSOs from 35 countries who 'engendered a vibrant debate about how to respond to the new

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45 A sample of 1,000 participants from each of the following countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Lebanon, Morocco, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Turkey and the UK,.

regional environment' (ALF 2011d, 2-3). Another two major initiatives were developed within the priority areas set in the three-year programme. The first was the 'Alexandria Education Convention', aimed at creating an handbook, based on the different expertise and perspectives of the region, to support teachers across the entire Euro-Mediterranean space in acquiring and spreading the necessary skills for 'intercultural citizenship education'. The second was the 'Translation Mapping Initiative', a research project functional to a new Euro-Mediterranean programme on this issue, which reported the current status and challenges of translation in the Mediterranean region, taking into account the various aspects and actors of translation, including authors, translators, publishers, booksellers, librarians, literary critics and funding donors (ALF 2015a).

The above budget was extended with a view to supporting other complementary programmes led by the ALF. One of these originated, as anticipated, from the meeting among the ALF staff, with Prodi's *Groupe des Sages* and other experts, organised on 22 November 2011 by Commissioner Füle. This additional programme, then labelled *Dawrak – Citizens for dialogue*, received a dedicated budget of EUR 3 million from the Commission and was aimed at mobilising and revitalising civil societies in the southern Mediterranean countries and improving their capacity for participating in democratic transitions (Füle 2011e). *Dawrak* was developed over three specific areas: capacity building, exchanges schemes and creating spaces for dialogue, and carried out specific projects in each of them, in light of existing ALF priority areas. The second additional programme, labelled *Young Arab Voices*, was co-funded by the British Council and the UK government's Arab Partnership Initiative with a much smaller budget than *Dawrak* (EUR 288,000) and the specific objective of training young people in debating and advocacy skills. Both programmes were thus conceived to be limited (or at least devoted as a priority) to the civil society of the Arab countries within the UfM. For the first time, in other words, EU programmes to promote ICD in this region were not primarily Euro-Mediterranean in scope.

2.4 Evaluating the implementation of ICD during the 'phase of professionalisation'

The above overview provides sufficient data to advance a few analytical considerations with regard to the overall implementation of ICD in the short but dense 2011-2014 time span. As in the previous empirical chapters, the following paragraphs discuss the consistency of the programmes with the overall goals of ICD and the number of resources allocated. Finally, they explore if, why and how the above-

mentioned programmes were (or were not) coordinated with each other, and contributed to making ICD a co-owned instrument.

Table 3. Overview of the programmes implementing ICD during the 'phase of professionalisation'

Programme /Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Euromed Audiovisual		[EMA III] (EUR 11 M)			
Euromed Youth	< 2008 - EMY IV (EUR 5 M)		*EMY IV* (EUR 6 M) > 2016 (ext'd)		
Tempus	< 2007 T IV (EUR 79 M*)				
Erasmus Mundus	< 2009 EM II (EUR 98 M*)				
Anna Lindh Foundation	< 2008 ALF II (EUR 14 M)		ALF III (EUR 17 M)		

*The figure indicated the amount channelled only to south Mediterranean countries in the span 2011-2013.
> indicates the beginning/closing year of the edition, when it does not coincide with the period of reference.

As far as consistency is concerned, a first preliminary consideration should be made. Since, during this period, as shown, the EU transferred the responsibility for the formulation of the objectives and scope of ICD to the ALF, the consistency of all programmes should be in fact assessed with reference to the new vision put forward by the Foundation itself. However, no new ICD programmes were launched by the EU during this period and, despite proclamations, EU commitment to *Euromed Youth* (and *Euromed Audiovisual*), *Tempus* and *Erasmus Mundus* resulted in only a short term extension of what was already going on before the uprisings broke out in Tunisia and Egypt. Indeed, in all cases except for the ALF, the EU just added some financial resources for pre-existing programmes which had been almost at the point of closing. In contrast, the new programmes launched in sectors once associated to ICD, from *Erasmus+* (education) to *Media and Culture* and *NET-MED Youth*, did not include references to the promotion of ICD among their goals. As has been stressed, the priority of these programmes, consistent with the approach developed in the revised ENP framework by the EU, has been to use the positive outcomes of people-to-people contacts primarily for socio-economic development, creating growth and job opportunities for Arab youth, and increasing civil society participation in decision-making processes in MPCs.

For its part, the ALF has shown a certain lack of coherence in relation to the omission, in the implementation of initiatives and projects, of any explicit reference to

the concept of democracy, even though this concept was one of the '4Ds' on which the innovative approach of the ALF to ICD was rooted. This contradiction derives in large part from what, despite the growth in relevance of the ALF within EU policies, has remained an open dilemma since the establishment of the Foundation. Although the EU started attributing to the ALF a larger autonomy of initiative in formulating the principles and objectives of ICD in the wake of the uprisings, the controls on its activities on the part of the intergovernmental Board remained significant afterwards. As stressed by Gianluca Solera, ALF networks coordinator from 2005 to 2011, 'there is a structural ambiguity: working with civil society while the supervision is by governmental authorities; and this supervision has been growing, the interferences of the governments has been increasing by the time instead of decreasing', including following the historic changes that affected the socio-political scenario in many Arab countries (Interview no. 5, 2013, see also Walton 2012, 281).

An example of this persistent ambiguity within the relationship between ICD and democracy was the final labelling of the *Dawrak-Citizens for Dialogue* programme, which was originally to be called *Dialogue and Democracy* but had to change following the opposition of some Arab countries. As Solera reports, 'at the end we had to try to do certain things without naming them. So there were a number of key words that were considered sensitive: activist, democracy, human rights' (Interview no. 5, 2013). Similar concerns may have been at the root of the choice by the ALF to keep the concept of democracy out of the first regional initiative promoted in the aftermath of the uprisings: 'Believe in Dialogue, Act for Citizenship'. Indeed, as shown in the documents circulated by the ALF during the early uprisings, the initial proposal for this initiative also considered the title 'Exchanging Practices on Participation and Democracy' (ALF Secretariat 2011) which was then dropped. In this case, however, the exclusion seems rather the result of anticipatory self-censorship by ALF leaders, since the initiative was launched in an institutional vacuum due to a lack of meetings of the Board for the first four months after the uprisings.

The key word in promoting democracy and other sensitive concepts without naming them was identified within the much vaguer concept of citizenship, which, in fact, appeared as a common denominator of several ALF projects, initiatives and areas of action during this phase. This gimmick certainly worked to bypass some of the obstacles of intergovernmental supervision, but the open dilemma for the structure of the ALF continued to hold significant implications for the consistency and, to a certain

extent, the credibility of the Foundation among Euro-Mediterranean civil societies. The staff of the Foundation, however, tends to look at this problem from a different perspective. According to Gemma Aubarell, Head of Programme and Operation Unit, the analytical perspective should be set on how the ALF has been successful in changing the opinion of governments and in adapting itself to the national agendas of the countries participating in the Board, rather than on the structural limits of the ALF. From this perspective, 'if you have a project that, at the end of the day, is an institutional and political process with a political will to develop an ICD perspective in the region, your partners have to be completely convinced about what you are doing and sometimes, this is according to the timing, which is not the same within European countries' agendas. From a certain point of view, what is more useful for the initiative is how you can see that, after some challenges, the initiative has been adopted' (Interview no. 12, 2015).

Another persistent problem of consistency between the formulation and implementation of ICD by the ALF during this phase concerns the involvement of religious, especially Islamic groups, in its initiatives and, in more general terms, the lack of a specific focus on religious issues in the three-year programme adopted in 2011. This problem was already evident, as has been discussed in Chapter 4, in the previous phase. Indeed, even when interreligious dialogue was among the priority areas of the ALF in the 2008-2010 programme, no major initiatives or projects were devoted to this issue, exposing a general difficulty of dealing with these contentious but crucial topics. Since, as has been mentioned, the new three-year programme dropped 'religions and spirituality' from its priority areas of action, it is likely that the commitment by the ALF to tackle these issues in the future will not change. This trend might have been further encouraged in light of the grassroots perceptions on which the Foundation has initially developed its more recent action. In particular, the survey at the basis of the second report of the Foundation on intercultural trends (published in late 2014) has shown that, overall, 'religious beliefs' have decreased in relevance within the value list of both Europeans and South Mediterranean respondents (ALF 2014, 20). This was a significant shift compared to the previous 2010 ALF report where, by contrast, religion was observed as the only exception among a number of unexpected affinities concerning the values shared by the people of the region in that religion drew a 'an expected disparity between European and southern and eastern Mediterranean countries' (Tozy 2010, 41).

In this context, however, it is important to note that the survey at the basis of the 2014 ALF report was conducted in the autumn of 2012 and only about 5,000 out of the 13,000 people selected among a target population that included all individuals aged fifteen and above were from MPCs, namely from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Turkey and Tunisia. It is thus possible to hypothesise that the perceptions which emerged from the survey, especially among the respondents from Egypt, might have been significantly different if data were collected just months later, or in other countries. Moreover, an analysis of the these data also shows, in fact, that placing attention and interest onto the issue of religious diversity in the area – a specific focus of investigation introduced for the first time in this edition of the survey – 'reveal[s] considerable – perhaps higher than expected – similarities between the two shores of the Mediterranean, as well as the existence of contradictory trends within societies' (Silvestri 2014, 39). For instance, a high percentage of the interviewees in both shores (more than 80%) regard cultural and religious diversity as important for the prosperity of their own society, but, at the same time, nearly half of respondents consider that religious and cultural diversity constitute a threat to the stability of society (*ibidem*). Despite the interesting variations captured by the survey, therefore, religion and the values associated with it remain a crucial and ambiguous issue that characterises Euro-Mediterranean relations.

Therefore, if the Foundation really aims at 'valuing diversity, promoting social participation in building open and plural societies, and fostering human development and fundamental rights' in the Mediterranean (ALF 2012, 10), the issue of religion and, in particular, of the religious dimension of civil society groups and movements in the Arab world, cannot be put aside. As some critics argue, bridging the divide between political Islam and Europe would be 'as crucial as closing the gap between the EU's rhetoric and practice' (Alami 2013). According to ALF officials, however, the exclusion of religious issues from the formal priority areas of the Foundation was a matter of 'how things are presented', and aimed at avoiding too much visibility for sensitive areas that might easily be stigmatised, especially in an important period of socio-political changes. In this context, 'instead of mixing issues connected with religions with other questions such as conflict prevention or gender and other issues that can be manipulated, [the ALF] preferred to tackle this issue inside the big projects' (Interview no. 12, Aubarell, 2015).

With specific reference to the involvement of religious organisations in the Foundation initiatives, however, the problem seems even deeper and does not appear to

have been particularly reduced by the recent position of the ALF vis-à-vis religious issues. On the contrary, as discussed in Chapter 4, the issue is part of unsolved difficulty for the Foundation, and for ICD programmes in general, in successfully involving the masses particularly in Arab countries (ALF 2010b, 3). As claimed by George Joffé, one of Prodi's *Sages* and a prominent analyst of European foreign policy, one of the problems with organisations such as the ALF is that 'they can only talk to people who *a priori* accept the fundamental assumption of ICD itself and, I have to say, European values associated to that' (Interview no. 8, 2013).

As confirmed by the ALF staff, it is actually very difficult to convince groups that have never participated or are not used to participating in this kind of activities to take part and get involved, notwithstanding any increase in the efforts made (Interview no. 12, Aubarell, 2015). Another reason for this problem recalls the structural contradictions of the ALF discussed above and in the previous chapter. Indeed, the Foundation remains, by statute, open to anyone who accepts its principles, but the national networks of civil society and, thus, their members need to be endorsed by respective heads of networks that, in turn, respond to national governments. In this perspective, problems regarding the access of religious organisations to the ALF may be also connected with the fluctuations of religious parties within each country and on the influences of fundamentalist groups on governments.

There have reportedly been several efforts in the last years to involve religious groups in Egypt, where the Foundation has its headquarters. However, after the El-Sisi's coup in July 2013, this has become even more complex (Interview no. 12, Aubarell, 2015). The interviewee could not explain if this growing difficulty was caused either by repressions by the El-Sisi regime towards Muslim groups, or, alternatively, by a choice by these groups not to take part in activities supported, at least financially and logistically, by the Egyptian government and Europe. In any case, the difficulty of involving those who are not used to or do not wish to participate in this process, especially religious individuals and groups, feeds into what, in Chapter 4, has been discussed as the elitist 'trap of professionalism' – i.e. the risk of increasingly working with a privileged group of organisations and representatives that share similar ideas about ICD promotion. From this angle, the persistent difficulty for the ALF of reaching the actual diversity of civil society voices and perspectives within the region can also be considered among the reasons that have provided the Foundation with an apparently rather benign, and to some extent naïve, overall perspective on the uprisings (despite the

negative consequences of the latter were already visible, also in Egypt, from 2011).

As far as financial resources are concerned, the rough calculus of the total sum for ICD compared with the total resources channelled through the ENPI (2007-2013) financial instrument provides very interesting and (at first sight) contradictory data. With the improvement in resources promised by the EU during the uprisings, the total committed to the Mediterranean under ENPI was EUR 4.35 billion. As discussed in Chapter 2, during the Arab uprisings the EU also insisted on the need to once again improve regional cooperation as an important complement to the mainly bilateral approach brought about by the establishment of the ENP (see European Commission and HRFASP 2011b, 12-18). Consistent with this objective, the budget devoted to regional cooperation was also increased during the period under examination and came to amount to EUR 857 million. Having been reduced to approximately 10-11% of the overall EU budget for the ENP in the late 2000s, the resources for regional cooperation thus stabilised at around 19% of the total in the last three years. In this context, the sum of the resources devoted to the various ICD programmes described in this chapter (about EUR 300 million in 3 years) represents 7% of the overall budget that the EU devoted specifically to the Mediterranean and a far more impressive 35% of the much-increased percentage of this budget devoted to specific region-wide cooperation.

At a first glance, these figures seem to contradict the overall argument advanced so far in this chapter, that is, that the EU neglected ICD from the list of its general policy priorities following the Arab uprisings, and gradually transferred the full responsibility for the promotion of this tool to the sole initiative of one of its programmes: the ALF. The high percentage of funding committed to ongoing ICD programmes would suggest that, from a financial perspective, the tool was, in fact, further increased among the most relevant efforts of the EU in the Mediterranean, especially to promote one of the four main objectives of the revised ENP, i.e. regional cooperation. If so, these data would provide evidence of an unusual inversion of the established rhetoric-performance gap in EUFP and in ICD promotion, making performance stronger than proclamations and promises.

However, if one considers that by the end of 2014 all the ICD programmes referred into this section, except for the ALF and the extension of *Euromed Youth IV*, had either been closed, enclosed in broader containers, or replaced with programmes which follow different priorities than ICD, the considerable financial effort outlined above seems like a flash in the pan. Moreover, with the ALF becoming the only ICD

programme for the Mediterranean to be funded by the EU in the next years, the usual amount of funding allocated to support the activities of this institution – ranging from 12 to 18 million for each three-year period – appears ridiculously low, especially in relation to the EUR 2.7 billion which has been tentatively dedicated to regional cooperation (15%) under the new EU financial instrument for the Neighbourhood, that is, the ENI (EUR 18 billion for the period 2014-2020)[46]. The only possibility of even slightly stemming this tendency may result from a shift in the continued trend within many UfM countries of not honouring their voluntary pledges towards the ALF, also through specific initiatives. For instance, the UK, which, according to data accessible to the ALF national heads of networks, is normally not committed to fund the budget of the Foundation (Interview no. 13, Lapidot, 2015), decided to promote and support the *Young Arab Voices* programme this time. However, given, in particular, the persistency of the economic crisis in the majority of the Euro-Mediterranean area, this shift seems unlikely in the near future.

Furthermore, during the brief time-span under analysis, the EU has not addressed the need for coordination between scattered ICD initiatives within Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. Unlike the previous phase of consolidation, however, this is no longer an issue as far as the implementation of this tool in prospect is concerned. Indeed, as a result of the professionalisation process investigated in this chapter, the ALF is soon to be the only EU programme devoted to ICD and, accordingly, the possibility of overlapping in ICD implementation will become increasingly rare. Nonetheless, the need for coordination among parallel cooperation programmes remains a broader management problem concerning how the EU delivers its overall external action and related policy tools in the Mediterranean, among which is ICD. For instance, during the few years investigated in this chapter, there have been plenty of programmes promoting, without detectable efforts of coordination among them, the goals of civil society participation in transition countries, empowering youth and women, building capacities and opportunities in the fields of education, media and culture with similar objectives and expectations (see, for instance, Hale and Ursu 2011, 5). As mentioned in the previous chapters, lack of coordination among cooperation programmes in similar fields produces overlap, which diminishes the effectiveness and visibility of the overall commitment of the EU in the related policy fields, and increases the potential waste of the resources invested therein. In light of this, the choice to enclose similar programmes

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46 Indicative figures from ENPI Info Centre 2014c.

under the same container, as with *Erasmus +*, may deprive the embedded programmes of the specific visibility they had gained over the years, but at the same time represent, in principle, a viable model to avoid duplications and to optimise, or at least rationalise, the resources at EU disposal, and their delivery.

From this perspective, therefore, the 'phase of professionalisation' of ICD analysed through this chapter also coincided with a more general process of rationalisation of this tool in EU external action. Indeed, in choosing to invest primarily in the ALF, EU policy-makers continued to implement ICD in Euro-Mediterranean relations, benefiting from the specific expertise developed over time by the specialised institution that the EU had created precisely to carry out this task and in which it had already invested significant human and financial resources. As a consequence, the EU avoided both dispersing its ICD resources, instead focusing on several effective but disconnected programmes, and widening further the rhetoric-performance gap on this tool, referring to just one specific programme and reducing declaratory appeals to a rather vague and little-understood concept.

As regards the achievement of co-ownership – that is the sharing of responsibilities, achievements, resources, as well as a sense of belonging and equality among participants (DRN and ADE 2009, 31) – as has been stated in Chapter 2, the concept in fact disappeared from EU principles at the basis of the ENP in the wake of the Arab uprisings, and was replaced by that of 'mutual accountability'. Still, while the latter was specifically conceived to guide relations at the top institutional level, the EU claimed to pursue the residual ICD programmes loyally to its old and long-standing promise to make them co-owned among the people of the area, with varying fortunes. For instance, *Euromed Youth* continued to be strongly owned by both partner countries and beneficiaries, confirming the success of the decentralisation process of its management from the Commission to national youth units. *Euromed Audiovisual III*, as seen, funded more projects proposed by south Mediterranean institutions than by Europeans. Moreover, the programme was hosted at major cinema festivals both in Europe (Venice, Cannes) and in Arab countries (Amman, Cairo), indirectly reaching thousands of prospective (elite) beneficiaries on both shores. In terms of *Erasmus*, there were substantial efforts to enhance mutual partnerships and joint programmes between higher education institutions from the two shores, providing more bi-directional exchange opportunities for students and scholars. Still, the significant quantitative gap between the south-north and north-south flows of students (3.5 to 1) in the

implementation of this programme suggests that the goal of co-ownership was still far from being achieved when the programme was enclosed into *Erasmus +*.

In contrast, the ALF, which had championed the principle of co-ownership since the first proposal for its establishment (Prodi 2002b) seemed to have partially abandoned this distinctive trait. Indeed, if some initiatives of the Foundation, such as the Alexandria Convention for Intercultural Citizenship Education or the 2013 ALF Forum in Marseilles, appeared to be truly shared, as well as jointly participated in at the Euro-Mediterranean level, two new trends of ALF action during this period can be interpreted as a prospective departure from the original EU ambition of co-owning ICD through the Foundation. First of all, there was a visible shift of focus for ALF activities from the whole Euro-Mediterranean area to Arab MPCs (Walton 2012, 287). This shift was based on what the Foundation's leadership labelled a logic of 'variable geometry', that is, the intention 'to act complementarily at the regional, sub-regional or national level, according to the variety of scenarios coming into view, and the priorities of the ALF donors, which cannot be handled with a one-fits-all policy' (ALF 2011d, 8-9). In particular, the Foundation applied this shift in the framework of its most recent ICD programmes, such as *Dawrak* and *Young Arab Voices*, and initiatives, such as 'Believe in Dialogue/Act for Citizenship'. The second, related trend was a growing commitment to enhancing capacity building activities in Arab MPCs: in other words, the idea of contributing to the advancement of ICD by first creating stronger intercultural competences within these Mediterranean countries' civil societies.

ALF's recent focus on capacity-building initiatives towards Arab civil society was based on the Foundation's first-hand perception of the difficulties faced by young civil society members in the countries of the uprisings, especially in Egypt where the ALF has its headquarters. From this perspective, the related activities and projects can be understood as a temporary but necessary empowerment step to further strengthen the co-ownership of ICD throughout the Mediterranean in a longer-term perspective. This is, indeed, the perspective offered by those working at the Foundation. In particular, as an ALF official claims: 'for the first time our approach has been from the south to the north and these two projects [*Dawrak* and *Young Arab Voices*] have become good practices for now in the new phase to leverage this at the potential Euro-Med level […]; we have a good methodology now that can be shared with our partners in the north […] and we are now ready to use some instruments that we used to use at the Euro-med level in a more balanced way, much more balanced, much more owned' (Interview no. 12,

Aubarell, 2015).

At the same time, however, if pursued further, this recent approach could also undermine the extent of co-ownership of ICD achieved with much endeavour on both shores of the Euro-Mediterranean space so far, and cause the ALF to be increasingly perceived as a European initiative limited to the socio-cultural development of the Arabs only. Such an outcome would unbalance the equilibrium of mutual understanding, respect and knowledge which has been at the root of ICD since the Barcelona Declaration, and has included, from the outset, CSOs from Israel and Turkey and, later on, from the Balkans. The critical position on this matter of Israeli civil society, in particular, seems to be already very clear. As the former head of that ALF national network (until 2014) claims: 'in the last 4-5 years what happens in the Foundation is that instead of working on the Mediterranean concept, what they did is to concentrate on, once again, a European mission to save the poor Arabs in the south, "we have to revive, discover and create civil society in Egypt, in Morocco etc." and the rest was insignificant. No concept of the Mediterranean, nothing' (Interview no. 13, Lapidot, 2015).

Besides the possible effects of the choices made by the ALF leadership in these years on overall ICD co-ownership, for the time being, the Arab uprisings seem to have in fact had some mitigated consequences in increasing the overall sense of belonging to the Foundation and in sharing the values associated to it. As an Egyptian programme assistant of the ALF claimed, although she was introduced to ICD as something that was 'either founded, organised or set by the EU', during the uprisings she felt that 'people are starting to actually think that it could belong to us' (Interview no. 2, Al Sharawi, 2013). This trend would further be confirmed by the data about an improved sharing of common values and perceptions collected in the mentioned report of intercultural trends and social change in the Mediterranean (Spencer 2014; Tozy 2014). As mentioned above, however, those data were collected in 2012 and respondents in the Arab world may have been still affected by the general sense of hope raised by the protests of the previous year, especially in Egypt. Moreover, nothing in these data allow to confirm any evident causal relations between the activities of the ALF and the changing trends identified in the report, although nothing exclude that the efforts of the Foundation have been among the factors behind them.

In the end, however, as ALF Executive Director Claret admits, 'there is still a huge asymmetry in the way in which Europeans and the Arabs are approaching ICD'

(Interview no. 6, 2013). As a consequence, even following the ideas brought in by the ALF in the wake of the uprisings, the diverse efforts made in the last twenty-five years by the EU and its partners have not yet managed to make ICD a co-owned tool in the Euro-Mediterranean space. Still, if it possible to trust the expectations of those working on the new programming of the ALF, at the moment of the interviews, the near future of ICD might be rosier, at least in this respect.

Conclusions: the role of ICD in the 'phase of professionalisation'

This chapter has shown that the historic events in the Arab world in 2011 had visible consequences for the EU's overall approach to the promotion of ICD in its Mediterranean policy. Having consolidated ICD as a priority tool in this area throughout the 2000s, following these events, EU leaders gave more relevance to the ALF, and transferred to the experts driving this institution the primary responsibility for advancing ICD. In fact, this process of professionalisation had its roots in the period before the uprisings. The chapter has shown that, by the end of the 2000s, EU policy-makers had already exhausted their discussions about the possible contributions of ICD to their Mediterranean priorities, while maintaining a steady interest in the ALF as a successful EU programme of cooperation engaging hundreds of CSOs throughout the area. In the meanwhile, the ALF leadership had gradually worked to expand the rationale of ICD to include issues of human rights and democracy and in response to the demands coming from the members of its national civil society networks. From this perspective, the outbreak of the Arab uprisings gave a meaningful boost to these ongoing processes. While not reactivating any discussion about the role of ICD in EUFP, these events prompted EU policy-makers to invest further in the ALF for the ability of the Foundation to both actively engage the civil society of MPCs in ongoing transitions and advance a programme of action for ICD that was key to new EU priorities for that area.

The question of the role which ICD played in overall EU Mediterranean policies in this phase is thus equivalent to evaluating if the ALF played a role and, if so, of what kind. From this perspective, the latter appears to have bestowed upon ICD a dual function. On one level, the ALF played a part (as did many other programmes and tools of the EU) in trying to support sustainable transition processes in MPCs, particularly through the active involvement of its large network of CSOs. This role, however, remains blurred within the multitude of initiatives launched by the EU in sectors such as

education, youth exchange and media, in which ICD had been historically developed until then.

On another level, the ALF worked intensively on building specific capacities for Arab civil society. The Foundation's leadership has motivated this choice as an effort to create new intercultural competences with a view to encouraging Arab CSOs and youth to participate more actively, to own the social and political processes underway and, eventually, to share ICD on the same basis as Europeans. From another perspective, however, this recent commitment by the ALF can also be seen as a relevant shift in the overall scope of ICD within EUFP, especially in terms of the proclaimed EU effort to build regional co-ownership around this tool. From this latter perspective, indeed, the ALF runs the risk of transforming the vague but nonetheless unique identity created around ICD over the years – marked by a solid and long-standing attention to mutual understanding among all the people living in the Euro-Mediterranean area – into one of the several EU's unilateral efforts to provide aid and build capacity in Arab MPCs. From this point of view, another role played by ICD in EUFP during this short period is that of a 'human development tool' designed specifically to empower the Arab component of Mediterranean civil society. While Arab CSOs and youth might certainly benefit in general terms from this emerging function of ICD, this change in approach has already charged ALF efforts with an additional shade of EU paternalism. For instance, as mentioned, some Israeli organisations already see the ALF as part of a process of the development of a contemporary form of European cultural colonialism in the Arab world, one which has nothing to do with the idea of the Mediterranean promised by the EU through ICD over the years.

Overall, the effect of this process of professionalisation on the evolution of ICD within EUFP has been ambivalent. On one hand, as mentioned, this phase led to a rationalisation in the employment of this policy tool. This was a positive and perhaps much-needed step following the fuzzy and disconnected proliferation of programmes and proclamations that characterised the consolidation of ICD in the 2000s. Moreover, it eventually allowed this tool to be primarily advanced by professionals with significant expertise and sensitivity to the real problems and needs on the ground. At the same time, however, this process marked a disengagement of the EU from its general ICD commitment since the responsibility to advance this tool was almost entirely transferred from European institutions and elites to the ideas of the Foundation's leadership. Moreover, while as a result of this shift, the ALF was reinforced and acquired more

visibility in EUFP, the mere EUR 10 million allocated by the Commission to the Foundation during this period suggests that, despite occasional outbursts of rhetoric, the ALF and its action is not considered important enough to extend its vision and try to make a difference at the greater Euro-Mediterranean scale. Significantly, indeed, each of the new regional cooperation programmes launched in the period 2011-2014 received on average more money than the ALF from the Commission.

Given the increasingly regressive milieu that is currently characterising the Mediterranean, the possibility for the ALF to continue on the path started in 2011 and to advance the 'next chapter of Mediterranean dialogue', as the ALF and EU officials promised at the celebrations for its tenth anniversary in Naples in 2014, remains open. As seen in Chapter 2, following the heydays of the uprisings, the EU had to progressively re-consider its priorities for the Mediterranean to address the urgent security concerns evidenced by challenges as the continual turmoil in Libya, the conflict in Syria, the glaring incapability of member states to manage unprecedented arrivals of migrants from those regions affected by conflict, and the return to the spotlight of Islamist terrorism. In face of this alarming scenario, the investment in the ALF to promote ICD among the CSOs of the area could be either moved further to the background of EU priorities, or boosted again, similarly to what happened following the dramatic events of 2001. Part of the fate of ICD will certainly depend on the approach advanced by the new ALF leadership that in 2015 has replaced the entrepreneurial Azoulay-Claret team. More significantly, however, the next steps will eventually derive from the outlook of the current EU policy-makers. Indeed, as this thesis has demonstrated, all the major shifts in the evolution of ICD since the early 1990s have been primarily determined by European elites' preferences in a changing Mediterranean context.

General Conclusions

The overall aim of this thesis has been to shed light on the contradictory and vague approach shown by the EU in its promotion of ICD within the framework of its Mediterranean policies. To this end, this research has analysed the diverse efforts that the EU has put in place to deploy this foreign policy instrument. Focusing on the period 1990-2014, it has explored the differences that at various moments have characterised the formulation, implementation and the roles of ICD, and the reasons behind these changes. Using the conceptual lens of FPA, the research has examined these questions within a broader analysis of the evolution of EUFP in the Mediterranean, investigating the roles of the actors involved in EU policy-making, their changing preferences, and the main internal and external factors that have affected the broad context within which decisions for the Mediterranean have been taken throughout the time period.

1. Empirical findings: change, vagueness and contradiction in the EU promotion of ICD

The first research question aimed to explain why the EU introduced ICD in its external action on the Mediterranean and why it developed a changing approach to the promotion of this tool over time. This thesis has based its main answer to the question on an identification and analysis of periodic shifts in the priorities attributed by the EU to addressing a series of social tensions deriving from political and socio-cultural divergences in Euro-Mediterranean relations, especially with reference to the consequences of spreading Islamic fundamentalism and xenophobic attitudes in Europe vis-à-vis migrants from MPCs. From this perspective, this thesis has argued that overall, the EU has attributed different roles and relevance for the promotion of ICD within its external action on the Mediterranean and, on this basis, has identified and named three distinct phases in the development of this tool. Accordingly, the evolution of ICD has consisted of the following stages; firstly, a slow and patchy 'phase of emergence' (1990-2001), from early EU reflections on mutual understanding within the negotiations of the Barcelona Process to the launch of the first regional programmes of cooperation; secondly, a 'phase of consolidation' (2001-2010), during which the EU put ICD at the top of its priorities and supported the development of several cooperation programmes to implement this tool, including the creation of a specialised institution, the ALF; and thirdly, a more recent 'phase of professionalisation' (2010-2014) in which the EU

stopped discussing ICD as part of the priorities of its external action, and transferred the responsibility for advancing this tool to the ALF.

1.1 The causes of ICD evolution within EU Mediterranean policies

This thesis has shown that these phases of ICD have developed following three major international events that affected the Mediterranean milieu during the research time frame: a) the conclusion of the Cold War in 1990; b) the terror attacks of 9/11, 2001; and c) the outbreak of the 'Arab uprisings' in December 2010. These three events generated noteworthy challenges and opportunities for relations between European and Mediterranean countries and people and accordingly prompted revisions of EU policy priorities and tools for this area. The context generated by each event, therefore, was also relevant to the development of ICD, as it provided a periodic occasion for EU policy-makers to assess and decide if promoting mutual understanding and cooperation among the culturally different civil societies of this area could serve their regional priorities and, if so, to what extent. However, this thesis has demonstrated that, within this changing regional context, the primary driving force behind ICD shifts was how EU leaders understood the importance of the socio-cultural dimension of Euro-Mediterranean relations for overall regional stability, and how they decided to address it. In other words, the three referred international events and their connected challenges for the stability of socio-cultural relations in the Euro-Mediterranean space acted as change enablers for ICD promotion. The determinants of ICD three-phase evolution were the preferences on this matter of the leaders, within EU institutions and member states, who were in charge of EUFP when these events occurred.

As demonstrated in Chapter 3, following the end of the Cold War EU officials and southern EU member states' politicians were deeply concerned about the spread of Islamic fundamentalism and rising xenophobic attitudes both in MPCs and in Europe. However, they considered that acting directly on these matters by favouring sustained exchanges among the peoples of the area was a possibility to be taken seriously but not (yet) an urgent policy priority. As a consequence, the overall EU commitment to ICD and mutual understanding among Euro-Mediterranean civil societies remained confined to policy documents, and took much time to be developed and implemented with practical cooperation programmes managed by the European Commission.

Chapter 4 has demonstrated that, in his capacity of President of the institution, Romano Prodi was already advocating the importance of addressing what he considered

a worrying socio-cultural gap between European and Mediterranean people before the events of 9/11, through strengthening the existing EU's commitment to ICD. From this perspective, when the existing difficulties with Islamic fundamentalism and xenophobia in Euro-Mediterranean relations were magnified in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, Prodi, supported by the majority of the member states holding the EU Presidency during that period (i.e. Sweden, Spain, Italy and Greece), easily managed to shape the EU agenda for the Mediterranean on the basis of his conception of ICD's utility, and thus to raise the visibility and resources of this tool as well as consolidating it, especially through his strong input for the creation of the ALF as a key tool of regional cooperation.

When the Arab uprisings broke out in late 2010, the ALF eventually took the opportunity to demonstrate to EU leaders the successful work it had carried out since its establishment in 2005, and its overall ability to engage the civil societies of the Mediterranean. In fact, the ALF – created by the EU to be a driving force for change in the region – did not play any noteworthy role in the outbreak and initial spread of the uprisings, despite being based in an Arab country, Egypt and, as shown in Chapter 5, having previously collected considerable data about changing trends in south Mediterranean societies. Like the majority of the international actors involved in the region, the Foundation was initially taken by surprise by the events of early 2011. Still, the ability of the ALF leadership in depicting the growing expertise and credibility of the Foundation in the eyes of European policy-makers played a part in changing the overall approach of the EU vis-à-vis ICD. It was also on this basis, indeed, that EU policy-makers eventually attributed the Foundation the overall responsibility to develop and implement ICD in the area during this phase.

As in the past, this latest shift in ICD was enabled by the changed regional milieu, since the sudden emergence of a cohesive and organised Arab civil society in the wake of the uprisings created a new and unexpected opportunity for the EU to invest further in cooperation with the CSOs of the area. However, as Chapter 5 has shown, the primary motivation for the transfer of responsibilities for ICD to the ALF is again to be found in the changed preferences of EU policy-makers in charge of external action during that period. Already before the outbreak of the uprisings, top officials in the Commission and EU member states had developed their own priorities for the Mediterranean neighbourhood. They had to a large extent exhausted the discussion about the possible relevance of ICD in EUFP and were primarily interested in

promoting the socio-economic development of MPCs and their people, without much emphasis on mutuality, cultural diversity and exchanges between the two shores. EU policy-makers, however, had also continued to value the ALF as a successful programme whose activities were, overall, complementary to the then EU priorities in that area, including promoting development among the people of the south and collecting first-hand data about their perceptions of Europe.

The phase-by-phase evolution in ICD promotion has been the result of negotiation among the preferences of the varied range of actors involved in EU foreign policy-making. Among these, however, this thesis has identified a particular contribution in the agency of the Commission. This is because although ICD has been discussed and promoted during the time frame in reference in the framework of various components of EUFP vis-à-vis the Mediterranean where supranational institutions play a minor role (including the CFSP and the JHA sector), the EU has largely developed this tool in the context of its 'external relations'. As set out in Chapter 1, 'external relations' has encompassed the component of EUFP where, in the framework of a strategic interest negotiated among member states within the European Council, the Commission has been attributed the lion's share in formulating proposals and coordinating policies and tools.

From this perspective, this study's understanding of agency as individual human beings taking decisions and implementing them on behalf of state and non-state entities (see Hill 2016, 58) has allowed it to examine the specific contribution to change in ICD brought by the perceptions and ideas of different officials within the Commission. In particular, it has highlighted the outlooks of the Presidents, those individuals tasked with, *inter alia*, the determination of the agenda of this institution, and the various Commissioners responsible for external relations and the neighbourhood.

This contribution has been observed, for instance, in the way in which the latest two Presidents of the Commission – Prodi and Barroso – prompted shifts in the relevance and role of ICD for EU external action by stretching the broad meaning of 'culture' according to their personal conceptions of it. As shown in Chapter 4, Prodi had a broad understanding of culture and, starting from this perspective, perceived the Mediterranean question as mainly a cultural question. He thus worked to strengthen and then consolidate ICD as an all-encompassing tool to address tensions connected to all the different elements that the concept of culture could subsume: religion, ethnicity, identity, values and all the artefacts associated with them. Barroso, on the other hand,

conceived culture as mostly connected with the social-economic development of the EU in a global context. While the promotion of culture in EU external relations remained at the core of the Barroso Commission's agenda, this was to create growth and development. By contrast, the scope of ICD as consolidated by Prodi found increasingly less space in that agenda (see Chapter 5). Thus, although ICD was not removed from the toolbox of EUFP for the Mediterranean during Barroso's two terms in office, especially during the second (2009-2014), the actual responsibility for its advancement was moved to a specialised institution, the ALF, which was the main outcome of Prodi's idea of the role that culture should play in EU external relations.

However, if the overall meaning of culture and the role of cultural tools (including ICD) have considerably changed as a consequence of different EU leaders' understanding of these broad concepts, the thesis has also demonstrated that the *raison d'etre* of ICD has remained tightly connected to the implementation and outcomes of other, mostly security-driven, policies and initiatives of the EU in the Mediterranean. This strong connection emerges in all the three phases of ICD promotion addressed in this study. It is evident in the gradual emergence and in the consolidation of ICD. As shown in chapters 3 and 4, the tool was first considered and then urged by the EU as a compensation to both the shortcomings and the negative outcomes, especially in terms of stable relations between Europe and MPCs, of the other tools wielded in the political, security and JHA components of the Barcelona Process. The same functional connection has developed in different policy areas, but has remained clear during the last phase. Chapter 5, indeed, has shown that the EU has exploited ICD and the ALF to promote human rights and a broader civil society engagement also with a view to offer an alternative to the, in fact non-existent, paradigm shift that it had promised to support democratisation and human rights in the countries of the uprisings. Therefore, in all the three phases culture, or better cultural and religious differences among the people of the area, have not been the target of ICD. Working on these aspects have rather been the 'working method' of a policy tool that has been primarily wielded to remediate to the consequences and compensate the failures of other ineffective and often partial EU policies in the area. This consideration also explains why, as will be further discussed below, MPCs' representatives have approached ICD with a permanent sense of suspicion and scepticism.

By enabling an analysis of change and continuity in the various EU policy makers' preferences vis-à-vis the promotion of ICD, FPA has been fundamental to

identifying this three-phase evolution of ICD and its causes, as well as in framing such evolution into a continuous process within EU foreign policy-making. In particular, it has allowed connection and discussion within the same actor-centred account of the different sets of scattered and at times inconsistent objectives, programmes and initiatives launched by the EU under the label of ICD over time within a changing Mediterranean milieu.

In this context, it should be pointed out that Chapter 2 of this thesis has also considered and discussed other events and factors that affected the broader Mediterranean policy context within which the EU developed ICD, for example the changing dynamics of Arab-Israeli relations and the various stages of EU enlargement. It has demonstrated, however, that these other factors did not enable specific opportunities for change in ICD overall promotion. One explanation for this is that although they were relevant in terms of EU policy makers' consideration of revisions to the general European approach to this area (enlargement towards the East, for instance, pressed the EU to launch the ENP in 2003), those events had rather indirect effects on the socio-cultural divide among Euro-Mediterranean civil societies, which was the main target underlying EU leaders' efforts for ICD from the inception of this tool in 1990. The developments in Arab-Israeli relations were in fact considered by the EU in expanding ICD objectives and the relevance of this tool for regional stability. On a few occasions, indeed, ICD was used in attempts at building peace and reconciliation at the grassroots in the MPCs involved in conflict situations such as, for instance, during the Israeli-Hezbollah crisis in 2006, and following 2008-2009 Israeli operation 'Cast Lead' in the Gaza Strip (see Chapter 4). In the end, though, applying ICD in that context merely added a further field of action for CSOs projects – labelled 'peace and coexistence' – without favouring a major reassessment of the general scope and relevance of this tool during the period investigated.

1.2 The consequences of EU/MPCs compromise within ICD's changing scope

The identification of EU foreign policy-makers' preferences as the main reason determining these three phases represents an original explanation of why overall EU efforts on ICD changed over the years. This finding, in fact, also provides an answer to the second research question, which was aimed at understanding how the EU has changed its approach to ICD throughout these three phases. Indeed, in attributing a different relevance and meaning to this tool, EU policy-makers' changing preferences

have also affected ICD objectives and how these were presented, the types of programmes supported to pursue such objectives, and the diverse roles this tool has played, phase by phase, in relation to the broader goals of EU Mediterranean policies.

From this perspective, however, this thesis has demonstrated that the way in which ICD objectives were formulated and its programmes and initiatives agreed upon and implemented within each phase often also conveyed a compromise between the interests and priorities of European policy-makers on one hand, and the claims of MPCs' representatives on this matter on the other. Indeed, European leaders have shown at times competing interests and ideas in how to advance ICD. Generally speaking, however, they have favoured and agreed a multiplication of both the policy objectives to which this tool could have contributed and of the number of practical activities that could have helped these objectives, regardless of whether they were supporting ICD or not. By contrast, MPCs, and especially Arab ones, systematically approached ICD with some suspicion, fearing that this tool could hide new forms of European colonialism, and an imperialism based on western culture and values. Although, as will be detailed below, the leaders of Mediterranean countries eventually accepted and paid lip-service to both the introduction and the various developments of ICD prompted by the EU over time, they also enforced a parallel commitment to oppose or at least control its formulation and implementation.

For instance, during the 'phase of emergence' EU policy-makers mainly conceived of ICD as a tool to combat religious fundamentalism and reduce the causes of xenophobia and racism in Europe. However, the EU was not entirely convinced about the need to enforce cooperation on these matters as a priority of the EMP. In this context, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, MPCs easily succeeded in maintaining a broad understanding for the objectives of this tool, contributing also to delaying its implementation within the Barcelona Process. The goal of ICD in this whole phase remained simply that of bringing the people of Europe and the Mediterranean closer and promoting mutual understanding among them, without any reference to the specific areas where this mutual understanding should have been developed (according to EU policy-makers).

By contrast, when Prodi and EU member states put ICD at the top of their agenda in order to foster overall progress in Euro-Mediterranean relations in the early 2000s, MPCs could not oppose the momentum gained by ICD. Thus, they took their concerns about the new developments of this tool within Euro-Mediterranean negotiations, and

particularly within those concerning the forthcoming ICD Foundation, which had been proposed by the Commission as a key resource in the future of regional cooperation. In this more cooperative perspective, the objectives of ICD were quickly allowed to become more specific. The creation of mutual understanding was explicitly framed within a shared understanding of ICD as an efficient means of conflict prevention, and as an instrument to fight fanaticism of any kind, be it extremism, racism and xenophobia, and in addition to foster the active participation of the civil society of the area (EMP 2003b, items 15-16). Some MPCs, such as Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan, even committed more financial and logistical resources to show support to the EU's emphasis on this matter. Their underlying suspicion of ICD, however, visibly emerged in the influence exercised by MPCs' representatives in opposing or diluting the substance of ICD implementation, especially within the ALF where decisions about new ICD initiatives and projects were to be first negotiated in the inter-governmental Board. As shown in Chapter 4, for instance, MPCs' ambassadors within the ALF Board successfully put on the pressure to water down the scope of those ICD activities that went beyond strict cultural and artistic cooperation and envisaged an engagement of their people on 'politicised' issues such as religious diversity (Egypt and Morocco) or Arab-Israeli peace (Israel, Lebanon and Syria).

Following the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, the EU gave *carte blanche* to ALF leaders' conception of ICD, which, on the basis of the inputs coming from the CSOs from the whole area, was developed around the nexus between dialogue, citizenship, democracy, and human rights. The ALF thus managed to add to EU policies on the Mediterranean its own bottom-up conception of ICD's function, a contribution that was particularly appreciated and exploited by EU policy-makers. Through the initiative of the ALF, in particular, the EU started promoting ICD as a tool to build the intercultural competences and skills it considered necessary to help civil society to participate more actively and consciously in the social and political changes underway in Arab countries. In this context, the level of opposition of MPCs' politicians was surprisingly low. As argued in Chapter 5, this was due to the fact that, when the ALF presented its plan of action in 2011, most of MPCs were overwhelmed by the political turmoil brought about by the uprisings. Even in this case, however, MPCs displayed their ever-present suspicion towards ICD in the actual implementation of such ambitious ALF programme of action. In particular, they worked to reduce, with some success, the scope and fields of action of those initiatives through which, with full support of the EU, the Foundation was, for the first time in ICD's evolution, explicitly connecting the enhancement of this

tool to the promotion of human rights and democracy across the Mediterranean. For instance, they pressed for re-labelling new ALF projects and initiatives that had the word 'democracy' in their title, tolerating as an acceptable replacement, the much more vague term 'citizenship' (see Chapter 5). The continual need to compromise between ICD promotion as envisaged phase by phase by the EU, and the concerns of MPCs vis-à-vis this tool represents thus also a major cause of the vagueness that has characterised ICD formulation and implementation in different periods of the large time frame in reference.

The levels of compromise achieved between the EU and its MPCs concerning the promotion of ICD partly also influenced the roles that this tool actually played in EU Mediterranean policies beyond European rhetoric and expectations. During the first phase, when ICD was not pursued as a priority by the EU and did not particularly affect MPCs' concerns, the main role played by this tool was one of capacity building. As shown in Chapter 3, ICD was indeed intended to create an initial basis of intercultural expertise among CSOs and governments of both Europe and the Mediterranean on which further cooperation could possibly be built. During the second phase, when both the EU and MPCs agreed to bolster ICD in Euro-Mediterranean relations, the EU could eventually deploy the tool as a (soft) security instrument: Chapter 4 has shown that, through the launch of cooperation programmes and region-wide initiatives during the early 2000s, ICD was explicitly wielded to try to encourage a response at the grassroots which allowed to address the causes and consequences of some of the key threats affecting the security of European and MPCs' citizens, namely those linked to fundamentalism, terrorism, xenophobia and racist violence against migrants. In the third phase, while both the EU and MPCs devoted less attention to discussing ICD in the new context of their relations, they agreed to have the role of this tool eventually shaped by how the ALF elaborated the needs emerging from the grassroots within the new framework of priorities set out by the Commission and the High Representative in the context of the uprisings. The main role that the Foundation played for EU policies in this perspective was, as shown in Chapter 5, that of promoting ICD mostly as a human development tool, focused on empowering and further mobilising Arab civil society in the alleged democratic transitions underway in some MPCs.

1.3 The changing extent of the ICD rhetoric-performance gap

In identifying and contextualising the material and ideational factors that have

affected EU policy-makers' approach to ICD in an evolving Mediterranean milieu, this research has provided a comprehensive explanation of why and how change has characterised ICD from 1990 to 2014. Within this general evolution, the compromises made between EU leaders' preferences about how ICD should be advanced and the concerns of MPCs on this matter contributed significantly to the vagueness surrounding the promotion of this tool. Despite these diverse inputs, however, over the years and of course with different degrees of visibility and resources, ICD implementation has remained in fact the sum of a few programmes launched by the EU with the stated aim of mobilising Euro-Mediterranean civil societies and reducing the socio-cultural divides existing among the people of this area. From this perspective, the analysis of the gap between EU policy rhetoric about ICD and its actual performance in the field, which was the goal of the third research question, has been particularly helpful also to understand the causes for the several contradictions that have characterised both ICD formulation and implementation during the three phases of its evolution.

This study has assessed this gap in terms of consistency, co-ordination and co-ownership of ICD initiatives, actual engagement of CSOs therein, and overall resources allocated by the EU to these efforts. In general terms, this gap has remained noteworthy and constant over time. However, as the overall promotion of ICD has changed according to the factors and processes recalled above, this gap has also taken on different shades, depending on the specific phase of ICD under consideration.

The emergence of ICD marked the importance of a cultural dimension in international politics (Schumacher 2001, 95), a move that was surrounded by implicit EU promises and by expectations, especially by analysts (Bicchi 2006; Adler and Crawford 2006; Pace 2006), about the launch of an innovative and truly comprehensive European policy towards the Mediterranean. However, the resources allocated to ICD accounted for less than 1% of the overall budget of the EU for Mediterranean, and for only about 9% of the resources devoted to regional cooperation (see Chapter 3). Although the money invested is just one of the indicators to be taken into account, it is clear that a considerable gap existed from the outset. However, this was not easily detectable because, in fact, aside from the original choice of introducing ICD within the EMP in 1995, the ensuing EU rhetoric on this instrument, although always present, remained rather restrained. ICD was indeed at an early development stage within EUFP, as European policy-makers were still considering how helpful promoting mutual understanding could actually have been in the context of Euro-Mediterranean relations.

During the next phase, this gap did not, in fact, grow. However, it became more evident, in particular because the consolidation of ICD was carried out by the EU in widespread popular anxiety accompanied by a growing sense of urgency, further reinforced by EU alarmist rhetoric, concerning the challenges that ICD was expected to address. As shown in Chapter 4, during the 2001-2010 period ICD was often presented to European and Mediterranean people as a remedy to the many tensions connected to terrorism, fundamentalism and xenophobia that characterised regional relations especially following the events of 9/11. On a positive note, the commitment to promoting ICD through increased education, media and youth exchanges was followed by the extension of EU higher education programmes providing scholarships and exchange experiences to thousands of students and academic staff on both shores of the Mediterranean (*Erasmus Mundus*, *Tempus*). As well as this, overall resources for ICD grew to 3.5% of the overall EU budget for the southern neighbourhood and to 23% of the part of that budget devoted to regional cooperation. At the same time, however, this still noteworthy proliferation of efforts to formulate and implement ICD during the 2000s proved scattered and, at times, contradictory. For instance, Chapter 4 has demonstrated that the creation of the ALF, on which the EU built the biggest expectations, was plagued by delays and contradictions due, in particular, to the various claims advanced by EMP countries trying to gain control of this new institution. Indeed, due to the growing interest and concerns of some governments toward this initiative, the ALF ended up being less autonomous and ambitious than had been expected by its promoters in the European Commission, and was provided with minimum resources compared to those recommended by President Prodi and the experts that he had gathered to give substance to his ICD policy. Thus, to substantiate its claims about the need for ICD, the Commission significantly raised the expectations of this tool and the resources to satisfy them. However, as ICD became a strategic tool of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, the translation of such rhetoric into action conflicted with the specific national interests of some EU member states and MPCs, and was limited by the need to find a compromise between the latter and the preferences expressed by Prodi and his collaborators. Despite, as stressed at the beginning of these Conclusions, the Commission having played a major role in formulating and implementing ICD within EU's 'external relations', the European approach to the advancement of this tool during this phase confirms that, overall, EU policy in the Mediterranean in practice results from a continuous competition among the different actors and policy components making up EUFP (see Seidelmann 2009, 268-269; Edwards 2013, 283).

During the 'phase of professionalisation', it is tempting to form the assessment that the rhetoric-performance gap of ICD ceased to exist. Following the Arab uprisings, indeed, the concept of ICD almost disappeared from EU rhetoric. Moreover, the huge increase in resources allocated for the years which remained of programmes such as *Erasmus Mundus, Tempus*, or *Euromed Youth* as part of the EU response to the Arab uprisings caused an astounding yet temporary rise in the total resources for ICD promotion, up to some 7% of the overall budget for the Mediterranean neighbourhood during this phase, and to about 35% of the total budget for regional cooperation. At the same time, European policy-makers continued to stress in their policy documents and declarations the relevance of the ALF for EU policy objectives in the area. However, the ALF remained in fact a temporary three-year programme co-funded by the EU and by those European and Mediterranean states which actually fulfil their financial pledges (very few, as has been shown in both Chapters 4 and 5). In this light, and bearing in mind that the ALF had been created with huge ambitions, the 'pocket money' allocated to ALF activities (EUR 10 million for three years by the Commission) is definitely not enough to cover the wide range of initiatives and fields of action that the Foundation is tasked or expected to perform. In transferring to the ALF the responsibilities for ICD, therefore, the EU has also developed a rhetoric-performance gap by proxy: the ALF has become the indirect repository of the ever-present EU rhetoric-performance gap in the promotion of ICD, and has replicated all its main features. Within its circumscribed and 'professionalised' framework, the ALF is indeed reproducing the clash of interests and compromises among the plural actors involved in Euro-Mediterranean relations, within a complex regional milieu that makes ICD implementation increasingly difficult.

The rhetoric-performance gap in ICD promotion has also been investigated in terms of the efforts made by the EU to nurture active participation of CSOs from both shores in ICD initiatives. The engagement of these actors has been an explicit target at each stage of ICD promotion. From this perspective, EU rhetoric on engaging CSOs has been significant. Throughout the time frame of this research the EU has gradually increased the resources and efforts invested in helping CSOs have a stronger input in ICD. However, as has been demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis, the EU has rarely in practice pursued these efforts with the determination needed to really apply its rhetoric to the matter. To explain this inability, it is necessary to frame ICD in the broader difficulty that the EU has had in involving civil society in the Mediterranean area. Beyond the rhetoric, indeed, some MPCs oppose giving too much autonomy or visibility to CSOs, in particular to human rights movements, which are traditional

challengers to Arab autarchies. From this perspective, as the rhetoric on ICD and CSOs involvement in it increased, there was at the same time an increase in the overall suspicion of MPCs for this tool vis-à-vis the EU. In this context, however, the EU preferred to break its promises with the expected beneficiaries of ICD efforts rather than pushing these countries toward empowering CSOs, at least until early 2011.

In that period, the EU saw the Arab uprisings as an opportunity to commit further and more credibly to promoting a partnership with the societies of the Mediterranean, and the ALF was part and parcel of such renewed effort. Euro-Mediterranean CSOs were eventually given an active role in defining the formulation and implementation of ICD during this period, as the programme of action proposed by the ALF in 2011 was mostly designed from input collected from their needs and requests. However, as mentioned above, despite it being among the EU initiatives most directly tasked to monitor civil society trends in the Mediterranean space, the ALF was surprised by the events, and did not manage to capitalise on the outstanding results obtained by those civil society movements that actually pushed and led the mobilisations in the early 2010s. The sustained focus in capacity building and creating intercultural skills in ALF action can be thus also observed in the framework of a more general attempt by the EU to catch up with these movements and the general needs they expressed from the bottom up during the protests, similarly to the brand-new *European Endowment for Democracy*. Despite these efforts, however, the number of people and organisations affected by ICD through the Foundation, while significant and still tending to increase, is not yet representative of the reality of civil society existing in the Euro-Mediterranean space, especially in Arab MPCs. The ever-present trap of 'professionalism' – i.e. the problem of always engaging the same CSOs' representatives and groups sharing similar ideas about ICD in ALF activities – has not been diminished. In particular, the Foundation has encountered further difficulties in involving religious organisations and individuals in its recent activities. On one hand, as the empirical data discussed in Chapter 5 have shown, the idea of ICD prompted by the ALF since 2011, linked to human rights, democracy and citizenship, remains in the eyes of many people of the Mediterranean linked to values that, although shared by the protesters during the early uprisings, remain associated with Europe and the West. On the other, as repeatedly stressed, the ALF is a programme of the EU controlled by an inter-governmental Board which includes also MPCs' ambassadors. These can have a say on the various members of their national network and thus hamper, as in fact they have frequently done, the access to the ALF for those individuals and groups with religious connotations who

might show interest in taking part into such dialogue (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Connected to this aspect, another dimension of the rhetoric-performance gap in the EU promotion of ICD has been observed in the level of co-ownership reached by this tool. Certainly, between the early steps of the Barcelona Process and the type of interaction seen in the most recent ICD initiatives, such as the ALF Forum of Marseilles in 2013 or the enthusiastic participation of young people in *Euromed Youth IV*, there has been some gradual improvement in the balance of reciprocal appreciation between the civil societies of Europe and of the Mediterranean. However, the meaning of co-ownership, in principle, was not intended by the EU to mean simply making people of both shores equally satisfied with the common institutions and the opportunities for interaction and cooperation that these make available. The promise of co-ownership in fact implied a deeper conception and a much broader outreach, and the sharing of responsibilities and costs among all the actors involved, including governments. From this more comprehensive perspective, it is possible to conclude that ICD promotion, and, as a matter of fact, any other instrument or initiative promoted by the EU in its Mediterranean policy, has never even come close to this idea of co-ownership, neither through the Euromed ICD programmes, the extension of EU higher education programmes, nor the ALF.

The reason for this lack of ownership lies precisely in the fact that ICD is a tool of EUFP in the Mediterranean and not a shared process, as some of the EU's rhetoric might suggest. Accordingly, as should be expected in dealing with a policy instrument, the change in relevance, resources, objectives and programmes concerning ICD came unilaterally from the EU and was only slightly affected by the need to accommodate some preoccupations of other actors involved in MPCs. In addition, CSOs of the Euro-Mediterranean area were for a long time merely a repository of EU ideas and choices while their inputs were rarely taken into account by the EU in revising the goals or fields of its understanding of ICD. In light of what has been concluded so far, therefore, the principle of co-ownership resulted largely in an unsuccessful attempt to make Mediterranean countries and people less suspicious of EU-proposed initiatives. Despite ICD practitioners and beneficiaries actually sharing a strong feeling of 'Mediterraneanness' due also to EU efforts over time, there has never been the possibility for this tool to be truly and fully co-owned among them.

If co-ownership was really crucial to advancing ICD, the EU and the ALF could have used the uprisings to exploit the spectacular emergence of Arab civil society

therein, in order to increase exchange among all the people of the Euro-Mediterranean space. In practice, the main focus of ICD was placed on the construction of what the ALF staff termed 'intercultural skills' for democracy, citizenship and development in Arab civil society. As elaborated in Chapter 5, this choice by the ALF might prove successful to improve feeling of ownership to ICD over a longer term, because the ALF has started working to empower a part of Mediterranean civil society that has always been difficult to substantially engage in EU initiatives. At the same time, however this choice risks distancing those CSOs that are neither European nor Arab (that is, those belonging to the Israeli, Turkish and Balkan ALF's national networks) from an established understanding of ICD as a common Euro-Mediterranean project involving all the people of this area together and on the same footing.

From this perspective, two possible scenarios might emerge in ICD's advancement and ownership. If the Foundation continues to claim regional co-ownership among its principles of action while cultivating ICD as merely a Euro-Arab tool, the other people of the Euro-Mediterranean space might abandon their interest and commitment in participating in the ALF and in ICD. This possible outcome, among other consequences, would paradoxically move the EU's approach to dialogue with MPCs back to the unsuccessful experiences of the 1970s, when socio-cultural cooperation started to be discussed in the so-called 'Euro-Arab dialogue'. By contrast, if the idea of co-owning ICD at the Euro-Mediterranean level is eventually sidelined, as anticipated, the ALF might rapidly transform into a decentralised development cooperation programme of the Commission that specifically addresses the Arab world, if only because UfM members' pledges to co-fund the ALF tend to be not honoured by most of them. In this second scenario, however, a significant rhetoric-performance gap will derive from naming as 'ICD' something that, in fact, is no longer aimed at engaging all the culturally different people of the whole Euro-Mediterranean area in a shared bottom-up effort to mutually improve the quality of their relations.

A final aspect of the rhetoric-performance gap investigated in this thesis concerned the coordination and management of the resources and fields of action of the various ICD initiatives by EU bureaucracies. Attention to this aspect was recommended in several institutional contexts at the European and Euro-Mediterranean level. However, as has already been mentioned in these Conclusions, the efforts made by EU bureaucrats to this end have been minimal, despite the fact that in administrative terms, the same unit within the Commission has managed the majority of ICD programmes,

including the ALF. This lack of coordination is certainly a by-product of the piecemeal process and of the vagueness which has characterised ICD implementation and has mainly resulted from a compromise between the different needs and preferences of European officials and member states' representatives involved into this process. Still, as the Commission is the main actor responsible for managing EU 'external relations' tools, and ICD has in large part been developed as one of these instruments, those working in the offices of this institution share some responsibility for the lack of coordination that has affected the overall implementation of ICD in the Mediterranean and contributed to its wide rhetoric-performance gap.

In analytical terms, this last finding confirms that all the typologies of actors that contribute shaping EUFP must be taken into account in order to understand in depth the various factors that characterise the overall promotion of such a foreign policy tool. Indeed, as mentioned, if the compromises among the preferences of EU officials and member states' representatives explain the major shifts concerning the role and scope of ICD in Euro-Mediterranean relations, the actual implementation of this tool, besides MPCs' concerns, has also been affected by the understanding of ICD held by single programme managers within EU bureaucracies.

2. Engaging with competing explanations

The comprehensive account of ICD provided within this research advances original knowledge on several aspects related to both the promotion of this tool specifically, and the conduct of EUFP in the Mediterranean in general. The choice to ground this research in FPA, combined with the adoption of a long time frame during which, as shown, several changes have affected the development of both EU priorities in the Mediterranean and the context into which policy has been applied, has proved very fruitful in this regard. First, this choice has provided the big picture within which the analysis of change and continuity in EU policies and ICD has addressed several gaps within the relevant literature, allowing previous findings on this matter to be contextualised from an original integrated perspective. Secondly, it has exposed several new aspects and factors in the development of ICD and, to some extent, on EUFP that the existing research on this subject, both empirically and conceptually grounded, has not managed to cover and examine.

2.1 Empirical contributions to ICD knowledge and connected debates

The first original contribution to ICD knowledge derives from the analysis of the actual origins of ICD within EU policies on the Mediterranean. On this matter, the literature tends to agree on setting the starting point of ICD as the formal introduction of this tool within the Barcelona Declaration of 1995. This research, however, has identified motivations for its introduction in the Europe-wide policy-formulation process that began in the wake of the Cold War and ended with the launch of the EMP itself. As this early period of EU policy-making was a catalyst for the establishment of the Barcelona Process, it must thus also be considered crucial to understanding the reasons for the introduction of this foreign policy tool therein. As a result, the thesis has shown that, when negotiating in the Catalan city, the EU had already developed a noteworthy reflection on the potential contribution to regional stability in creating mutual understanding among the culturally different people of this area. This reflection, as recalled above, was much more specific and strategic, in terms of pursuing the long-term conditions for the security of European and Mediterranean people, than what was eventually agreed and written in the Barcelona Declaration.

An earlier starting point for ICD than the one generally agreed upon has thus been identified, and in doing so, this research has also unveiled a period of EU formulation of the objectives of this tool previously neglected in the relevant literature. More significantly, however, this original finding has provided a different perspective to those offered by other analysts on how the various moments of ICD promotion can be assessed. For instance, all agree that the components of the human, social, and cultural partnership (the so-called 'third basket') of the EMP, including ICD, were neglected during the early years of the Barcelona Process. In this context, many have claimed that these components were initially subordinate, serving as a type of appendix to the gains pursued (or rather, expected) through improved cooperation in the political, security, and trade spheres (Jünemann 2003b; Gillespie 2003; Schumacher 2007). However, the interconnection observed in Chapter 3 between the objectives formulated for the precursors of ICD before 1995, and the political, security, and socio-economic priorities of the EU in the Mediterranean (these latter priorities already related to the alarming increase of fundamentalisms, terrorism and xenophobic attitudes versus migrants from MPCs), demonstrates that the introduction of ICD in the EMP was no secondary afterthought for Europe. The compromise made by the EU in the Barcelona Declaration to accommodate the claims of Mediterranean partners, therefore, left ICD and its

rationale vague and also delayed implementation. However, this does not mean it can be considered a mere add-on to EU action in the EMP.

This original finding is also particularly helpful in addressing the set of empirical findings on aspects of ICD that emerged during its 'phase of consolidation' from a slightly different perspective than the one exposed by the strand of literature that addressed ICD in a context of security, especially following the events of 9/11 2001. That literature, in particular, strongly criticises the EU for having politicised ICD and for having changed the rationale of this tool, orienting the latter toward the promotion of security rather than to enhancing cultural exchange and mutual understanding (Malmvig 2007; Gündüz 2007; Del Sarto 2007). However, as the EU conceived ICD from the very beginning as potentially helpful in addressing the then-emerging security concerns deriving from a worrisome socio-cultural divide between the two shores of the Mediterranean, the choice to push this tool with more determination at a moment when these same concerns became stronger, or at least more evident, appears in fact implicit in the growing 'success' of ICD as a EUFP instrument. The bulk of the analysis of this specific phase, therefore, can be easily moved from criticising the fact that the EU politicised ICD following 9/11 to an evaluation of the ideational and material causes at the basis of the consolidation of this tool. Due to this change in perspective, in particular, Chapter 4 has succeeded in uncovering the role of different EU policy-makers' preferences in determining ICD consolidation during this period and the contribution of the compromise between EU's objectives and MPCs' concerns in explaining the vague and, at times, contradictory deployment of ICD and its wide rhetoric-performance gap. In addition, this change of perspective has also favoured a better contextualisation of the other shifts undertaken by ICD in the research time frame.

Indeed, delving into the bigger picture of EU action in the Mediterranean has allowed all moments of the promotion of ICD to be brought under analysis, including those that have apparently held less relevance. In fact, as the relevant scholarship on this matter (which mushroomed in the mid-2000s) indirectly confirms, most of the significant developments concerning this subject happened during the consolidation phase of ICD (2001-2010). This research also confirms that the actions of the EU before 2001 and after 2010 are less significant in terms of specific EU discussion and practical efforts to advance ICD. It is no coincidence, indeed, that the first phase was labelled with the term 'emergence', while, in the third phase, the focus of empirical analysis

shifted from the priorities of EU policy-makers to the input of ICD experts and practitioners in what was termed as the 'phase of professionalisation'. However, part of the originality of this research lies in explaining these changes and vagueness of ICD within the broad and lengthy continuum of EUFP in the Mediterranean and, specifically, within the changing preferences of EU leaders in charge of it.

From this perspective, the analysis of ICD during the 'emergence' and the 'professionalisation' phases is absolutely relevant in order to tell the full story of the EU's commitment to promoting this tool, and thus advances knowledge on under-researched aspects of EUFP decisions concerning the Mediterranean. Through an integrated analysis of all phases, this study has been able to demonstrate that ICD has been defined by a sequence of steps and that, at the root of these steps, there has been both change and continuity concerning the personal ideas and concerns of different EU officials in the Commission and member states, the preoccupations and interests of some MPCs, the constraints of a developing EUFP system, and the Mediterranean policy context into which this tool has been developed. This thesis has shown, in other words, that ICD promotion in EU external action can be fully understood and assessed only by in-depth investigation of all factors and actors – both within and outside Europe – involved during the longer possible time frame of reference.

This research also contributes, within its necessarily limited scope, to a better empirical knowledge, with historical depth, of how EUFP works. As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, some EU foreign policy analysts have identified a general scholarly need of this kind together with the necessity to conceptualise the EU's international role and identity within a stronger empirical grounding (Smith K. 2008b, 2; Schunz 2010, 23). In the process of investigating the causes of ICD's evolution, this research also gives an account, from an original and under-researched viewpoint, of how the actors, processes and outcomes of EUFP have interacted and changed over more than two decades. Not all these actors and factors specifically affected ICD's scope and rationale; nonetheless, they were part of a broader context concerning EU leaders' choices in relation this tool. For instance, this account shows how the gradual growth of a European polity (from a European Community of 10 members to the current European Union of 28) has affected the overall relevance, resources and tools of Mediterranean cooperation within EUFP, including in terms of balance between EU priorities in Eastern Europe and MPCs. The research also draws in empirical data concerning the development of the overall system of EUFP, from the pre-Maastricht

foreign policy competences of the EC to the most recent changes introduced with the Lisbon Treaty, affecting the specific competences of the various EU actors and the balance among them in shaping the outcomes of external action and of its tools.

In its effort to provide a contextualised account of ICD promotion, moreover, this research also provides significant empirical knowledge of how, over the years, the EU has promoted its cultural policy tools. In particular, Chapter 3 has shown how cultural tools were initially defined and introduced by the EU in its foreign policy towards the Mediterranean; Chapter 4 has accounted for how and to what extent EU institutions and member states have bargained the possible uses of culture-related initiatives to bring about regional and international stability; Chapter 5 has addressed the expected applications of cultural policy tools for the socio-economic dimension of EU's external relations in comparison to those awaited from the deployment of ICD. The findings of this analysis therefore also act as empirical ground for conceptual debates on the EU that imply an investigation of how the latter deploys its 'civilian' foreign policy instruments, such as those on 'soft' and 'normative' power mentioned in the Introduction. The different ways in which ICD was proposed to MPCs during the time frame indeed represent different expressions of a single effort by the EU to use dialogue and the promotion of common values as a first-choice method to solve a number of crucial problems of Mediterranean stability, such as the low participation of civil society in public life, the lack of meaningful respect for human rights and religious diversity, or the need to cease regional conflicts.

Eventually, this analysis also helps explain EU choices vis-à-vis current regional concerns with the benefit of an historical perspective on its previous action on these matters. In particular, the overview made in Chapter 2 has shown that the EU has addressed a set of persistent challenges characterising the relations between European and Mediterranean people over time – namely religious fundamentalisms, xenophobic attitudes and other related socio-cultural tensions –, and that it has developed and then brought back different policy initiatives and tools without, however, managing to tackle them satisfactorily. As these challenges are still major issues in the EU agenda, this thesis provides rich empirical knowledge to an understanding of how the EU has decided to address these phenomena at different moments in a very long time frame that, in turn, can offer also a comprehensive perspective to critically assess the most recent EU decisions and actions on these matters.

2.2 The specific contributions of (and to) FPA

Besides favouring the original empirical contributions discussed above, the choice of theoretical approach employed in this research brings also some relevant contributions to scholarship about EUFP. At the present time, FPA does not rank among the lenses most frequently employed to address the peculiarities of the EU's external dimension. However, in this study, FPA has proved very effective in analysing the complexities of a continual change in the responsibilities of different types of European actors, their policy preferences and how these affected EU decision-making processes in the Mediterranean over a long time frame. In particular, as already discussed above in section 1 of these Conclusions, this approach has allowed the question of agency to be given full relevance in the multi-actor definition of EUFP, as well as the connection between both the material concerns and ideas of European policy-makers to the internal and external factors that affect the context within which EUFP decisions are taken. From this angle, FPA has proved particularly useful in contextualising a significant amount of scattered and unconnected empirical data within a comprehensive and coherent actor-centred account.

In the specific context of this research, FPA has indeed provided an original and advantageous alternative to those studies (as yet very few) that have addressed ICD from a conceptual perspective. As already mentioned, a few case studies have grounded the analysis of this subject under a constructivist lens, addressing ICD in terms of broader EU efforts for identity building in the Mediterranean space. However, to take a longer view, these conceptual efforts have shared a similar problem with the overall empirical scholarship on ICD, which is that their contribution is contingent to a specific period, approach, and initiative of the EU: the Barcelona Process. The latter, through its multi-dimensional approach to cooperation, embodied the promise of creating a regional community in the Euro-Mediterranean space within which the promotion of mutual understanding at the grassroots was in fact functional. However, since the launch of the ENP in 2003, the idea of region-building in the Mediterranean (despite occasional rhetorical references) has been gradually abandoned by the EU, while ICD has been maintained and extended to new priorities, going as far as to acquire a Euro-Arab (or just Arab) dimension following the uprisings. From this perspective, FPA has thus allowed ICD to be liberated from its original policy framework and scope, and made it possible to observe its development and the causes for this in relation to the broader context into which EUFP decisions concerning the Mediterranean have been made.

Moreover, in contrast to constructivist explanations of ICD in EU Mediterranean policies, FPA has been used to demonstrate that EU efforts for this tool over the years have not primarily mirrored a European discourse. More evidently, the EU's varying commitment on ICD has resulted from negotiations and compromises among European elites, bureaucrats, member states and also CSOs' leaders on the question of how to advance a European policy response to a number of social tensions, both within and outside EU borders. Furthermore, while Constructivism is generally weak on the analysis of implementation (Hill 2013, 2), this thesis has drawn some of its main original findings precisely from an in-depth understanding on how and why different types of actors, each with its specific role within the various components of EU foreign policy-making, have tried to affect, phase by phase, the scope and contents of ICD implementation.

FPA has also proved very convincing in conceptually addressing the complexities of EU external dimension in comparison to the promises of other competing approaches discussed in Chapter 1. For instance, contrary to what integration theories would have expected, FPA has revealed that rather than converging on an integrated European approach around the promotion of this tool, each actor involved in EU foreign policy-making in the Mediterranean has tried to shape ICD according to its own perceptions, concerns and interests. Moreover, when dealing with EUFP, integration theories tend to insulate the EU analytically from the broader international relations context (Niemann and Bretherton 2013, 263). In this thesis, by contrast, the acknowledgement of the influence of both internal and external factors, including the changing Mediterranean political context and MPCs' concerns about EU initiatives, has been useful in order to grasp a quantity of significant information about how and why ICD has changed in scope, objectives and roles throughout the three phases of its evolution; findings that, otherwise, it would have been very difficult to uncover. A similar reflection can also be advanced for those approaches discussed in Chapter 1 that focus on the categories of governance. Indeed, as highlighted, while very insightful in addressing a changing milieu where rule-making is increasingly the domain of a wide range of both state and non-state actors, of which the EU is a pertinent example, these approaches tend to focus their causal explanation mostly on internal factors and processes and, accordingly, to neglect the evidenced influence of external factors and actors.

The choice of FPA has also proven advantageous in comparison to the possible contribution of mainstream IR approaches to understanding EUFP, such as Realism and

Liberalism. Generally speaking, indeed, in expecting their core units of analysis to exhibit unity, rationality and instrumentality, these approaches would have not been useful in identifying and investigating the distinct contribution brought to EUFP in the Mediterranean and, specifically, to ICD's changing formulation, because of the wide range of state and non-state actors that make up that disaggregated entity that is the EU. As demonstrated throughout the thesis, in every phase all these actors have affected EU choices concerning ICD with different intensity according to their specific interest and preferences, and have influenced, consistent with their roles and attributions within the different components of EUFP, the common decisions made by the EU for the advancement of this tool. From this perspective, rather than a unitary European interest in promoting ICD in its southern Mediterranean neighbourhood, FPA has uncovered the existence of a disaggregated set of European interests for advancing (or not) this tool within a changing Mediterranean context, which were at times competing.

These positive results in exposing aspects of EUFP that other conceptual approaches have not managed to uncover and examine should thus encourage scholarship to employ FPA middle-range theories more widely in the analysis of the external action of the EU. This choice would especially help in overcoming the extra difficulties implied in research that addresses this subject over longer time frames, and also in grasping the specific contribution of each component of this disaggregated entity to shape common foreign policy outcomes. After all, as Hill (2016, 24) points out, it is the task of FPA to try to resolve some of the confusion generated by a confusing mixed-actor international environment 'where obstacles and opportunities are by no means clearly delineated, by clarifying basic concepts and by showing how foreign policy relates to the key question of agency in the modern world'. The EU is a perfect field of inquiry to make FPA perform this task.

Ultimately, this thesis also makes a contribution to FPA scholarship on the EU. As discussed in Chapter 1, this body of literature has spent considerable efforts in demonstrating that, although it has generally been concerned with the foreign policy of nation states, as an actor-centred approach FPA is also well-suited to address the complexities and peculiarities of EUFP and of its multi-actor system. The main focus of analysis, however, has generally been on the bargaining and compromises among the preferences of decision-makers within European institutions, member states and bureaucracies (Hill and Smith 2005; White 2004; Gross 2007; Mockli 2009). By contrast, this referred body of literature so far has devoted less attention to the role of

civil society actors in shaping the goals and contents of EUFP although, as an approach, FPA has been increasingly concerned with the contribution of NGOs, movements and other non-state actors to foreign-policy making (Marchetti 2013; Baumann and Stengel 2014; Hill 2013). In showing how the preferences of CSOs from both shores of the Mediterranean area have gradually entered EU decision-making and partly contributed to the significant shifts in ICD formulation and implementation uncovered in this thesis, this research has also collected empirical evidence to support an interest in civil society agency within an FPA of the EU. In particular, including a systematic analysis of CSOs can be fruitful to further understanding and contextualising change and continuity in EUFP, especially in recent times.

3. Final considerations and further research perspectives

The formulation, implementation and roles of ICD have changed periodically during the time frame of reference following the varying preferences of EU policy-makers faced with the main political, socio-economic and cultural concerns which arose over time within the Mediterranean milieu. The overall result of this process was a very flexible policy instrument with a vague and changing meaning and scope, depending on the policy choices and specific European needs of each period. The rhetoric-performance gap has always existed, especially in the way in which the EU tackled the problem of involving larger segments of civil society from both shores of the Mediterranean within a regular exchange for mutual understanding. The research cannot quantify the extent of this gap, and in fact evaluating the impact or the perception of these initiatives was not among its objectives. However, one thing that emerges clearly from the research findings is that the many promises made by the EU to publicly strengthen the promotion of ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean area have in fact been matched by very circumscribed outcomes. Co-ownership, one of the main objectives stated by the EU in the Mediterranean, and especially through ICD, has been achieved only superficially among small groups of people who very often, however, were already active and 'professionalised' in this sort of exchange. The 'people of Europe and the Mediterranean', as most of ICD officials have reluctantly acknowledged during research interviews, have barely been touched by programmes and initiatives, or at least not in a way that could produce a noteworthy change of perception among them.

As ICD has been addressed as a foreign policy instrument of the EU, the final consideration of this analysis must be necessarily framed within an evaluation of the

broad context within which this tool has been deployed. Over the years, EU policies in the Mediterranean have been periodically changed, revised or even rehashed with the result that, first, the very same challenges which were emerging from the Mediterranean in the early 1990s – including the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the spread of xenophobic attitudes – have constantly intensified; secondly, the few significant opportunities that, from time to time, have affected EU relations with its southern neighbourhood, such as the beginning of the MEPP in 1991 or the outbreak of the Arab uprisings in 2010, have either disappeared or transformed into new and more intense challenges.

Generally speaking, therefore, it is possible to conclude that ICD has failed to achieve any of the objectives with which it has been associated during this time frame, in the same way that the majority of the other policies and tools employed by the EU in this area for the last 30 years have done. Notwithstanding, the analysis made in this thesis has also shown that in the open-ended, rhetorical and sometimes naïve European vision for its external relations with the Mediterranean neighbourhood, none of the initiatives developed so far have been repudiated or totally discarded by EU policy-makers. All the diverse tools promoted by the EU in this area endure, as there seems to be an implicit conviction among European leaders that every idea developed in the past might come to play a part in future relations with Mediterranean countries and people in a changed policy context.

Following the Arab uprisings, the EU has transferred ICD to the sole initiative and activities of the ALF. Chapter 5 has concluded that, despite the acclamation of the European Commission concerning the recent contribution of the Foundation to the goals of the EU in the Mediterranean, this process seems to denote also a more general disengagement of the EU from ICD. In the Mediterranean context of early 2010s, increasingly characterised by urgent regional challenges, including the conflicts in Libya and Syria, the further rise in migration caused by these conflicts, and the return to the spotlight of the terrorist threat with the rise of ISIS, ICD has indeed kept its place within the European toolbox through the ALF, but there was neither the political interest, the financial commitment or even the social curiosity that could motivate a further re-prioritisation of this tool in EUFP, at least in the short term. According to the process which has been tracked throughout this thesis, however, there is a possibility, within this circular logic of 'everything may come in useful one day' which characterises the general EU approach to the Mediterranean, that the relevance of ICD

toward addressing European priorities might be suddenly reassessed.

Illustrative of this logic has been the First High-Level Meeting on intercultural and interreligious dialogue, organized by the government of Spain, the UfM and other partners in July 2015. On that occasion, the UfM Secretary General stressed that 'challenges in the region, such as terrorism, extremist trends and the humanitarian tragedy of immigration in the Mediterranean, confirm the need for greater collective action and a more comprehensive approach. Reinforcing intercultural and interreligious dialogue, strengthening regional integration and restoring harmony in civil society are now more important than ever if we are to create a common space for solidarity and stability in the Euro-Mediterranean region' (ALF 2015b). Although the UfM currently is a secondary initiative in EU overall efforts for the Mediterranean, it is impossible not to notice how the rhetoric of this and of other similar speeches made by European and Mediterranean countries' politicians during this meeting echo the declarations and expectations that, some 15 years ago, brought the EU to the consolidation of ICD.

In fact, until the challenges mentioned above are not solved or at least significantly stemmed, it is possible to hypothesise that ICD will continue to fluctuate, ever-dependent on ensuing European leaders' preferences, attracting greater or smaller commitment for its implementation, and having its scope and relevance changed according to the way in which these same leaders will decide to address their current priorities in the area. According to the latest revision of the ENP, adopted by the new EU leadership a few days following the terror attacks in Paris of November 2015, for the future security of the Neighbourhood, 'cross-cultural dialogue, such as that promoted by the Anna Lindh Foundation, will be key' (European Commission & HRFASP 2015, 13).

From this continuing but vacillating perspective on the future of ICD, a number of further lines of research might prove interesting. One certainly coincides with the main empirical limitation of this study, which is the lack of a systematic, empirically based analysis of ICD's impact or, at least, of the perception of these initiatives between European and Mediterranean people. As stated in the introduction to this thesis, impact is something which is difficult to explore with regard to foreign policy analysis. It is even more complicated when the foreign policy is that of the EU and the focus is on such a vague and ever-changing tool as ICD. However, despite the original insights that this research has brought to the knowledge of this subject, there is a need to understand if there exists a concrete reason for the EU to continue investing European taxpayers'

money in this tool and related initiatives such as the ALF, and if so, how evident ICD shortcomings might be improved.

A second interesting research project involving ICD concerns the EU practice of promoting civil society engagement in its partner countries or regions, with a view, in particular, to investigating the rhetoric-performance gap in this leitmotiv which has emerged in EU external action. Thus ICD programmes could be addressed in comparison with other sets of initiatives into which the EU has invested noteworthy efforts to support CSOs in various fields and areas, including the most recent *Civil Society Facility* and the *European Endowment for Democracy*. In particular, as this dissertation has been framed in one of the types of dialogue conducted by the EU in its foreign policy (see Mascia 2007), an original piece of research could compare how CSOs are involved and perform in EU's 'intercultural', 'human rights', and 'political' dialogues in a selection of third countries or regions.

A third research perspective that may develop out of this analysis of ICD concerns a comparative study of the intercultural or civilizational dialogue approaches that have been developed in different institutional contexts. As hinted at in the introduction to this thesis, the EU has been a pioneer in promoting ICD in the context of international politics, but certainly not the only actor in this field. Other international organisations such as the Council of Europe, ISESCO, UNESCO and the UN, mainly through the creation of the 'Alliance of Civilisations', have put forward their own conception of this notion. Their combined efforts have contributed, each according to its specific mandate, scope and capabilities, to the creation of a widespread momentum felt around the need to promote grassroots mutual understanding worldwide. Comparing the differences, outcomes and approaches of these different international actors may shed further light on a very broad and extensive concept within recent global political affairs, which touches upon a number of current controversial issues in international relations, but about which little is yet known.

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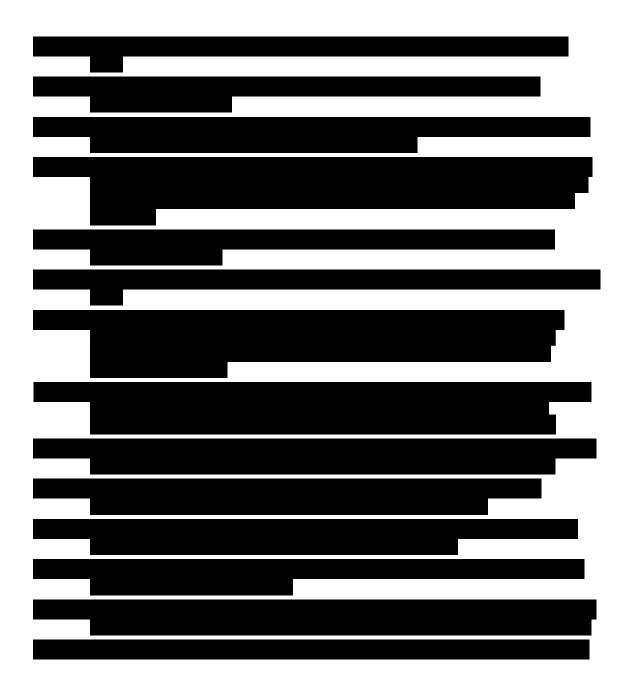Füle Š. 2012a, Presentation of the European Neighbourhood Policy package, 21 May, SPEECH/12/374.

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Interviews

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