

THE NORMATIVE DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STEPPING OUT OF THE SHADOW OF THE WORLD BANK?

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Abstract

This paper seeks to contribute to the debate on the European Union (EU)'s distinctiveness as an international actor. In particular, it examines whether there is anything distinctive about the international development norms promoted by the EU. Previous studies have indicated that in the field of development policy the EU is predominantly a 'norm taker', meaning that it has to a large extent translated development aid norms originating from other donors, including the World Bank, into its own development policies. However, in recent years the EU has arguably become a more mature, ambitious and professionalized development actor, which explicitly aims to take the lead on the international development front. Therefore, this paper assesses whether the EU is still taking on development aid norms originating from the World Bank, generally considered a leader in international development thinking, influencing many other donors, including the EU. The paper does so by focusing on the development areas of governance, aid effectiveness and the social dimension of development. Importantly, the paper situates 'norms' at the specific level of 'policy ideas' (as opposed to 'programmatic' and 'philosophical' ideas), since normative differences between the EU and the World Bank – if any – might be translated differently by the two actors. Accordingly, the paper hypothesizes that both substantially and procedurally the EU has been stepping out of the shadow of the World Bank.

Based on the findings presented in the paper, it appears that in the three areas studied the EU has effectively made a shift away from being a pure norm-taker from the World Bank, and towards becoming a more distinctive development actor, at least to some extent. Indeed, the paper finds that since the 2000s the EU and the World Bank have increasingly developed a different interpretation of the concepts of governance and aid effectiveness and the social dimension of development, both in terms of substance and procedure.

I. Introduction¹

How distinctive is the European Union (EU)² on the world scene? A plethora of labels have been suggested to describe the allegedly distinctive and normative nature of the EU as international actor, such as civilian power (Duchêne 1973, Sjursen 2006), magnetic force (Rosecrance 1998), gentle power (Paddoa-Schioppa 2001), normative power (Manners 2002, 2008), post-modern paradise (Kagan 2003), responsible power (Mayer and Vogt 2006), ethical power (Aggestam 2008), and even metrosexual power (Khanna 2004). At the same time, many authors have criticized the idea of a normative and distinctive EU foreign policy by pointing at its inconsistencies (e.g. for an overview, see Whitman 2011: 13-16), its interest-based nature (e.g. Hyde-Price 2006), or its unreflexivity (e.g. Diez 2005).

This paper aims to contribute to this debate, not by bringing yet another case or critique of the (non)normative power Europe idea, but by examining the distinctiveness of the norms promoted by the EU. Thus, we are not interested in the question whether the EU *is* a normative power. Rather, we want to understand *how distinctive* – if at all – the norms are that the EU advances on the international stage.³

There has always been some ambiguity as to whether a Normative Power Europe promotes norms that are distinctive for the EU as an international actor, or whether it aims to advance universal norms (Sjursen 2006; Smith 2008). For example, Manners' original account states that the norms promoted by the EU stem from its specific 'historical context, hybrid polity and legal constitution', but he quickly adds that this led the EU to put 'universal norms and principles' at the heart of its foreign policy (Manners 2002: 241). In a later publication, he emphasizes that the EU's normative principles combine 'communitarianism with cosmopolitanism' (Manners 2008: 47). While the uniqueness of the norms promoted by the EU has been challenged both empirically (e.g. Smith 2002) and theoretically (e.g. Diez 2005), the question of the distinctiveness of the EU's international norms remains unanswered and understudied. While most scholars from EU studies assume that the EU promotes its own *acquis*-related norms abroad, recent research suggests that even in its neighbourhood policy, the EU relies to a large extent on internationally agreed norms rather than its own internal norms (Barbé et al. 2009; Herranz 2009). In the field of development, most authors seem to agree that the EU is increasingly aligning with the development thinking of the international institutions such as the World Bank. However, more recent and empirically substantiated analyses are lacking, and as will be argued in this article, there may be good reasons to assume that the EU is no longer a norm taker from the World Bank.

When addressing our research question on the EU's distinctiveness, we make three delineations. First, we focus on the development policy of the EU. The Union plays a major role in this external policy area, if only because of its substantial aid budget, and it has increasingly profiled itself as a distinct and normative development actor. Second, we compare the EU's development norms with those of the

¹ We would like to thank Mario Telo, Patrick Holden and Jorg Faust for their useful comments on an earlier version of the paper.

² In this paper, we will refer to the EU as a multilateral actor, rather than the different member state donor agencies.

³ We do not assign an ethical connotation to the concept of 'norms': norms are not by definition ethically 'good' or 'bad' (cf. Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 892). Nor do we assume that normative 'distinctiveness' would be 'better' than alignment with international actors (cf. Diez 2005).

World Bank (WB, or ‘the Bank’). The WB is undoubtedly a leading international donor, which has greatly influenced academic and policy-relevant thinking about development issues. Third, we study development norms at the concrete level of policy ideas, not at the more general level of paradigms or philosophies. While we do not expect the latter to be different among leading donors such as the EU and the WB, both organizations may well prove to differ substantially on the level of policy ideas. Even more so, we challenge the oft-heard argument that the EU would be a norm-taker from the Bank.

In order to explore this hypothesis, we engage in a comprehensive empirical analysis. More specifically, three development norms that are central to both the EU and the WB will be studied: good governance and democratic governance, the aid effectiveness agenda including ownership and donor coordination norms, and the social dimension of development comprising gender equality, social protection and labour standards. This selection of norms guarantees sufficient variation in the extent to which we expect more or less distinctiveness of the EU compared to the WB – e.g. more or less political versus economic areas, more substantial versus more procedural norms. At the same time, all three areas have in common that they have become the focus on the EU’s growing ambition to play a leading and distinctive role in development since the early 2000s.

This article is structured as follows. After this introductory section, the second section reviews the literature on the EU’s putative distinctiveness and on the EU and the WB in international development. It hypothesizes that both substantially and procedurally the EU has been stepping out of the shadow of the World Bank. Then, the subsequent sections will examine this hypothesis through an analysis of three development policy areas, namely governance, aid effectiveness and social issues. The final section sums up the findings, which reveal that in the areas studied here the EU has effectively made a shift away from being a pure norm-taker from the WB, and towards becoming a more distinctive development actor, at least to some extent. Indeed, the paper found that since the 2000s the EU and the World Bank have increasingly developed a different interpretation of the concepts of governance and aid effectiveness and the social dimension of development, both in terms of substance and procedure.

II. EU distinctiveness and development policy

When researching the question of the EU’s normative distinctiveness in development and hypothesizing that the EU is a distinctive actor on the development scene, we focus specifically on a comparison with the World Bank. Why comparing the EU with the WB and not with other international development actors? First, the EU and the WB are the two largest multilateral donors and they are ‘clearly dominant in financial terms’ (Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 105). Each institution represents about 10 percent of worldwide development aid.⁴ There are more similarities than differences between both donors: the WB is ‘more than a bank’ and also acts as a development agency and knowledge proclaimer (Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 119), while the EU is ‘less than a state’ being a more technocratic donor (see below). Both institutions can be studied as analytically distinct,

⁴ See OECD-DAC figures 2006-10 (EU: 9.5%, WB: 8.2%) and CPA+ figures of 2010 (EU: 10.2%, WB: 10.5%).

despite overlapping memberships (cf. Baroncelli 2011: 642).⁵ The Bank manages to play an autonomous role vis-à-vis its members (see e.g. Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 704-5; Barnett and Finnemore 2004; Sarfaty 2009: 654-656).⁶ Second, the WB constitutes a 'hard case' for the purpose of this research, since much of the literature depicts the EU as merely a follower of norms developed within the Bank. Moreover, the Bank is often seen to pursue 'western' development norms similar to the EU (Carbone 2007: 41). In the next paragraphs, we will first explain why we nevertheless expect a normative distinctiveness of the EU. Subsequently, we will advance some more specific expectations of how exactly the norms promoted by the EU and the Bank may differ. Finally, we will introduce the case studies that will be elaborated in the next sections.

While the Bank is widely considered to be a leader in development thinking (Broad 2006; Goldman 2005; Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 94), the EU is often seen as following the Bank's views. Indeed, the dominant view in the literature on EU development policy considers the EU is a 'follower' or a 'norm-taker' from international institutions such as the UN, the G7/G8, the OECD-DAC, the IMF, and last but not least, the World Bank (see e.g. Brown 2004; OECD-DAC 2002; Santiso 2003; Lehtinen and Sindzingre 2003; Farrell 2008; Jörgensen and Wessel 2011: 283; Holland & Doidge 2012: 199). The intellectual leadership of the Bank (and other institutions) over the EU in development norms is explained, first, by the EU's lack of staff, expertise and knowledge to develop new and innovative ideas in development policy (Santiso 2003). This is in sharp contrast to the 'intellectual monopoly' of the World Bank (Baroncelli 2011: 646), which has also been defined as a 'knowledge bank' (Sarfaty 2009: 670). Second, there are different bureaucratic cultures in both institutions: while the Bank promotes evidence-based policies and fosters close interaction between the research and policies, the EU behaves more like an administration, which prioritizes implementation of its mandates over innovative thinking (interview at World Bank delegation to the EU, 11.04.2012; Broad 2006; Goldman 2005). Third, development policy is a shared competence within the EU and some EU member states are reluctant to transfer power in this area to the European level. Importantly, the most innovative development actors within the EU (the 'Nordics', comprising Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and often the UK and the Netherlands) are equally those who are most skeptical towards European development policy integration (Carbone 2007: 46; Orbie 2011: 28). In 2002, an OECD-DAC report suggested that limited analytical capacity, bureaucratic procedures and member states' reticence explain why the EU 'is usually a taker of policy from other sources rather than an institution that sets the international agenda on contemporary problems in development' and 'too often a free-rider on other institutions' analysis' (OECD-DAC 2002: 60).

⁵ Thus, we are not interested in studying the EU's policies within the WB. The EU does not even have observer status within the WB and its role is generally very low, although it may be growing, e.g. through its contribution to WB Trust Funds (see Baroncelli 2011: 639).

⁶ Barnett and Finnemore (1999, 2004) and Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen (2005: 94) emphasize the bureaucratization of international (development) organizations such as the World Bank. Specifically studying the WB, Sarfaty emphasizes that members represented in the Board of Executive Directors lack significant power over the Bank's management and staff because as multiple principles they are constrained by internal disagreements and the consensus norm, and because of their limited institutional memory (Sarfaty 2009: 654-656)

Nevertheless, we contend that this may have changed over the past decade, and that the EU has increasingly pursued development norms distinct from the WB, at least in some cases and under some circumstances. While this thesis needs to be researched empirically, there are indications that, through a series of institutional reforms and policy initiatives, the EU has become a more professionalized and ambitious development actor, which aims to put a distinctive stamp on the international development scene. In response to several scandals plaguing EU development policy in the 1990s, the Commission reformed its aid architecture through e.g. the establishment of EuropeAid, decentralization towards EU/EC offices, the creation of Country Strategy Papers, initiatives on Policy Coherence for Development, reforms in relation to Complementarity and a Division of Labour, etc. The recent establishment of the European External Action Service could further enhance the coherence, professionalism and legitimacy of European foreign policy, including development policy (Furness 2010). More importantly, reforms of the EU's institutional capacity have been accompanied with a growing ambition to create a distinctive 'leading and benevolent' EU identity in development, often through differentiation with the US and the World Bank (cf. Orbie 2003). Some observers have discerned a 'new season' in EU development policy (Carbone 2008a) where the EU is increasingly asserting itself as a distinctive actor, which seeks to promote its own norms, or at least a European interpretation of global development norms (Bonaglia et al 2006). A recent volume suggests that the EU may be an 'Enlightened Superpower in the making' (Gänzle et al. 2012). Various initiatives and communications illustrate the EU's aspiration to export so-called European norms to the development arena, including the emphasis on the 'root causes' of conflict, the social dimension of globalization and regional integration processes, which are often considered to stem from EU experiences. In order to develop and disseminate the European vision on development, the EU decided *inter alia* to organize the annual European Development Days ('to be at the cutting edge of the thought process about contents')⁷ and to publish an annual European Report on Development (ERD), modeled after the World Bank's World Development Reports. The European Consensus on Development promotes an 'EU vision' on development (2005). It was originally termed the 'Brussels Consensus' and explicitly aimed to counter the so-called Washington Consensus, which stemmed from Washington DC-based institutions such as the World Bank⁸. The latest EU development assistance strategy, the Agenda for Change, even explicitly states that it serves to give the EU 'a leading role in setting a comprehensive international development agenda up to and beyond 2015' (European Commission 2011: 12). In addition, the EU has gradually assumed a more political profile through the creation of a Common Security and Defense Policy over the past decade, which may well influence its policies towards developing countries compared to the WB, which is arguably more an economic and technocratic polity.

In sum, the EU has considerably strengthened its institutional capacity for development policy. While it is still smaller in terms of staff and expertise than the World Bank, the EU does have a large and

⁷ Press call - Paul Wolfowitz and Louis Michel, Brussels, 15/11/2006.

⁸ A concrete example of the EU's ambitions constitutes the creation of the African Infrastructure Trust Fund in 2007, perceived as a 'war declaration' in Washington, as this was hitherto considered the WB's distinct area of expertise (Baroncelli 2013: 214).

professional development apparatus⁹, and more importantly perhaps, it has shown that it does no longer comfort itself with the role of a norm-taker from international institutions such as the World Bank. As Santos stated in 2009 ahead of the new six-year mandate of the European Commission: 'Today, the World Bank enjoys a near-monopoly in intellectual debate on development, even though the Commission is well placed to put forward innovative ideas in this field and to strengthen the link between development research and policymaking' (Santos, 2009: 98). The WB for its part is facing a 'threat of marginalization' in the multilateral development system whereby the EU constitutes an 'immediate competitor' of the Bank (Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 140).

Another reason why the comparison with the WB makes this a hard case for studying the EU's assumed distinctiveness, is that both institutions are considered to reflect western views. Thus, the WB's development norms can be expected to be more similar to those of the EU compared with the UN related development agencies which represent more 'Southern' views. In this context, it should be specified that we study 'norms' at a low level of abstraction, namely the level of 'policy ideas'.¹⁰ This is in contrast to most existing research on this topic, which considers norms in the more abstract sense of 'programmatic' and 'philosophical' ideas. While the former are situated at the 'foreground' and can be changed relatively rapidly, the latter are at the 'background' and more resistant to changes (cf. Schmidt 2009: 11). This corresponds with Goldstein and Keohane's distinction between on the one hand 'causal beliefs', which provide guidance as to how the preferred norms are to be achieved and tend to change frequently, and on the other hand 'world views', which are deeply embedded in societies (Goldstein and Keohane 1993: 8-11). It may not be surprising that, when focusing on the philosophical level or the level of world views, existing studies do not find much of a difference between the EU and the Bank. For example, many scholars found that the EU has followed 'neoliberal' development paradigms as developed within international institutions such as the World Bank (see Arts and Dickson 2004; Farrell 2008; Hurt 2010: 160). However, differences may well emerge at the more specific level of policy ideas, where, for example, neoliberal ideas can be translated differently into norms; the notion of governance may be interpreted in various ways, etc.¹¹

Then, the question arises *how* the EU would be distinctive from the World Bank? While the EU foreign policy literature provides ample indications of the EU's distinctiveness in general (see the first paragraph

⁹ The World Bank has about 9,000 staff members, of which 3,000 in the developing world; in the field of development policy, the EU has about 7,500 staff members (3,900 DG Development and Cooperation and 3,600 European External Action Service (EEAS), of which 2,060 in country delegations), although not all the EEAS staff are directly involved in development issues. Estimations, data available at: http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/docs/hr_key_figures_en.pdf, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/afet/dv/201/201203/20120321_hrvpreport_en.pdf, <http://www.feps-europe.eu/uploads/fresh-thinking/022012/022012-6.pdf>, and <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTSITETOOLS/0,,contentMDK:20147466~menuPK:344189~pagePK:98400~piPK:98424~theSitePK:95474,00.html#8>

¹⁰ Norms' are usually defined 'as a standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity' (Finnemore and Kissink 1998: 892). Applied to our research question, this means that we are interested in knowing which norms are found to be appropriate to be promoted by the European Union as a given identity.

¹¹ However, we do not look at the impact of EU and WB policies. Our analysis concerns the normative distinctiveness between the EU and the WB on the level of discourse in a wide sense, including documents, speeches and initiatives.

of the introduction), what it is that would make the EU unique in the area of development has rarely been researched. Many accounts stress that the EU distinguishes itself by having an important development policy arm as opposed to military or diplomatic power (e.g. Holden 2009; Keukeleire & McNaughtan 2009), without engaging in an analysis of how EU development policy may differ from that of other actors. Thus, the EU's distinctiveness *within the development sphere* is mostly overlooked; and when authors do consider this question they mostly limited themselves to the level of philosophical ideas to conclude that the EU's development norms are largely similar to those of the World Bank (see above).

That said, existing studies can provide us some guidance to elaborate our hypothesis. Here a distinction should be made between on the one hand procedural (e.g. means-oriented) norms, which define the appropriate approach, and on the other hand substantive (i.e. ends-oriented) norms, which define the appropriate content for actors (cf. Thomas 2009: 344).

Substantively, it may be expected that the content of EU development norms will be more oriented towards political and social issues compared to the more economic content promoted by the WB (Baroncelli 2011: 639). With 'political' we do not mean that the Bank would not engage in politics – the WB has been involved in 'highly normative, ideological and value-based issues' (Degnol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 97). Rather, we refer to the attention for democracy, human rights and the rule of law as core political issues, in contrast to more economic and technocratic issues related to the efficiency of the government apparatus and the functioning of the market. From this perspective, the Bank may be less political than the EU since the former's mandate does not officially allow it to intervene in the political sphere (Hout 2007: 25), while the EU as a 'global player' explicitly aims to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law (Lehtinen and Sindzingre 2003). This distinction also relates to a difference in administrative culture between both organizations: the Bank was originally almost exclusively staffed by economists, which strengthens the 'apolitical' aspects of their policies, and although the staff profile has become more diversified in recent decades (Boas and McNeill 2004), the dominant subculture within the organization still consists of economists (Sarfaty 2009: 373-4; Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 121). Whereas the WB's Executive Director's offices are staffed mainly by ministry of finance officials, in the EU, the member state representatives in the Council and COREPER settings are mostly officials from the ministries of foreign affairs (Lehtinen and Sindzingre 2003), and the EU Delegations are staffed by a mix of development experts and political experts (Benson-Rea and Shore 2011: 490). The more political nature of the EU compared to the WB was also stressed by the then Development Commissioner Louis Michel during his speech at the first Development Days:

"Let's not forget, we always say there is a difference between the World Bank and the European Commission. [...] this difference stems principally from the different nature of our institutions. The World Bank is a bank and as such must comply with the imperatives of a bank, with all the rigor this entails. The *European Commission is a political body*, and so we are afforded a lot

more flexibility in regards to intangible principles, so *it is a little bit easier for us to take political stands* and to express these in our actions than it is for a bank.”¹² (italics added)

However, putative differences between the ‘economic’ World Bank and the ‘political’ EU may be smaller than it seems. Just like the WB, the EU constitutes a development agency that is relatively autonomous from its member states, and that is therefore less prone to pressure from public opinion (cf Molenaers and Nijs 2011: 419-420), more technocratic (Del Biondo 2011: 664 and more apolitical (Faust et al 2012: 2). On the other hand, the Bank has gone far beyond its economic mandate (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 118). Thus, the validity of this expectation remains to be examined empirically.

The same is true for the assumption that EU development policy focuses more on social issues than the WB. Within the literature on EU external relations, it is often assumed that the EU distinguishes itself by a stronger emphasis on social solidarity, including gender equality, given the ‘solidaristic tradition’ of the EU member states (Bonaglia et al 2006: 182; Manners 2008: 46). Without overlooking the political and commercial entanglements with EU aid policy, it is commonly assumed that the EU has been a ‘progressive’ development actor similar to the small, like-minded donor countries (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 55, 128). The EU’s softer approach to international development has been contrasted to the Structural Adjustment Programmes of the WB and the IMF in the 1980s and 1990s (e.g. Brown 1999; however see Holland & Doidge 2012: 61). However, given that the social content of the EU’s development policies has been criticized for being limited (Orbie 2012) and the WB has come to put considerable emphasis on social issues since the end-1990s (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen 2005: 119), the normative distinctiveness of both organizations in this area remains unclear.

Procedurally, it may be expected that the EU’s development norms are more distinctive. The Union would be unique not so much in the substantive norms that it seeks to promote internationally, but in the way it pursues them, namely through dialogue and cooperation (Smith 2008). In relation to developing countries, there is a clear-cut consensus in the literature that the EU prefers a coordinative approach over unilateral action and that it has a preference for incentives and dialogue instead of coercion (Bonaglia et al 2006: 182; Vogt 2006: 166; Youngs 2001: 42-43; Carbone 2010: 23-24). According to Vogt (2006: 166), for the EU ‘dialogue has become a value in itself’. Given its ‘federalizing role’ and ‘multilateral DNA’, the EU would be almost predestined to act through collaboration, also in a developing country context (Lucarelli et al. 2011: 156; OECD-DAC 2007: 13; Scott 2013: 33). Yet again these insights come from comparisons with the US and EU member states and do not necessarily also hold for the EU’s distinctiveness vis-à-vis the WB. Whether the Bank has a less coordinative and more coercive approach will be examined throughout the different case studies.¹³

¹² Press call - Paul Wolfowitz and Louis Michel, Brussels, 15/11/2006.

¹³ The EU also distinguishes itself by a more regional approach to international relations. Since the EU’s procedural norm of regionalism is well-established and undisputed (Börzel & Risse 2009; Hettne & Söderbaum 2005; Smith 2003; Söderbaum & van Langenhove 2006), we will not focus on this area. Even if the WB has increasingly attempted to formulate regional programmes, its regional profile remains limited, in particular compared to the EU. This reflects its longstanding focus on country programmes, associated with their principal instrument, the

In sum, there is a strong need for more in-depth research into the EU's normative (substantive and procedural) distinctiveness from the World Bank. For this purpose, we selected three cases, or clusters of issues, which together cover a wide range of the EU's and WB's policies: (i) good governance and democratic governance, (ii) the aid effectiveness agenda, including ownership and donor coordination norms, and (iii) the social dimension of development comprising gender equality, social protection and labour standards. What all three cases have in common is that they (at least initially seem to) illustrate the EU's renewed ambition in development. As such, they constitute 'best cases' to explore our hypothesis: if we do not find evidence of a normative distinctiveness of the EU in these cases, it will be very unlikely that the EU promotes distinctive norms in other development fields.¹⁴

The first case we will be exploring is the governance norm. The latter has become increasingly emphasized by the EU since the White Paper of 2001 (European Commission 2001a). The governance norm was already included in the Cotonou Agreement (2000) and came at the forefront of EU development policies through a communication in 2006 (European Commission 2006). It has been argued that the EU gradually came to accept a more 'holistic' (Carbone 2010) and 'democratic' (Börzel et al 2008) conception of governance. The second norm under investigation concerns aid effectiveness. The EU assigned itself a leading role in the various UN Conferences related to aid effectiveness, e.g. the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development (2002) or the Rome High Level Forum on Aid effectiveness (2003), which culminated in 2005 in the Paris Declaration and in 2007 into the Accra Agenda for Action (ActionAid/ECDPM 2008; Carbone 2007; Eurodad 2005; Keijzer & Corre 2009; Schulz 2009). During the same period, the EU strongly emphasized its leading role in the promotion of the social dimension of globalization (European Commission 2002, 2005) and gender equality in development (European Commission 2001b; European Parliament and Council 2004), which constitute the third case of our empirical study. These social norms are presumably based on a distinct European social model, however vaguely defined (Orbie and Tortell 2008: 8).

While all three cases relate to the EU's new ambition in development, they vary across the different variables and expectations identified above on *how* exactly the EU would be distinctive from the Bank, both substantively (the governance and social cases) and procedurally (esp. the aid effectiveness case but also the other two cases). For each case, we analyse the documents produced by both the EU and the WB since the early 2000s, together with the scholarly literature on the different topics, with the aim to identify the different interpretations of development norms at the level of policy ideas.¹⁵

loan to a single government (Birdsall 2004). The EU has long-established trade-and-development agreements with the ACP group and has engaged in various partnerships within the Joint Africa-EU Strategy since 2007.

¹⁴ An important exception might be the EU's policy on fragile states and the development-security nexus more broadly, in which the EU has been profiling itself as a distinctive development actor (see e.g. Castillejo, 2011).

¹⁵ Our objective is purely comparative, aimed at evaluation of the EU's distinctiveness. It is not our intention to estimate the causal relation between both institutions' norms or the mechanisms of norm diffusion.

III. Governance norms by the WB and EU: same same but different

Governance is an interesting example to study the distinctiveness of EU norm promotion vis-à-vis the World Bank. The World Bank is usually considered as a norm setter when it comes to governance in development. The 1989 report *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth*, which pointed to the lack of governance as the main reason for poor economic performance in sub-Saharan Africa, inspired many donor agencies to make development cooperation conditional on governance (Abrahamsen 2000; Masujima 2004; Craig and Porter 2006; Hout 2007). The EU also borrowed the concept of governance from the World Bank in the 1990s (Hilpold 2002), but as we will show below, there are indications that both the substantive and procedural interpretations of the governance concept have changed since then.

The governance concept as originally formulated by the World Bank had a very economic and technocratic character. It referred to a country's administration, economic policies or political issues with a direct consequence for economic development, including corruption or neo-patrimonialism (World Bank 1989). Although country assessments were already made in that period to guide the allocation of lending resources of the World Bank, governance criteria were not included until the late 1990s (World Bank 2005: 1). Within the context of EU cooperation with the group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, the EU's first definition of governance was clearly based on this perspective of the World Bank. In the 2000, Cotonou Agreement, 'good governance' is defined as 'the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for the purposes of equitable and sustainable development'. It became a fundamental element of the agreement, which implied that the EU could suspend cooperation in the case of serious corruption (Fierro 2003: 314-315). Governance also became an important concept in the EU's relations with other regions such as the Southern Mediterranean. Within the context of Euro-Mediterranean relations, good governance was first mentioned in the preparatory documents leading to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) (1995), and in the *Mesures d'Accompagnement* (MEDA) regulation (1996). Here too the EU interpretation was primarily based on the World Bank approach, by which state and civil society should support the market. Since Euro-Mediterranean relations were primarily focused on economic reforms (Reynaert 2011), this emphasis on economic and technocratic governance fitted very well within the EU approach to the region. In this respect, it should be added that EU economic assistance was mainly based on the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) approved by the IMF and the World Bank.

At the time, governance was almost equated with anti-corruption policies. This reflected the World Bank's view, but it also resonated with intra-EU developments. EU aid policies in the 1990s were characterized by a number of corruption scandals, for example in Côte d'Ivoire where €27 million in structural adjustment funds were misappropriated (*Agence Europe*, 22 June 1999). Moreover, governance had also become an agenda point for the EU internally under the Prodi Commission, which took office in 1999 after the resigning of the Santer Commission amidst allegations of corruption (Manners 2008: 54-55).

However, in the course of the 2000s, the EU tried to develop a distinctive approach to governance, which was more holistic and less rigid than that of the World Bank (Carbone 2010a: 21). The EU's

interpretation of the governance concept changed somehow between 2000 and 2006, both in terms of substance and procedure. Substantially, the EU's interpretation became more political, focusing increasingly on what became to be called 'democratic governance'. A rather cautious attempt in this direction was made with the 2003 Commission Communication on Governance and Development. The Communication proposed a broad approach to governance, which was rather vaguely defined as 'the state's ability to serve its citizens' and 'the rules, processes, and behaviour by which interests are articulated, resources are managed, and power is exercised in society'. Nonetheless, governance was still seen as separate from human rights and democratization; it was stated that governance was a more pragmatic and practical concept (European Commission 2003a). By 2006, however, the EU had shifted to an explicitly political meaning of governance, with the aim to strengthen the profile of the EU vis-à-vis the World Bank (Carbone 2010: 14). This political understanding of governance was reflected in the adjective 'democratic'. Nonetheless, democratic governance was not solely confined to aspects of democratization and administrative good governance, but was understood holistically, including the political, social, economic and cultural dimensions of governance.¹⁶

Procedurally, the EU took a more incentive-based and less rigid approach to governance-based policies in developing countries. A prime example in this respect is the Governance Initiative for the ACP group. This initiative was introduced with the above-mentioned Communication on Governance (2006) as an alternative approach to aid selectivity than the World Bank's Country Political and Institutional Assessment (CPIA), the Bank's assessment framework for lending to countries. The Governance Initiative is based on dialogue, persuasion and trust (Carbone 2010a: 23-24), given that allocations are made on the basis of commitments rather than past performance. It is also based on qualitative analysis, compared to the quantitative CPIA (Carbone 2010a: 23-24). Governance Profiles are qualitative assessments on the basis of the above-mentioned holistic definition of democratic governance, although this assessment does take into account a country's score on the World Bank's Governance Indicators (European Commission 2006: 11).

However, this evolution away from World Bank style governance could be qualified. On the one hand, the World Bank has paid more attention to the political dimension since the end 1990s. The 1997 World Development Report *The State in a Changing World* implicitly proposes liberal democratic regimes as the best way to make the state more effective to regulate the market (World Bank 1997), and some of the World Bank Governance Indicators (established in 1999) include political aspects such as 'Voice and Accountability', 'Political stability and the Absence of Violence' and the 'Rule of Law' (Kaufmann et al. 2008). However, because of its apolitical mandate, the WB cannot intervene in political sectors (e.g. electoral support, financing human rights organisations) or make its assistance conditional upon political criteria. This apolitical approach is clearly shown in the World Bank's aid selectivity framework. The CPIA

¹⁶The following items were listed: respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms (including freedom of expression, information and association); support for democratization processes and the involvement of citizens in choosing and overseeing those who govern them; respect for the rule of law and access for all to an independent justice system; access to information; a government that governs transparently and is accountable to the relevant institutions and to the electorate; human security; management of migration flows; effective institutions, access to basic social services, sustainable management of natural and energy resources and of the environment, and the promotion of sustainable economic growth and social cohesion in a climate conducive to private investment.

mainly includes technocratic criteria (the exception being gender equality), and the six governance-related indicators introduced in 1998 were also limited to administrative governance (Hout 2007: 25-32). The World Bank would not be able and willing to take the lead in overtly political measures. While the EU is both a foreign policy actor and a donor, the World Bank is restricted from interfering in the political matters of partner countries (Abrahamsen 2000: 11; Weiss 2000: 803-804; Masujima 2004: 151).

On the other hand, the EU's approach towards the Southern Neighbourhood long continued to promote the original, technocratic interpretation of governance, as opposed to the democratic governance view that inspired the relations with the ACP. Despite a growing recognition of the lack of political governance in Arab countries (European Commission 2003b), the concept of democratic governance has hardly been used in official documents on the ENP, not even in the 2006 Communication on Governance and Development, which included a section on the ENP. Instead, key documents such as the 2006 and 2007 Commission Communication on the ENP, keep referring to 'good governance' or governance, stressing the economic dimension much more than the political dimension. Nonetheless, in 2007 the Commission established the Governance Facility, which resembles the Governance Initiative and is equally based on 'democratic governance' (European Commission 2007b).

This distinct but cautious divergence from the World Bank's interpretation of governance has become more outspoken in recent years. This can be seen in the debate on budget support and the role of democratization in the ENP. In principle, budget support is allocated on a purely technocratic basis; eligibility criteria include the country's commitment to development, a national development strategy and public finance management (Schmidt 2006: 25). However, the European Commission is proposing to substitute General Budget Support by 'Good Governance and Development Contracts'. Although it is not yet clear how good governance will be interpreted precisely, the idea of the communication is clearly to link budget support with 'fundamental values' (European Commission 2011b). Similarly, the EU Neighbourhood Policy now focuses more explicitly on political objectives. In documents adopted since the Arab Spring, the EU does no longer refer to the concept 'good governance', and focuses instead on 'deep democracy'. This entails that the EU now tries to focus more on political reforms, although the main objective of the 'renewed' ENP remains the integration of the neighbouring countries in the internal market (European Commission and High Representative 2011).

IV. Aid effectiveness

In the early 2000s, a number of global initiatives were initiated to improve the effectiveness of aid e.g. the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development (2002) or the Rome High Level Forum on Aid effectiveness (2003). These efforts culminated in 2005 in the Paris Declaration, which builds around the principles of ownership, alignment, harmonization, results and mutual accountability (Hunt 2008; Cassimon *et al.* 2009). Ever since, aid effectiveness has dominated the international development agenda. In 2005, all major donors, developing countries and NGOs endorsed the principles laid down in the Paris Declaration. The international community subsequently renewed its intentions regarding aid effectiveness in Accra (2008) and Busan (2011).

At the heart of the aid effectiveness agenda are the principles of ownership and donor coordination. These norms have been dominant in the discourse of both the World Bank and the EU in the past decade. This section will examine whether there is anything distinctive in the EU interpretation and implementation of these norms, compared to the definition and approach by the World Bank. We will find that the EU has largely followed the World Bank in terms of ownership, but that it has a more distinctive view and approach to the coordination norm.

Ownership

The concept of ownership first appeared at the highest political level in 1995 when it was introduced by the new World Bank president John Wolfensohn. After a decade of failed and heavily criticized SAPs, the Bank wanted to abandon its so far predominantly top-down development approach and take on a more participatory approach (Woods 2000). This paradigm shift was rooted in a study of the World Bank, in which ownership was found to be a necessary condition for effective aid (World Bank 1996; Hunt 2008: 87-88). Simultaneously, also a number of important bilateral development agencies, including DFID (UK), DANIDA (Denmark) and SIDA (Sweden), increasingly emphasized the principles of ownership and participatory development (Craig and Porter 2003; Fraser 2005). The EU largely followed (and underwent) this paradigm shift. From 2000 onwards, with the signing of the Cotonou agreement, the principle of ownership lies at the heart of the European development policy (Carbone and Lister 2006).

When comparing how the World Bank and the European Commission define ownership, it becomes quickly apparent that the latter is not that distinctive from the WB. . From 1999 onwards, the World Bank defines ownership as “ (...) *a programme based approach under government leadership*” (1999: 43). This must be produced in a way that “ (...) *includes transparency and a broad-based participation in the choice of goals, the formulation of policies and the monitoring of implementation.*” (1999: 30). The World Bank also puts emphasis on the need for a broad support for this development strategy among all important stakeholders within and outside the government including ministries, parliaments, civil society organizations (CSOs) and private sector groups (World Bank 1999: 10-30). This broad and vague¹⁷ definition of ownership (Booth 2003; Faust 2010) strongly resembles the one put forward by the EU in Article 2 of the Cotonou agreement (2000) :

“ [...]ACP states shall determine the development strategies for their economies and societies in all sovereignty and with due regard for the essential elements described in Article 9; the partnership shall encourage ownership of the development strategies by the countries and populations concerned” (Cotonou agreement 2000).

At the substantive level, there is one important difference in the two donors' interpretation of ownership. The European Commission's definition puts considerable emphasis on the whole range of state, non-state and civil society actors (Art. 4-6). Unlike the World Bank, the EU also puts strong emphasis on capacity building of non-governmental organizations in the South (Art.7), so that they can

¹⁷Compared to the definitions put forward by the Overseas Development Institute or the OECD-DAC (Faust, 2010).

fully participate in the whole process. Only recently, in the aftermath of the Arab spring, World Bank president Zoellick (2011) made a first (strong) plea for supporting CSOs.

However, in reality the World Bank and the EU have been very similar in the way they promote ownership. In 1999, the World Bank launched the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) in order to translate the ownership concept into its policies. According to the then World Bank chief economist Joseph Stiglitz, the CDF offered a holistic approach to development cooperation in which the role of the state and CSOs was also taken into account. This resulted in the establishment of the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers* (PRSPs)¹⁸ as an alternative for the SAPs (De Meyer 2004). One year later, in 2000, the European Commission also developed a proper poverty reduction framework with the launch of the *Country Strategy Papers* (CSPs). In a similar vein, the CSPs put much emphasis on a long term development strategy based upon the principles of ownership and partnership. Given these strong similarities with the PRSPs, most authors argue that the EU largely adopted the World Bank strategy with regard to ownership and poverty reduction (Santiso 2003: 3 and 18; Fraser 2006; Farrell 2008; Fraser and Whitfield 2009). Moreover, a number of important EU officials, including the then Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid Poul Nielson, confirmed this claim by openly stating that the establishment of the CSPs was based upon the World Bank's PRSPs (Brown 2004:34-39).

This finding may be surprising, since the EU initially intended to challenge the Bank's PRSP approach. Murphy refers i.e. to the statement made by the Commission during the 2001 PRSP review: *"PRSPs may reflect more what governments and civil society perceive as donor's wishes than what they really see as priorities for poverty reduction"* (cited in Murphy 2008: 59). Nonetheless, in the following years, the EU did not develop an alternative implementation strategy for the CSP (Farrell 2008; Brown 2004).

Donor coordination

The importance of better coordinated aid delivery has long been recognized by the development community, including the EU (Pearson 1969; Cassen 1986; OECD 1996; World Bank 1998). With the emergence of the aid effectiveness agenda in the early 2000s, coordination again became a central norm of the international development scene (see above). However, we will argue that the procedural norm of coordination has been particularly strong within the EU, and that the EU has even gone further than the Paris Agenda by using more ambitious targets for harmonization and engaging in complementarity and division of labour initiatives.

The Paris Declaration's interpretation of 'harmonization', defined as *"donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication"*, as well as the monitoring indicators linked to the harmonization principle¹⁹, are rather narrow (cf. Wathne and Hedger 2009). This interpretation has been fully endorsed by the World Bank. In fact, the World Bank has co-shaped the

¹⁸ A number of authors, however, claim that the spirit of the CDF was largely abandoned from the moment the WB started to focus on poverty reduction.

¹⁹ Namely (1) using common arrangements or procedures, measured through the percent of aid provided as programme-based approaches, and (2) encouraging shared analysis, measured through the percentage of a) joint field missions and b) joint country analytic work.

Paris Declaration norms on coordination²⁰, and it emphasizes that it has been promoting this even prior to the Paris Declaration (World Bank 2011: 3).

The EU has taken a more ambitious and more concrete approach to donor coordination. Within the EU, complementarity-based division of labour and ultimately joint programming of EU and Member States' aid have been the spearhead of its policies to implement the Paris Declaration²¹, apart from the ambition to take up a lead role in implementing the Paris Declaration commitments by delivering on the globally agreed indicators.²² The EU Code of Conduct on Complementarity and the Division of Labour in Development Policy (2007) lays down operational but voluntary principles for complementarity among EU donors, while emphasizing that the initiative is also open for the wider donor community. Observers have argued that the EU could serve as "an engine for a donor-wide Division of Labour, given its unique position in the aid system" (Mürle 2007) and "its long-standing experience with the supranational *modus operandi*" (Schulz 2007).

The international agenda on aid effectiveness, in which coordination has been put forward as a main principle to provide better aid, has constituted a major opportunity for the EU to combine the global harmonization principle of aid effectiveness with the old integration principle, and the promotion of a European approach in development cooperation. In the EU, the coordination norm is also related to the issue of identity and influence: speaking with one voice can increase the EU's international influence. Coordination between the Community's and the Member States' development policies has been on the agenda of the Commission since the Treaty of Rome (1957) and the creation of the European Development Fund (EDF). In 1972, the Commission already stated in a Memorandum that the lack of harmonization and coordination had led to duplication and gaps and reduced the effectiveness of aid. The Commission suggested a first set of proposals on aid coordination at the Community level, which are still reflected in the current EU vision on aid effectiveness and donor coordination. However, the ambition of the Commission was confronted with dissension and opposition of the national governments and aid administrations, and it was clear from the very beginning that coordination in the EU context would remain a very sensitive issue (Carbone 2010b). Only with the Treaty of Maastricht (1993), when the European development policy had been given a specific legal basis, coordination became a legally binding common principle. The Treaty does not specify the respective responsibilities of the EU and the Member States but lays down three core principles (the so-called Triple C), namely complementarity, coordination and coherence.

²⁰ The World Bank has been a key actor in the OECD-DAC's work on promoting aid effectiveness. For example, the World Bank proposed to have the first High Level Forum on Harmonization in 2003 and established a secretariat to coordinate the effort (World Bank 2003).

²¹ Apart from promoting Division of Labour, the EU has also put forward the agenda on joint programming. However, we do not include this in this section because in this area, less concrete initiatives have been implemented in the field in the EU context.

²² It should be mentioned, however, that the EU made four additional commitments: to provide all capacity building assistance through coordinated programmes with an increasing use of multi-donors arrangements; to channel 50 % of government-to-government assistance through country systems, including by increasing the percentage of our assistance provided through budget support or sector-wide approaches; to avoid the establishment of any new project implementation units; to reduce the number of un-coordinated missions by 50 % (European Consensus 2005).

However, it should be noted that the idea of division of labour is not ‘invented’ by the EU; previously, coordination efforts had been made by the most progressive bilateral donors within the EU, such as the Nordic Plus donors, as well as in the context of Joint Assistance Strategies, in which also other donors are participating (Mürle 2007). Nevertheless, the EU Code of Conduct and its Fast Track Initiative on Division of Labour have been portrayed as an international best practice to improve donor coordination (cf. OECD-DAC 2008). Moreover, it is considered to be largely thanks to the EU’s efforts²³ in this regard that the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) included commitments for country-led division of labour²⁴ (ActionAid/ECDPM, 2008; Keijzer & Corre, 2009; Schulz, 2009).

In sum, while the World Bank has a more limited interpretation of donor coordination, the EU has been promoting a distinct interpretation of donor coordination based on the principle of complementarity and embedded in multilateral commitments.

V. Social dimension: *un ménage à trois*

In various policy documents, the EU has committed itself to supporting the social dimension of globalization, including the promotion of gender equality, core labour standards and social protection (European Commission 2002, 2005). In this part we examine *how* exactly the EU would be substantially and procedurally distinctive from the World Bank by examining the core documents produced by both institutions since the early 2000s.

While initially the EU and the WB developed their policies following developments at the UN level, by the early 2000s both actors started presenting themselves as major gender actors in the world, stressing a ‘long-standing engagement to promoting gender equality’ (European Commission 2001b: 2) and ‘unusual breath of expertise’ (World Bank 2002: 62). In terms of the substantial norms, however, there

²³ For example, the Task Team on Rationalising Aid and Fostering Complementarity of the OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness was created, and under the lead of the European Commission and France the ‘Compendium of Good Practice on Division of Labour’ was prepared to serve as an input for the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra (2008).

²⁴ For example, in Tanzania and Zambia, the EU is indeed considered to be ambitious and engaged towards increasing coordination both among EU donors and with other international donors (Delputte and Söderbaum 2012). Whereas the EU engages in information exchange and promotes division of labour the World Bank is considered to be less committed to driving the coordination agenda forward in the field. Interviews with donor officials revealed that “the EU is much more active in coordination. The World Bank is not so much into coordination. On coordination the EU has nothing to learn from the World Bank” (interview with donor representative, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 28.02.2012). The World Bank is seen as “rather autonomous”, “without a tendency to coordinate” (interview with donor representative, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 02.03.2012). It is suggested that the World Bank’s analytical and intellectual leadership is difficult to combine with leadership in the field of coordination: “the WB has difficulties to play both the role as the analytical capacity for the donors in the sectors and then also put in efforts to coordinate” (interview with donor representative, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 02.03.2012). At the same time, these accounts from the field have pointed to considerable implementation problems of the EU’s agenda on aid effectiveness, but it is beyond the scope of this paper to evaluate the effectiveness of the norm promotion.

are differences between the EU and the World Bank. In general, the EU sees gender equality in development policy more as a political and social project, while the World Bank perceives it almost exclusively as an economic project, a 'business case' (World Bank 2002, 2006, 2010, 2012) or 'smart economics' (World Bank 2006, 2010, 2012). Although both donors conceptualize gender equality in an instrumental way, stressing the importance of gender equality to achieve other development goals such as poverty reduction or growth, the EU's framing seems to be more balanced as it also occasionally emphasises the intrinsic value of gender equality. While the EU indeed clearly focusses on the 'the benefits and potentials that gender mainstreaming can bring' (European Commission 2001b: 15), it also mentions the importance of gender equality as a question of 'social justice' (European Commission 2007c, 2010). While the EU uses a human rights approach to gender and development, the World Bank almost never mentions gender as a 'right' in relation to development.²⁵ However, this has changed with the release of the World Bank's 2012 World Development Report, which conceptualizes gender equality more as a political project and recognises its intrinsic value. The 2012 WDR, which is specifically dedicated to Gender Equality and Development, acknowledges that 'economic development is not enough to shrink all gender disparities' and that gender equality is – next to smart economics and enhancing productivity – 'a core development objective in its own right' (World Bank 2012: xiii). Moreover, the social and political dimensions of gender equality²⁶ receive greater attention in the 2012 WDR, although the main focus on economic aspects remains. The fact that the World Bank devotes its annual flagship publication to gender equality setting out 'directions for the global development community' is a strong signal from the World Bank that 'gender equality matter[s]' and that it wants to be a global leader on the topic.

In terms of the procedural norms, the concrete methods of the Bank and the Union seem to be similar and focus on the institutional level by employing a mainly expert-bureaucratic approach: e.g. developing gender tools and guidelines, monitoring instruments, sharing best practices, policy dialogues, creating and using gender disaggregated data and gender sensitive performance indicators, (voluntary) staff trainings, reporting and assessments. However, it seems that the methods of the World Bank are more clearly operationalized, distinguishing organisational responsibilities for gender mainstreaming at a high level and outlining results frameworks with clear indicators and targets to be met. Another difference is the focus on multilateralism. The MDGs are much more central in the EU's recent gender and development policy documents compared to the Bank's policy. The MDGs are mentioned in most EU documents on gender and development, and have come to take an increasingly important position. For example, in a 2010 Commission document the MDGs are called the 'overarching objective' of the EU's gender and development policy (European Commission 2010: 6). By contrast, the MDGs seem to be much less central to World Bank documents, which, to be fair, refer to 'women's economic empowerment and investments in women' to 'promote economic development and attain the MDGs' (World Bank 2010: 3).

²⁵ For example while the EU mentions the more holistic yet more controversial 'sexual and reproductive health and rights' the World Bank mainly discusses 'reproductive health' in an instrumental fashion and never talks about sexual or reproductive rights.

²⁶ Including women's voice and agency in the household and in politics, access to justice, social security, the effects of unpaid domestic and care work, the importance of shifting gender norms.

While the principle of core labour standards originated in the context of the ILO, particularly in the 1998 ILO Declaration, the EU very soon presented itself as an international leader on core labour standards. Two communications on core labour standards were released in 2001 and 2004, and in 2002 the EU played an important role in the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. At the same time, the EU kept referring to the ILO, with which High Level meetings were held from 2001 onwards, and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2004. The World Bank, in contrast, has been much more reluctant to take up the core labour standards agenda. The Bank started supporting core labour standards rather late, and it was only as of 2004-2006 that concrete actions were taken up in the WB practice through the conditionalities for IFC and IDA. However, the WB's approach has from the onset been much more concrete than that of the EU, which is based on vague references to human rights and does not contain clear implementation mechanisms. Even the conditionality mechanism in GSP+ is more focused on incentives than on sanctions. As in the case of democratic governance, the World Bank's apolitical mandate prevents it from addressing core labour standards as a human rights issue and thus an objective in its own right. Conditions on labour standards can only be attached when there is evidence that non-commitment to core labour standards undermines the economic and development objective of the programme.

While social protection has always been one of the core issues of the ILO, it was the World Bank that started promoting this norm in the context of developing countries, while the ILO focus remained on Western countries. The World Bank's profile on social protection rose in the early 2000s with its 2000-2001 World Development Report, 2001 'Social Protection Sector Strategy' and the development of its Social Risk Management Framework. This represented a radical shift from the Structural Adjustment era, and can be explained by the acknowledgment at that time of the risks of uncontrolled globalization and the emergence of the poverty reduction agenda (Holzman and Sipos 2009). At the same time, the World Bank's conceptualization of social protection continued to be market oriented, focusing on issues like the labour market, social insurance, social safety nets, social funds, disability and development and risk and vulnerability analysis. In contrast, the EU has been late to enter the social protection arena. Only in 2010, the European Report on Development was devoted to social protection in development. Institutionally, as early as 2000, the WB founded a Sector on social protection, including development and social and labour staff. As a result, the World Bank has developed substantial technical expertise and is able to proactively put certain themes on the agenda (Holzman *et al.* 2003). In comparison, the EU was hampered by its traditional developmentalist vision. In this context, the 2010 ERD requested that the EU started a social protection and development network of experts, including stakeholders from the labour, financial, social and development field and civil society.

VI. Conclusion

This paper aimed to analyse the distinctiveness of the EU's development norms from those of the World Bank. Previous studies have indicated that in the field of development policy the EU has to a large extent translated development aid norms originating from other donors, including the World Bank, into its own development policies. However, in recent years, the EU has arguably become a more mature, ambitious

and professionalized development actor, which explicitly aims to take the lead on the international development front. Therefore, this paper assessed whether and to what extent the EU is still taking on development aid norms originating from the World Bank, generally considered a leader in international development thinking. In doing so, the paper distinguished between on the one hand procedural (e.g. means-oriented) norms, which define the appropriate approach, and on the other hand substantive (i.e. ends-oriented) norms, which define the appropriate content for actors. Empirically, the paper examined the areas of governance, aid effectiveness and the social dimension of development.

Based on the findings presented in this paper, it appears that in the three areas studied here the EU has effectively made a shift away from being a pure norm-taker from the World Bank, and towards becoming a more distinctive development actor, at least to some extent. Indeed, the paper found that since the 2000s the EU and the World Bank have increasingly developed a different interpretation of the concepts of governance, aid effectiveness and the social dimension of development, both in terms of substance and procedure.

In the case of governance, at the substantive level, the EU's interpretation has gradually become more political, focusing increasingly on 'democratic governance'. By 2006, the EU had shifted to an explicitly political meaning of governance, with the aim to strengthen the profile of the EU vis-à-vis the World Bank. Procedurally, the EU took a more incentives-based and qualitative approach to governance-focused policies in developing countries, as opposed to the more rigid and quantitative approach of the World Bank. However, the EU's evolution away from World Bank style governance needs to be qualified, in particular in the context of the EU's approach towards the Southern Neighbourhood. In the Southern Mediterranean countries, the EU long continued to promote the original, technocratic interpretation of governance, in contrast to the democratic governance view that inspired the relations with the ACP.

In the case of aid effectiveness, the results are more fragmented between the norms concerned, i.e. ownership and donor coordination. While the EU has largely followed the World Bank with respect to ownership, it has developed a more distinctive view on and approach to the coordination norm. In the case of ownership, procedurally, the World Bank and the EU have been very similar in the way they promote ownership. At the substantive level, however, there is an important difference in the two donors' interpretation of ownership. Indeed, unlike the World Bank, the EU puts much stronger emphasis on the involvement of civil society, and particularly on capacity building of non-governmental organizations in the South, so that they can fully participate in the whole process. In the case of donor coordination, the paper found that the EU has been promoting a distinct interpretation of donor coordination, based on the EU principle of complementarity as well as its commitment to implementing the Paris Declaration and making progress on the indicators monitored at the OECD-DAC level. In contrast, the World Bank has a more limited interpretation of donor coordination and it is less committed to driving coordination efforts on the ground.

Concerning the social dimension of development, it became clear that in terms of substantial norms the EU is more political in the sense that it focuses more on human rights and social justice. Compared to the World Bank the EU is less focused on economic arguments and market-oriented logics. Although both actors seem to have a similar instrumental take on social issues, the EU's take is broader and more

balanced, as it goes beyond growth and poverty reduction and explicitly sees equality, rights and social justice as intrinsic aims. In terms of procedural norms, we detected two interesting differences. Although the EU's and the World Bank's methods are to some extent similar content-wise, the World Bank's methods are often more detailed and clearly operationalized distinguishing organizational responsibilities and outlining results frameworks with clear indicators and targets. The EU's implementation seems to be more vague and incentives-based, while the Bank can have more leverage through its hard conditionalities. A second procedural difference is the focus on multilateralism. Compared to the EU, the World Bank refers significantly less to the policies of other international organizations such as the UN and the ILO.

The question remains how we can explain this normative distinctiveness between the EU and the WB. One explanation stands out, namely the nature and set-up of the EU as a political institution of regional integration. To begin with, this helps to explain why the EU has moved gradually away from the World Bank's economic understanding of governance to a more political interpretation. This is fully in line with the EU's increased political competence and ambition in development policy, and in foreign policy more generally, in contrast to the World Bank, which cannot move outside of its economy-focused mandate. In this regard, the importance of public opinion should also be noted; indeed, the EU is more vulnerable to public opinion than the World Bank. Moreover, the EU's incentives-based and qualitative approach to governance and core labour standards – as opposed to the World Bank's more rigid, technocratic approach - should be situated within the distinct character of the EU's broader foreign policy agenda, which favours a 'soft' approach to foreign policy, based on dialogue and partnership. Finally, the nature and set-up of the EU as a political institution of regional integration also helps to explain why the EU has put more emphasis on the donor coordination principle than the World Bank: 'coordination' is the EU's core business. The 'federalizing' role of the EU in development cooperation between the EU institutions and the EU member states is key to understand why the EU has been promoting its own interpretation of the coordination norm.

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