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TITLE	NORMATIVE COMPONENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE SOUTH CAUCASUS COUNTRIES: A DISCOURSE OF EUROPE
SUMMARY	<p>The concept of ‘normative power’ implies that values should take precedence over narrow political interests and designates the ability of international actors to establish global norms and to encourage other actors to prioritize these values in foreign and domestic policies. The European Union had been traditionally considered one of the main proponents of this concept but the revision of the European Neighborhood Policy in 2015 has changed the cooperation agenda between the EU and Partner Countries by strengthening its pragmatic component. In that regard the case of the South Caucasus is of special interest as it demonstrates how three countries of the region addressed the EU agenda for cooperation and devised different formats of cooperation, despite similar initial conditions. The paper compares narratives of affiliation with Europe in official discourses in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. On the one hand, this approach allows the author to demonstrate how these countries use the normative component of their cooperation with the EU to advance their own foreign policy agenda through, inter alia, unveiling inconsistencies in the EU’s own policy. On the other hand, the author emphasizes the conflict potential inherent to the European Neighborhood Policy which seeks to erase borders between the EU and partner countries, while simultaneously creating new dividing lines and clearly delineating a circle of friendly states. Here arises a normative paradox, since the EU’s self-identification, contrary to declared universalism of its values, leads to an exclusion and deprives the certain countries’ of the right to be considered ‘European’. This paradox limits severely normative influence of the European Union as it challenges the very idea of the EU normative power and brings about an increasing fragmentation rather than a stabilization of the region.</p>
KEYWORDS	the European Union, EU, South Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, normative power, European integration, European Neighborhood Policy.