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**The External Dimension of the Common Agricultural Policy:
Shaping Rural Spaces in Georgia**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in Politics and International Studies, Department of Politics and
International Studies, University of Warwick /
Doctorat en sciences de la société mention science politique, Département de Science
Politique et Relations Internationales, Université de Genève

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European Joint Doctorate on
Globalisation, Europe & Multilateralism -
Sophistication of the Transnational Order,
Networks, and European Strategies

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Abbreviations

ABBREVIATIONS

CAP: Common Agricultural Policy

CETA: EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

DCFTA: Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

DG AGRI: Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

DG NEAR: Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement

DG DEVCO: Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development

EAFRD: European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

EaP: Eastern Partnership

EBRD: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EC: European Community

EEAS: European External Action Service

EEC: European Economic Community

ENP: European Neighbourhood Policy

ENPARD: European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural
Development (Georgia)

ELARD: European LEADER Association for Rural Development

EU: European Union

EUR: Euros

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GEL: Georgian Lari

GI: Geographical Indication

GiZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit, German Development
Agency

Abbreviations

INAO: Institut national de l'origine et de la qualité, previously Institut National des Appellations d'Origine

LAG: Local Action Group

LDS: Local Development Strategy

LEADER: Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale

OriGIn: Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network

PCA: Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

SPS: Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards

TTIP: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

WIPO: World Intellectual Property Organization

WTO: World Trade Organisation

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Declaration

DECLARATION

This submitted thesis is based the author's own work, except for when it references the work of others. It has not been submitted in the pursuit of another degree.

Laura Gelhaus

ABSTRACT

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is one of the oldest and most controversial EU policies. Yet, while it has been criticised for the external effects of internal instruments such as subsidies, little is known about whether and how the EU has encouraged the adoption of CAP elements in non-member states. The thesis fills this research gap by investigating how the CAP is externally governed, and how effective its external governance has been. Specifically, it focuses on rural development, a more recent and lesser studied aspect of the CAP. It applies the external governance framework to two rural development instruments in Georgia: Geographical Indications (GIs) which protect agricultural products from certain places against imitation, and the LEADER programme which supports local development projects.

Contrary to the sectoral and institutionalist expectations of the framework, the instruments follow different modes of external governance, which are largely determined by domestic contexts. Despite the difference in modes, and despite the general absence of EU-hierarchy in the process, the external governance of both instruments is effective, and they shape Georgian rural spaces in similar ways. This includes the ‘Europeanisation’ of rural spaces and the further empowerment of existing elite actors. Therefore, the thesis contributes to the EU external governance literature the study of an under-researched sector, and it moves beyond the sectoral level through its engagement with policy instruments. The thesis also extends the framework’s measure of effectiveness by investigating the instruments’ consequences through the concept of rural space. Thereby, it provides heuristics that could benefit future research on EU external action, namely rurality, place, land, and territory. Finally, thesis adds empirical insights to the literature on the CAP and the two instruments, which have seldom been studied in post-Soviet contexts, despite the rich and diverse rural contexts in the region.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is undoubtedly one of the best known and most notorious European Union (EU) policies. Being part of the original set-up of the European Economic Community (EEC), it has been implemented, reformed, and heavily criticised for over fifty years. Milk lakes and butter mountains have become carved into public imaginaries. A sector of shared competence, it has also been an arena for continuous disagreements between member states and EU actors. Since its establishment, the CAP has attracted the largest share of the budget, peaking at an astonishing 73% in 1985 (European Commission 2018a: 1). Clearly, the CAP is a central EU policy.

At the same time, the EU and its policies do not only have implications for member states but reach far beyond. Indeed, the way the EU conducts itself in international relations has become increasingly relevant, not only considering the more specific focus on external actions and extended external competences through the Treaty of Lisbon, but also due to an altered, and arguably more hostile external environment for the EU. Therefore, analysing how the EU performs and how effective its external actions are is vital. After all, if the EU's actions have no or even negative consequences, gains made on the dimension of EU-actorness may be irrelevant or even counterproductive.

As one of the central common policies, the CAP should clearly be part of analyses of the EU's role in the world. The CAP has been extensively criticised for the significant negative impacts on developing countries that arise from internal instruments such as subsidies. Curiously however, there exists hardly any research on whether the CAP itself has travelled beyond the EU, and even less, how effective its external governance has been. The central aim of this thesis is to close this gap. It investigates how the EU externally governs through the CAP, and what the consequences of this external governance are for rural spaces. Hence, the central puzzle is one of two interlocking pieces: how do we conceptualise 'effective' EU external actions, and how has one of the most famous and most contested common policies fared beyond the EU's borders?

Addressing this puzzle is vital not only to narrow existing research gaps but also because rural spaces, the spaces for which the CAP has most consequences, are highly contested themselves. This includes campaigns around the global food system,

including against industrial farming, and for animal welfare, or groups that attacked French McDonalds franchises over US bans on Roquefort cheese (Clapp 2012; Henley 1999). However, these debates also transcend beyond agriculture and food. There have been increasing concerns about the depopulation of rural spaces, with especially young people leaving villages for cities, as well as about the depletion of essential services (DuPuis 2006). At the same time, former city dwellers have increasingly been chasing the ‘rural idyll’, creating a juxtaposed process of counterurbanization (Spencer 1997; Bell 2006).

1.1 EU external relations, their effectiveness, and the CAP

A wide range of scholarly contributions conceptualised the EU’s role in global politics. Chiefly, authors have attributed overarching roles to the EU as an actor. Whilst some understand it as Civilian or Normative Power, others view it as Superpower, Empire, or Market Power (Duchêne 1972; Manners 2002; Galtung 1973; Zielonka 2008; Damro 2012). Contrastingly, sectoral approaches do not expect to find one overarching role for the EU but rather a differentiated behaviour according to each sector. As will be explained in detail in Chapter 3, a sectoral approach provides a better starting point for the analysis, considering that the CAP requires a highly differentiated approach. Even more specifically, the thesis applies and expands the EU external governance framework, which studies the expansion of the *acquis communautaire*, and thus EU policies, to non-member states, particularly to those without membership perspective (Lavenex 2004; Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009). This is in large part as they not only encapsulate various ‘roles’ in studying how the EU expands its regulatory regime, but importantly because the framework presents a structured concept of effectiveness that forms the starting point for this thesis.

The two main alternative approaches that could have been applied were that of “From Europeanisation to Diffusion” (Börzel & Risse 2012), and the policy-analytical approach to differential Europeanisation (Bauer et al. 2007: 407). Both of these frameworks include various modes of Europeanisation beyond Europe, detailed in Chapter 3, and take a similar institutionalist starting point to the EU external governance approach. However, the EU external governance framework has two advantages over these approaches, as well as the role concepts mentioned previously: its brevity and its systematism.

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First, it encapsulates a broader understanding of *how* the EU exports its rules, including institutionalist but also domestic and power-based explanations. This advantage becomes clear in the modes of external governance Lavenex and Schimmelfennig suggest, which capture three main ways the literature has thought about the EU's external actions. First, the hierarchy mode is similar to EU conditionality, albeit applied to non-candidate countries, and centres around a relationship governed through binding rules (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 797). Second, the network mode describes an external governance that is guided by socialization with and learning from EU rules, consensus-based instruments, and process-orientated guidelines (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 797). Third, the market mode acknowledges the potential that EU rules travel without direct EU initiative, through the supposed attraction by the Common Market. In this mode, companies in non-member states lobby for the approximation with EU rules to gain access to the single market (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 799). The approach's brevity is also evident in the explanations for how the EU externally governs its rules. Explanations range from prominent institutionalist approaches over understandings based on power interdependencies, to those based on likeness-of-fit with the legal framework of the non-member state. While these approaches exist in the broader literature, the EU external governance framework unites them under one roof. This broad theoretical approach is particularly important considering that this is one of the first analyses of the CAP in EU external relations, meaning that there is little previous research that could guide the analysis of modes or explanations of external governance.

Second, it, other than the frameworks by Börzel and Risse as well as Bauer et al., they provide a structured approach to measuring *effectiveness* that provides an ideal starting point for the analysis of this thesis. Generally, effectiveness can be understood as goal attainment (see e.g. Jørgensen et al. 2011: 603), and in EU external governance, has largely referred to the goal of expanding the EU's regulatory scope beyond its borders. In the external governance approach, the first level of effectiveness is conceptualised as rule selection, meaning that the EU rules are accepted as blueprints or baseline in bilateral negotiations (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 800f.). Second, rule adoption describes whether EU rules are adopted into non-member state policy (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 801). Lastly, rule application is achieved when EU rules are applied in political and administrative practice in the non-member state (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 801).

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In this structured conceptualisation of effectiveness lies one particular strength of the external governance framework. Importantly, analysing the effectiveness of the EU's external governance is vital not only for the scholarly discourse but also policy practice. If the EU's actions are ineffective or produce effects that contradict original goals, this can have severe consequences for the EU itself, as well as the domestic context in non-member states. Yet, as mentioned previously, the focus of the external governance framework lies on the attainment of the EU's goal to export the *acquis communautaire* beyond its borders. This thesis broadens this conceptualisation by adding the aspect of external governance consequences to the understanding of effectiveness. Specifically, it does so through the concepts of (rural) spaces.

Through this addition, the thesis stands in connection to two more recent strands of the EU external actions literature, those with a focus on local ownership and unintended consequences (see Korosteleva & Flockhart 2019; Burluk 2017). However, this thesis opts for a broader engagement with the effects of external governance by analysing all potential consequences on the ground in rural spaces, rather than strictly focusing on the concept of local or unintended consequences. Thereby, it expands the external action literature's and the external governance framework's understanding of effectiveness, forming one of the thesis' central contributions. As will be argued in the Conclusion of this thesis, the findings also demonstrate the potential of the application of other approaches, such as multilevel governance or Postcolonialism. However, as the applicability of these approaches only became visible through the empirical findings, they did not lie in the scope of this thesis.

The second starting point of this thesis and its second major contribution is the analysis of a policy sector that has been widely neglected by the EU external relations literature: the Common Agricultural Policy. This lacuna is curious for various reasons. The importance of the CAP for European integration is difficult to overstate. It is one of the oldest common policies, created through the 1957 Treaty of Rome. In fact, it has been argued that the European Economic Community would not have existed without the CAP, as the Netherlands and France refused to accept a common market without an agricultural component (Wilson 2001; Garzon 2006: 23). Since then, the CAP has continuously attracted the largest budget allocations, amassing 34.5% of the total EU budget in 2020 (European Parliament 2020). This centrality to integration and

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immense budget has led to the CAP's characterisation as "one of the cornerstones of the European Union" (Grant 1997: 1).

Accompanying this long historical trajectory and institutionalisation are extensive public debates. The CAP has been subjected to internal criticisms, for instance on 'butter mountains', 'milk lakes', or more recently shortcomings in addressing the climate emergency (Peter 2015; Greenpeace European Union 2020). At the same time, the CAP has publicly been criticised for its impact on its outside, specifically developing countries, for instance for produce dumping or the negative externalities of the CAP's alleged protectionism (Ackrill 2000: 19f; Zschache 2015: 253; Boysen et al. 2016; Matthews 2008). As Ackrill illustrated: "The CAP is one of the most pervasive of all EU policies, one of the most infamous and perhaps one of the most misunderstood" (Ackrill 2000: 15). Given this centrality of the CAP to debates and EU policymaking, it is surprising that so little literature on EU external governance has engaged with it.

On the EU-level, the CAP is primarily governed by the Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), but directorates concerned with trade, budget, development, cohesion, and health¹ also overlap with agricultural and rural policy (Ackrill 2000: 143). Being a sector of shared competence, qualified majority voting in the Council alleviated historical deadlocks and since the Treaty of Lisbon, the Parliament's legislative power has increased (Lovec 2016: 4; Daugbjerg & Roederer-Rynning 2014: 41). Next to its centrality to EU policymaking, the CAP's internal complexity makes it a fascinating object of analysis, marked by a dense net of instruments negotiated at the international, European, national, and sub-national level (Ackrill 2000: 46; Garzon 2006: 7). Contributing to this complexity, the CAP has been characterised by processes of policy-layering in which small changes were incrementally introduced through various reforms, especially since the 1980s (Garzon 2006: 1; Daugbjerg & Swinbank 2016: 265).

After a long resistance to substantive change, the policy moved away from its initial narrow agricultural to a broader rural outlook. Since the Agenda 2000 reform, the CAP has been divided into two pillars. While Pillar I pertains to the functioning of agricultural markets and direct payments to farmers and land managers, Pillar II, the

¹ For instance, the EU's food safety policy.

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Rural Development Policy, includes broader measures, co-financed by the EU (European Commission 2011: 2). However, as is explained in Chapter 5, the pillar structure is not helpful for the empirical analysis of the CAP's external governance.

The literature presents two main research gaps regarding the CAP that this thesis taps into. First, existing literature largely addresses either the external impact of the CAP as an EU-internal policy or its role in trade negotiations (see e.g. Orbie 2008; Kerremans 2006). As is discussed in Chapter 5, hardly any academic publications have focused on the export of EU rules or norms in this sector, and what consequences this may have.² Instead, this thesis takes an external governance approach. Second, while much of the existing literature on the CAP, including on its external impact, has engaged with the traditional agricultural core of the policy, such as its subsidy regime, this thesis scrutinises the CAP's transition from a purely agricultural policy to one that addresses rural spaces more comprehensively (cf. Matthews 2008; Boysen et al. 2016; Schure & Arts 2012).

1.2 Central concepts: rural spaces

In Chapter 4, the concept of rural spaces is developed with a view towards rurality itself, as well as through an engagement with relevant spatial concepts, drawn mainly from Political Geography, Sociology, and Rural Studies. Thereby, the concept forms a main contribution of this thesis by expanding the perspective on how we understand the consequences of EU's external actions 'on the ground'. Moreover, the concept is particularly valuable given the comparatively limited engagement with geographical concepts in the field. It could also open existing perspectives beyond their concentration on non-member states' capitals, and therefore provide an entrance into studying EU external governance more comprehensively.

Rural spaces provide a particularly apt lens for studying the CAP. Especially from the 1990s, the policy has taken an interesting reform trajectory that moved it beyond its astonishingly sturdy productivist paradigm, meaning a preoccupation with agricultural production. Instead, the CAP has expanded its view towards rural development. Therefore, it is for rural spaces that the external governance of the CAP can be expected to have consequences. The thesis finds that rurality is, both in public and academic understandings, frequently marked either by a synonymous understanding

² see Kourtellis (2017; 2018) for two exceptions, even though more focused on the ENP than the CAP.

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with agriculture, or narrated in a dichotomy to ‘the city’ or ‘the centre’. They are hence associated with conservatism and backwardness, standing in contradistinction to the modern city (Sauer 2012; Cloke 1977; Butler 1990). At the same time, they are imagined as remote, peripheral, local, or even at the frontier, contrasting countries’ globalised cities and the power concentrated in the capital (Murray Li 2014; Woods 2007). What is notable about the external governance of the CAP, then, is that it aims to bridge both sides of a debate when it comes to rurality. On the one hand, it to some extent aims to modernise the countryside, making it more competitive and its products marketable to global consumers. At the same time, it often utilises narratives and imaginaries of tradition and remoteness in this pursuit.

Turning to spatial concepts, the thesis mainly applies three interrelated dimensions: land, territory, and place. Place can be described through the perceived and experienced connections both insiders and outsiders have towards spaces, for instance feelings of belonging or exclusion (Tuan & Strawn 2009; Gupta & Ferguson 1992; Gieryn 2000). Land and territory are closely related, in that they both relate to notions of control, power, and authority. While territory, understood as state space, relates specifically to political power relations, such as between different levels of government, land refers to relations of ownership and capital accumulation, and thus takes a more economic perspective (Bernstein 2010; Akram-Lodhi & Kay 2007; Brenner & Elden 2009; Lefebvre 1991; Sassen 2006). As detailed in the research design section, these heuristics provided the basic structure for the thesis’ analysis of consequences, even though overlaps especially between land and territory as well as rurality and place were inevitable in the empirical analysis.

1.3 LEADER, Geographical Indications and what can be learnt from them

In line with the shift within the CAP, from the earlier agricultural productivist paradigm towards a broader engagement with rural spaces, specific instruments that reflect this shift were selected for closer study, as is detailed in the case selection section of this chapter. The first instrument, Geographical Indications (GIs), is a system for intellectual property rights applying to products protected for their region of origin or production. Prominent examples are Parma ham, Champagne, and Feta cheese. Yet, rather than ‘just’ an intellectual property right, GIs have always been intensely intertwined with narratives on rural development and the imagination of European rural spaces and have become a major topic in international trade, both in

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the negotiation of bilateral trade agreements and at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The second instrument, LEADER (Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale)³, makes this shift to 'the rural' explicit. The rural development programme is based on the assumption that local actors can best decide the rural development needs and solutions for 'their' area and provides funding for so-called Local Action Groups (LAGs) to develop local strategies and fund sub-projects. LEADER has been widely hailed within the EU as a success story since its initiation in 1991 and since the early 2010s has been exported beyond the EU and candidate countries, including to Georgia, which is the unit analysed in this thesis, as explained below.

From this set-up, three specific research questions emerged:

- (1) How has the CAP been externally governed?
- (2) Have the rural development instruments of GIs and LEADER been effectively externally governed in Georgia?
- (3) How have GIs and LEADER shaped the understanding and politics of rural space in Georgia?

1.4 Research design

Having introduced the basic tenets of the thesis, this section outlines how the three research questions will be answered. Hence, this chapter sets out the case study methods used in the thesis, concentrating on case selection and interview data collection. Moreover, it explains the trade-offs of the selected methods, predominantly the lack of generalizability and potential biases stemming from the interview sample. The rest of the introduction will then provide a short introduction into Georgia-EU relations, main findings, and a structure of the thesis.

As mentioned, the thesis addresses various gaps in the existing literature, mainly by integrating the CAP into the EU external governance literature and by moving beyond the framework by asking what happens 'on the ground' during and after external governance. Importantly, while the thesis originally aimed to merely apply theory to novel cases, it encountered some challenges regarding the hypothesised modes and their relationship with external governance effectiveness. In turn, these observations can help refine the original theoretical framework. Therefore, the thesis also

³ Liaison among Actors in Rural Economic Development.

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investigated the underlying questions of whether the modes of external governance, as well as the relationship between modes and external governance effectiveness occurred as expected by the framework.

The design of this thesis was inspired by Sil and Katzenstein's (2010) work on analytic eclecticism, a research strategy based on pragmatism that speaks to concrete policy issues and incorporates the "messiness" of real-world situations (Sil & Katzenstein 2010: 412). Eclecticism was valuable for both questions addressed in this thesis. First, being targeted at very specific cases with a strong attention to detail but within a specific theoretical framework means that it was able to uncover additional insights (see Sil & Katzenstein 2010: 414). Secondly, its aversion to rigid foundational principles, rather tracing consequences over a wide range of complex potential mechanisms (Sil & Katzenstein 2010: 418)⁴ was particularly valuable for the third, explorative, research question.

1.4.1 (Comparative) case study

Whether this thesis can be characterised as a comparative case study primarily depends on the readers' understanding of what constitutes a case (see e.g. Gerring 2004; Eckstein 2000; Halperin & Heath 2017: 219). Here, it broadly sided with Gerring's argument that case studies always employ more than one case and that every case study implies some element of comparison, e.g. with a counterfactual or a previous event (Gerring 2004: 342 f.). As outlined in the subsequent section, the two instruments were selected as cases within a single unit (Georgia) to maximise their comparability (see Gerring 2004: 348).

The methodological literature highlights a variety of justifications for small-n approaches that present themselves for the research questions. First, it has been suggested that case studies can incorporate broader contexts and detail than statistical analyses (Halperin & Heath 2017: 153; Flyvbjerg 2006: 5). As a result, they are valuable for addressing threats to internal validity, such as historical and contextual factors, and for avoiding conceptual stretching that may result from cross-unit comparisons (Halperin & Heath 2017: 2012: 153; George & Bennett 2005: 19). Correspondingly, case studies allow to 'zoom in' on real-life in complex social

⁴ The authors' understanding of mechanisms is broad, defined as "all entities [...] that generate immediate effects through processes that may or may not recur across contexts and that may be but are often not directly observable" (Sil & Katzenstein 2010: 418).

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situations, which is in line with the eclectic analytic approach presented above (Flyvbjerg 2006: 19). Further, the in-depth knowledge produced by case studies is particularly valuable for explorative research where they can identify new research avenues (see Gerring 2004: 349; George & Bennet 2005: 19f., Eckstein 2000: 138). Hence, while the maximization of internal validity was important for all research questions, the incorporation of contexts and detail were crucial in those areas of the thesis that moved beyond the existing framework, both when it identified the contextual factors in the anomalous findings of Chapter 6 but most clearly in Chapter 7's explorative research on how the instruments shape rural spaces. Given the scarce literature on the CAP and especially rural development in EU external relations, the spatial concepts developed in Chapter 4 were utilised as heuristics that structure data collection and analysis. This was, as elaborated on later, done primarily to keep the area of potential consequences as broad as possible, rather than restricting it to the consequences that were intended by the EU or observed by previous case studies of GIs and LEADER.

Second, a benefit of case studies that became apparent in this thesis is that of refining existing theories, their potential to shed light on whether theories travel across contexts and/or analyse anomalous findings in-depth (Halperin & Heath 2017: 215f.; Gisselquist 2014: 481ff.; Przeworski & Teune 1970: 31). As mentioned, in this thesis, the application of the theoretical framework, rather than its testing, resulted in some anomalous findings. Of course, this does not mean that the framework itself can or should be discarded, especially as case selection was not directed at this purpose, e.g. through the selection of a most-likely case (see George & Bennett 2005: 115; Eckstein 2009: 149). Nevertheless, some observations, such as the importance of non-member states' domestic context at various levels, could contribute to the refinement of the original theoretical framework if confirmed by future analyses.

Third, small-n studies may be the only option when the universe of potential cases is restricted (Halperin & Heath 2017: 227). In the case of external governance, while the theory does not specifically limit itself to the European neighbourhood and could be applied to all countries without membership perspective, other factors restricted the size of a useful sample. Importantly, cases far beyond the neighbourhood are less likely to shed light on the research questions given the larger number of intervening factors and the less direct relationship of those countries to the EU. Hence, the application to

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a broader range of cases would have likely negatively impacted both internal validity and the potential to elucidate on the puzzle (Goertz & Mahoney 2012: 181; Herron & Quinn 2016: 460).

1.4.2 Case selection

As mentioned, the thesis selected the two instruments, LEADER and GIs, as the cases within one unit, Georgia. This choice - rather than comparing the CAP or one instrument across EaP cases - was guided by two rationales: the possibility to elucidate on the research questions and address gaps in the literature, as well as the theoretical framework itself which determined the initial identification of important factors, i.e. external governance mode and effectiveness (see Geddes 2003; Haverland 2006: 139; Halperin & Heath 2017: 218).

As the thesis was developed within the GEM-STONES⁵ research network, the project's aim was limited a priori to studying the CAP's external governance. Subsequently, the area was narrowed to a concrete research question by studying the CAP's internal regulatory framework. It was discovered that various parts of the overarching CAP framework appeared to be governed quite differently. As explained in Chapter 5, the policy is often described as divided into two pillars. Initially, this was a first indication that the CAP may not correspond to the literature's expectation that external governance mirrors internal governance, and that there is one *sector-wide* mode for external governance at the same time. Even though the two pillars were not an appropriate distinction for this thesis, as they overlap significantly, it emerged that measures with the general goal of rural development themselves were governed differently internally, as well.

Thus, it was decided to apply the theoretical framework at the instrument level and thereby increase variation regarding the internal mode of governance to investigate this initial, seemingly anomalous, finding.⁶ The focus lay on rural development instruments primarily because purely agricultural instruments are rarely adopted outside of the EU due to the substantive financial commitments attached, which often cannot be borne by non-member states. Additionally, there exists a striking vacuum of

⁵ GEM-STONES is a research network and joint doctoral programme funded by the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. GEM-STONES is an acronym for "Globalisation, Europeanization and Multilateralism – Sophistication of the Transnational Order, Networks and European Strategies".

⁶ Indeed, Przeworski and Teune themselves suggest low levels of analysis as the starting point for Most-Similar Systems Designs (MSSDs; Przeworski & Teune 1970: 36).

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research on this aspect in EU external relations. While there exists some literature at least on the external impact of agricultural measures such as subsidies or direct payments, these analyses are largely absent for rural instruments. Even though the focus lay instruments of the CAP, connected instruments especially of the EU's food safety policy and trade policy, are touched on throughout the thesis, particularly in Chapters 2 and 7.

Consequently, two instruments were selected, both with a rural development component but appearing to be governed differently within the EU. LEADER and Geographical Indications met those criteria and are, in addition, interesting cases due to the importance attached to them within the CAP. LEADER is an instrument that is frequently referred to in the Rural Development Policy Regulation 1305/2013 and is utilised prominently in the EU's promotion of rural development. It is often hailed as an outstanding success story and innovative model of EU governance and presented as a programme that has been "recognized worldwide as best practice" (European Commission 2017a: 2). Respectively, GIs are, within the EU, understood as rural development instrument, rather than strictly an intellectual property right. This instrument is particularly interesting due to the EU's intensive efforts to expand its *sui generis*⁷ GI system globally, as well as their prominence in international and bilateral negotiations. Taken together, the two instruments also offer an important contrast: GIs are guided by strict rules and tightly connected to agricultural producers and markets, suggesting different modes of governance may be at play compared to the distinctly bottom-up LEADER programme.

Therefore, the analysis could shed light particularly on the validity of the sectoral approach to external governance versus the institutionalist assumption that external governance modes mirror internal ones. One caveat needs to be raised here. While case selection methodology suggests that compared cases should be independent from each other (Gerring 2007: 149), there exist connections between the two instruments. For instance, in Georgia some LAGs support the promotion of local products or wine tourism. However, these were single observations that are unlikely to severely bias overall findings.

⁷ Rather than through a trademark system as is the case for instance in the United States.

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In turn, it was decided that the two instruments should be selected akin to a Most-Similar Systems Design (MSSD). MSSDs select cases that are similar with regards to many important features but differ in one theoretically important aspect (Przeworski & Teune 1970: 32; Halperin & Heath 2017: 219). In turn, “the shared characteristics act as a control in order to test whether the crucial difference between the [cases⁸] is associated with the variation in the dependent variable” (Halperin & Heath 2017: 219). Considering the external governance framework, as elaborated below, the cases that were selected differed on the theoretically important aspect of internal mode of governance.

Considering the differences in agricultural and rural contexts across the ENP, it was decided that the most valid strategy was to apply the comparison within one country unit, corresponding with advice against cross-unit comparisons if research cannot hold other potentially confounding factors constant (Gerring 2004: 352; Flyvbjerg 2006: 14). Georgia was selected as both instruments have been applied here the longest out of all Eastern Partnership countries. This increased the potential of elucidating on the question how EU external governance of the CAP shapes rural space, which arguably requires that some time passed between implementation and evaluation. The only other country in which external governance of both instruments occurred is Moldova. However, here LEADER has only been applied since 2016, meaning an analysis would be less likely to shed light on the third research question. There have been overarching rural development programmes funded by the EU, called European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) both in EaP countries and in the ENP South (see e.g. Kourtelis 2017; 2018). However, which concrete instruments are included in these programmes differs. For instance, ENPARD Armenia focuses almost exclusively on technical assistance, and does not include a LEADER component (UNDP Armenia n.d.). Similarly, in the ENP South the set-up and instruments do not include an institutionalised LEADER component (EU Neighbours South n.d.).

There exist various countries which have implemented LEADER and/or GIs, meaning that the individual findings are relevant beyond Georgia. As the adoption of LEADER and GIs is necessary in the accession process, observations already gathered from the newer member states, presented in Chapter 5, helped contextualise the findings of this

⁸ Countries in original.

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thesis. Next to the newer member states, the instruments apply to current candidate countries which must adopt the EU *acquis*. However, the external governance framework explicitly moves beyond processes of formal conditionality in enlargement, and thus a focus on the Eastern neighbourhood was more appropriate.

Indeed, various countries that are neither member, candidate, nor neighbourhood countries have applied the instruments, albeit not at the same time. For instance, there are some individual instances in which LEADER was implemented as part of research projects. On a larger scale, various countries have adopted the EU's *sui generis* GI-system and there are instances of singular GI products that are protected in the EU, with the most prominent example being Tequila from Mexico (Bowen 2015). However, the EU also recently increased its external governance of rural development to the African Union. As elaborated on in Chapter 5, the EU promotes its GI-system as a comprehensive rural development tool "that can protect the identity of local and indigenous products throughout Africa" (Advisory Group International Aspects of Agriculture 2012: 10). Moreover, the 2018 the Task Force Rural Africa, created by the European Commission, in their report "An Africa-Europe Agenda for Rural Transformation", supported the implementation of the LEADER programme (Arnold et al. 2019: 65). Thus, the thesis is relevant as a stepping-stone into analyses of these future developments.

In addition, while Georgia was selected primarily because it allowed the analysis of the two instruments within one country, various other benefits derived from this selection. These mostly relate to observations on the Georgian context that expand the understanding of EU external relations, as well as the findings' contribution to the literature on the two instruments themselves, considering that they have seldomly been studied outside of the EU. This is especially true for the post-Soviet context, which, as outlined below, presented some unique findings that had not been observed previously. Lastly, it enhances understandings prevalent in the external governance literature, for instance by adding post-Soviet governments' entrepreneurial motivations to the conceptualisation of the market mode, as demonstrated in Chapter 6.

In turn, the design was utilised to analyse whether the theoretical expectation that the mode of external governance determines its effectiveness travelled to the cases in question (see Gerring 2007:130f.; Flyvbjerg 2006; 153; Gisselquist 2014: 482). As other unit-factors, such as political system or historical context were constant, it was

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striking that both instruments were fully effective despite (a) their differences in mode of governance; and (b) the absence of hierarchical governance, which the external governance literature suggests will be most effective. In turn, it can be questioned whether the mode of external governance is indeed decisive for effectiveness. One alternative selection strategy that could have provided better hypothesis-testing is that of a most-likely case (Eckstein 2000). However, these cases depend heavily on previous knowledge, in this case of both the modes and effectiveness of external governance, which was not available a priori and which was part of the empirical research (see Herron & Quinn 2016: 471).

While the distinctly comparative case study design was primarily applied to the first two research questions which were more closely guided by theory, it also generated valuable insights for the question of how the instruments shaped rural spaces. First, there exists little research on this topic that explicitly connects EU external actions to consequences on the ground, also for these instruments. Secondly, a similar “logic of elimination” (George & Bennett 2005: 153) could be applied to the connection of external governance modes with consequences. As explained in Chapter 7, both instruments present similarities in how they shape rural spaces, again questioning the relevance of how instruments are externally governed and highlighting the need for a structured inclusion of domestic contexts at national and local levels. Nonetheless, the potential impact of structural changes cannot be fully eliminated (see Börzel & Risse 2012). Even though the sources used often directly connected the instruments to the consequences, future ethnographic research could contribute further.

1.4.3 Data

It became evident that various methods of data collection and triangulation were necessary to produce valuable in-depth findings that help answer the research question with this case study approach (see Lamont & Swidler 2014: 162; Goldstein 2002: 672). Primarily, the thesis utilised textual and interview data⁹, triangulated with each other as well as with observations during fieldwork, participation in workshops, and informal talks to ensure validity.

Regarding textual data, it was attempted to collect as much data from as many sources as possible to reduce potential bias and to increase the potential for findings that helped

⁹ Ethics approval was granted by the University of Warwick’s Department of Politics and International Studies Research Ethics Committee (PAISREC).

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answer the research questions. Documents included governmental policies and strategies from various ministries, promotional material both by the EU and the Georgian government, EU documents from various DGs and institutions, reports from NGOs and international organizations, both those that were subcontracted by the EU and those that were not, ENPARD newsletters and reports, the Local Development Strategies published by various LAGs, but also articles in newspapers, travel and wine magazines, as well as postings on company websites. These latter, less formal sources were particularly valuable for the third research question, especially for arguments related to place and rurality. There was no pre-defined starting date for publications to be included and data collection finished in November 2019.

The second main data source was interviews. To this end, fieldwork was carried out in Georgia and Brussels which was “key to making connections and being able to set up interviews” (Goldstein 2002: 671). Practical limitations meant that the timing and duration were different for both locations. While Georgia was visited five times for periods between five days and two weeks in 2018 and 2019, a secondment to the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Brussels took place from September 2018 to March 2019, during which more interview data were collected. Both longer and short-term stays had different advantages for the research objective. For Georgia, multiple trips facilitated the snowballing of interviewees who were difficult to contact. As a contrast, EU officials in Brussels were often available on a very short notice. Moreover, both approaches allowed the gathering of insights beyond interviews, for instance by attending workshops and conferences, but also talks with sommeliers or tourism operators to gain a deeper understanding of the subject of GIs and ensure validity.

As for case studies, and fieldwork, various reasons explain the selection of interviews as one of the two main data sources. First, there is a general lack of data on the topic of the CAP’s external governance of the instruments in Georgia and their consequences for rural spaces. Hence, interviews were used to test documents’ validity, which was necessary considering that they are often published by governmental, EU, or EU-funded sources, as well as adding information (see Aberbach & Rockman 2002: 673). Second, it was important to analyse subjects’ perceptions and narratives for the third research question, which can be best explored through interviews (see Aberbach & Rockman 2002: 674).

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Interviewees were sampled broadly, from governmental actors to those engaged with these instruments ‘on the ground’. Hence, it covered both the “A-list elites” (Pierce 2008: 121) and lower-level officials with more day-to-day policy involvement (George & Bennett 2005: 103). Potential interviewees were contacted mostly via their professional email, with initial contact explaining the objectives of the research and potential ethical concerns (e.g. anonymity; Leech 2002: 666). It was attempted to use language familiar to the potential interviewee, e.g. specific terminology commonly used by EU officials, wine experts, or development actors, which was important because most interviewees had not been subject of an academic study previously (see Leech 2002: 666). Another strategy was snowball sampling of interviewees, which was particularly relevant for Georgia, where interviewees frequently mentioned possible additional interviewees in their answers. In total, 23 respondents were interviewed, and a list can be found in Annex 1. Interviewees were reminded at the beginning and end of the interview of possible risks and that the potential to withdraw consent (see Halperin & Heath 2017: 162). Although some interviewees consented to the full publication of their name, it was decided that all interviewees would be anonymised to the most secretive level chosen by an interviewee, which was the level of type of organization (e.g. EU, government). Otherwise, due to the small number of people working in the field, readers familiar to the topic could have discerned the anonymised interviewees by elimination.

To reflect the research objectives, the questionnaire design lay between semi-structured and unstructured. Importantly, there was not one unified questionnaire for all subjects (see Halperin & Heath 2017: 289). This was decided primarily to increase interviewees’ responses, after those who were first approached often did not feel comfortable with the initial unified interview questionnaire that was sent upon request in advance (see Aberbach & Rockman 2002: 673). Often, subjects argued that they lacked expertise on some of the questions and thus feared they could not be helpful altogether. Hence, only two broad questions were administered to all interviewees:

- a) Who do you think are the main actors regarding [GI/LEADER] in Georgia?
- b) What do you think the main consequences of [GI/LEADER] are in Georgia?

The first question intentionally left open whether it referred to the stage of policy selection, adoption, or application to reflect the different expertise of interviewees and making it possible to connect responses to the various measures of external

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governance effectiveness. For the second question, in case interviewees only referred to positive consequences, a probe on the “challenges” of the instrument was added. Even though this question presumed that there had been challenges, the probe was necessary to safeguard validity (Leech 2002: 666). In addition to these general questions, others were included depending on the expertise of the interviewee. While differing interview protocols decrease both the overall reliability and comparability across subjects, the access to a broader range of interviews, as well as the increased detail and validity of responses in specific areas of expertise outweighed these negatives (Halperin & Heath 2017: 289).

It has been suggested by the methodological literature that broad, open questions are particularly valuable for projects where depth, context, perceptions, and emotions are crucial (Berry 2002: 682; Larmont & Swindler 2014: 57; Aberbach & Rockman 2002: 673). These aspects particularly speak to the third research question, addressing how the instruments have shaped rural spaces. Here, the spatial concepts elaborated on in Chapter 4 were vital to develop heuristics that guided broad questions and the analysis of answers. Importantly, the concepts do not only demand contextualization but rely on the perception or emotions, whose observation is an advantage of interviews as a data collection method. This can be illustrated by the concepts of place and rurality that contain emotional relations toward spaces or narratives of periphery and backwardness, respectively. As mentioned, there was no formalised set of questions, but questions touched on spatial dimensions¹⁰ and answers were organised according to the spatial heuristics during data analysis (see Aberbach & Rockman 2002: 674). This strategy, rather than developing questions based on the internal literature on LEADER and GIs also had the benefit of reducing contamination of responses by pre-existing hypotheses on the instruments’ consequences (see Aberbach & Rockman 2002: 674). In turn, these open-ended questions had “the virtue of allowing the subjects to tell the interviewer what’s relevant [...] rather than being restricted by the researchers’ preconceived notions about what’s important” (Berry 2002: 681) which also allowed for the revelation of new factors that had not been expected by the EU or observed by the literature.

The interview locations varied from offices to cafés and wine bars, and so did the length of the interviews themselves, with the shortest interview being an hour while

¹⁰ E.g. “Who is involved in the decision-making process of LEADER?” for territory.

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the longest one lasted almost three hours. Interviews with experts in Georgia were generally longer than interviews with EU officials. Even though EU officials' interviews were shorter, the interviewees here were also arguably more comfortable with academic interviews as well as English as the conversational language, meaning answers were often more concise and required fewer questions of clarification. Interviews were not recorded, as notetaking was thought to be more assuring for interviewees given the added level of confidentiality. This was important specifically given the concerns of many interviewees who had never been interviewed before and who had heightened privacy concerns given the small number of people active on these instruments.

1.4.4 Trade-offs

Besides trade-offs regarding reliability which were already mentioned, this section engages with other potential concerns. First is the limited external validity of the findings, associated with most case studies (Gerring 2007: 43; Collier & Mahoney 1996: 96; George & Bennett 2005: 30). Indeed, it could be argued that generalisability is particularly problematic in this thesis that analyses only one country unit. Moreover, with respect to LEADER, generalisability is limited as it appears the instrument is not applied consistently even across the EaP. For instance, the budget attributed to it is significantly smaller in the programme's second implementation in Moldova, potentially suggesting learning effects from the Georgian case (Interview 23). For GIs, as noted, rural contexts and agricultural systems vary widely even across post-Soviet spaces, considering for instance the large volume cereal production in Ukraine versus the smaller scale wine production in Georgia. Yet, external validity was not the primary objective of this thesis. Rather, it aimed at internally valid findings stemming from the application of the theoretical framework to a new sector, as well as the exploration of consequences that had as a main finding the importance of context and thus inherently lacks generalizability.

The second main caveat relates to aforementioned problems with non-responses of potential subjects which resulted in the non-representation of two important groups: beneficiaries of LEADER sub-projects, and wine producers (see Goldstein 2002: 669). Likely, the non-responses from these groups resulted from my paucity of Georgian language skills, lack of personal relations in this area, as well as the unfamiliarity of academic interviews by the potential respondents. For wine producers, especially

larger firms, this absence of responses was substituted by researching their websites and promotional material to explore narratives surrounding GI products, as well as by interviews with wine experts. When it comes to small producers specifically, the interviewed wine experts could also provide extensive information as they often also work in the provision of ‘off the track’ wine tourism. The lack of voices from LEADER beneficiaries is more problematic. While they were cited e.g. in newsletters or promotional material, this information likely contains a positive bias. However, findings that were drawn regarding the consequences for rural spaces, i.e. the Europeanisation through student-teacher relationships and the further empowerment of elites were mentioned consistently in documents and interviews. Nonetheless, extensive ethnographic research on the perceptions of a wide range of subjects could, as is explained in the conclusion of this thesis, provide interesting future research avenues for the EU external relations literature.

1.5 Main findings and contributions

As noted previously, the three research questions addressed in this thesis are

- (1) How has the CAP been externally governed?
- (2) Have the rural development instruments of GIs and LEADER been effectively externally governed in Georgia?
- (3) How have GIs and LEADER shaped the understanding and politics of rural space in Georgia?

The first research question is addressed both in a general review of the CAP and its evolution, provided in Chapter 5, as well as in the specific cases of LEADER and GIs in Georgia in Chapter 6. The latter also assesses the external governance effectiveness of the instruments, before assessing their consequences for the third research question in Chapter 7.

By addressing these questions, the thesis provides contributions to the literatures on external governance, external action more generally, and on the CAP itself. As mentioned, it inserts the CAP into the external governance literature. Rather than concentrating on external economic impacts such as tariffs, quotas, or dumping practices, as has been done previously, the thesis focuses on how EU policies themselves travel beyond the Union and how effective this process is. Importantly, it broadens the understanding of what can be understood as effective external

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governance by analysing the consequences of GIs and LEADER on the ground and for (rural) spaces. While EU external governance has often been assessed as effective when EU-rules were implemented in non-member states, or evaluated according to EU expectations, this thesis contributes to this view through the concept of rural spaces. Thereby, it contributes under-utilised interdisciplinary approaches from Rural Studies, Political Geography, and Sociology into the EU external actions literature to form a more comprehensive view of the consequences EU policies have in non-member states. Secondly, through its results, it also adds complexity to what has often been understood as a linear process of policy export. Specifically, it contributes nuance to both institutionalist and sectoral explanations of EU external governance, instead emphasising the importance of analysing specific policy instruments and their interaction with domestic contexts. In a third contribution to the external governance literature, the thesis also contributes new ways of studying these processes, moving beyond negotiations and legal texts towards a more comprehensive timeframe and the inclusion of broader narratives into analysis.

Beyond the specific focus on the external governance framework, the concept of rural space also provides heuristics that can be taken up in future research to both move beyond the typical sites of analyses for EU external actions, i.e. non-member states' capital cities, and by concretising what 'on the ground' might mean. Too often, analyses of non-member states' domestic contexts and policy instruments' consequences are constrained to the level of the central government or other elites largely situated in capital cities. The focus on rural spaces expands this view to those spaces that have received less attention but in which the EU's external governance may not be any less effective. In addition, concepts such as local ownership and unintended consequences have gained traction in the debates on EU external action, and these debates can be enriched through the analysis of the EU's performance in (rural) spaces.

Utilising the concept of rural space, the thesis is also able to identify important themes of the CAP and its curious reform history, and structure the analysis of its instruments. Lastly, the thesis provides empirical insights on the two instruments themselves. Even though the findings demonstrate processes that are specific to Georgia, the thesis studies them in contexts that have rarely been explored previously. For instance, LEADER has hardly been studied outside of the EU at all, while GIs have been hardly

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studied in post-Soviet countries, meaning the findings can provide a starting point for analyses in future applications of the instruments.

Generally, findings in both empirical chapters highlight the importance of domestic contexts and narratives in both how EU-rules travel to non-member states, as well as their consequences. In Chapter 6, thesis confirmed neither sectoral nor institutional expectations for external governance: LEADER and GIs were externally governed in different ways, but these ways also did not correspond to their internal governance. While LEADER's external governance was guided by its internal network mode, other than within the EU, there was no explicit dimension of EU hierarchy. Nonetheless, the networks also produced student-teacher relationships between Georgian and EU actors, rather than cooperation on equal footing which prevented the adaptation of the programme to the Georgian context. On the other hand, GIs did not strictly correspond to any of the modes delineated by Lavenex & Schimmelfennig (2009). While the motivations to protect GIs followed the market mode of external governance, the central government, not producers as would be expected by the framework, were central. Additionally, the EU was surprisingly passive in the selection, adoption, and early application of GIs in Georgia, lacking the expected hierarchical elements. Nonetheless, both instruments, despite the different ways in which they travel to Georgia, were selected as blueprint, adopted into Georgian policy, as well as applied in political and administrative practice. This therefore contradicts earlier findings and expectations of hierarchy and conditionality as the most effective tools of EU external relations. Yet, again, domestic contexts and narratives were crucial in ensuring this 'success'. While GIs were connected to narratives of national tradition and identity, for LEADER, local actors were more important for external governance effectiveness than the central government.

Considering the third research question, the thesis found that the way in which instruments were governed externally did not determine its consequences. Instead, the two instruments shaped rural spaces in remarkably similar ways. Both reconstructed conceptualisations of rurality as backwards and remote. GIs did so by remodelling backwardness as tradition, and LEADER by adopting 'modern' European development approaches. In fact, both instruments were perceived as tools to overcome 'Soviet history'. While LEADER contrasts 'modern' EU approaches with the alleged 'backwards' mentality during times of the Soviet Union, GIs were

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embedded into narratives of tradition *before* Soviet occupation. At the same time, the instruments addressed the perceived isolation and remoteness of rurality by connecting outsiders, particularly international tourists, to places. However, on the dimensions of land and territory, little has changed. Rather, both instruments reinforced actors that already had considerable resources. Only large producers are in a position to benefit from GI protections. For the case of LEADER, local politicians, university graduates occupy central positions, and local businesses are the primary beneficiaries.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Having introduced the main themes of the thesis, Chapter 2 provides a brief overview of EU-Georgia relations, starting from the country's overarching foreign policy outlook and context as well as general EU-Georgia relations, before circling in on sectors adjacent to the CAP, particularly trade and food safety. Chapter 3 reviews the EU external relations literature. It first discusses the overarching role concepts, before arguing for the adoption of a sectoral framework and specifically an external governance perspective. Yet, it also reviews those contributions of the literature arguing for a more detailed understanding of external governance, specifically by the appreciation of additional, non-EU, actors both within the non-member state, as well as third countries and international and non-governmental organizations. Additionally, it highlights recent relevant contributions, most notably of the EU unintended consequences literature and that of local ownership in EU resilience approaches (Burlyuk 2017; Burlyuk & Noutcheva 2019; Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020; Petrova & Delcour 2020). Chapter 4 then discusses the various conceptualisations of rural spaces, including the dimensions of rurality, connections to and control over spaces. To reiterate, these concepts are utilised as heuristics structuring the empirical analysis while retaining an explorative approach that aims to capture as many different consequences as possible.

Turning to the main original chapters, in Chapter 5, the historical trajectory of the CAP is discussed, tracing its shift from a largely agricultural, productivist policy towards its broader approach on rural spaces. Incidentally, the chapter argues that much of this shift was due to external challenges in international trade negotiations. It thereby also draws a line from the failure to establish EU rules on the international level to the inclusion of the two instruments in bilateral relations and agreements. Subsequently, the chapter provides a more detailed introduction into LEADER and GIs, including

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the ways they have been governed externally in other cases. Then, existing case studies of applications of LEADER and GIs within and outside the EU are discussed, and previously observed consequences presented. Chapters 6 and 7 then present the main empirical contributions of this thesis. Chapter 6 answers the first two research questions, first by explaining rural policies in Georgia, EU-Georgia relations in this regard, and the network of international actors within the sector, before analysing the modes and effectiveness of GI's and LEADER's external governance. Chapter 7 then moves beyond the existing framework by focusing on the consequences of the implementation of these EU-instruments, and thus connecting the external relations literature with rural space, i.e. rurality, place, land, and territory.

Finally, Chapter 8 summarises these findings and draws implication for theory. This includes the aforementioned broadening of the theoretical framework as well as the importance of domestic contexts, histories, and narratives. Thus, it is suggested that further research not only analyses further instances of CAP external governance, but also takes a less legalistic and more sociological, or ethnographic approach, as well as drawing lessons from postcolonial approaches particularly considering the findings on student-teacher relationships. Additionally, it suggests some implications for EU policy making, including adjusted expectations depending on the context, a genuine focus on local ownership and connected to this an increased flexibility of EU external actions.

CHAPTER 2: EU-GEORGIA RELATIONS, A BRIEF OVERVIEW

This chapter provides a basic overview of EU-Georgia relations. Thereby, it provides important context that helps embed the case study within a broader trajectory. This is particularly important contextualising some of the findings of Chapters 6 and 7, for instance the relative passivity of the EU in the external governance of GIs. The chapter first provides a brief overview of the domestic Georgian context from the 2003 Rose Revolution. Then, it engages with the history of interactions between the EU and Georgia from the 1990s and its later inclusion first in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and subsequently the Eastern Partnership (EaP). In Section 2.2, the focus lies on more recent relations surrounding particularly the Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA & DCFTA). Here, relations in sectors adjacent to agriculture, such as trade and food safety, will be of particular interest. Finally, the chapter discusses EU-Georgia relations on agriculture and rural development specifically, without going into detail on LEADER and GIs, which are discussed in Chapter 6.

Turning to the domestic political context for EU external governance, Georgia has at least since the 2003 Rose Revolution,¹¹ been dubbed the “most advanced and committed partner of the EU in the South Caucasus” (Simão 2018: 315) and has even been considered as the EaP’s ‘frontrunner’ of approximation (Delcour & Duhot 2011: 43). Being elected after the ousting of President Eduard Shevardnadze, Mikheil Saakashvili of the 2001-founded United National Movement set Georgia on a course of both radical market liberalisation as well as integration into the EU and NATO. Both of these orientations continue to shape Georgian politics and therefore set the context for EU external governance, including of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Geopolitically, Saakashvili offensively targeted integration into the EU and NATO as a foreign policy priority (Simão 2018: 315). Consequently, tensions with Russia heightened, resulting in the embargo of Georgian agricultural products on unevidenced ground of food safety concerns from 2006 to 2013 (Cenusa et al. 2014). The hostility

¹¹ The Rose Revolution was the largely peaceful process in which large-scale protests in November 2003 led to the ousting of President Eduard Shevardnadze, and the consequent rise to power by Mikheil Saakashvili, which has been argued to have confirmed the end of Soviet-leadership and setting the country on a decidedly pro-Western course.

subsequently erupted in the 2008 war and de-facto occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia that continues until today. Curiously, rather than preventing closer cooperation with the EU, the embargo and war facilitated Georgian political consensus on developing closer relations with it (Simão 2018: 316). Next to the withdrawal from the Commonwealth of Independent States in 2009, the war also resulted in the dissolution of Russian military presence in Akhalkalaki, where there is both a protected GI for potatoes and a newly founded LEADER Local Action Group, discussed in Chapter 7 (Simão 2018: 316f.). As will be discussed for the case of GI, the 2006 Russian embargo has also been argued to have facilitated the diversification of Georgian exports (Cenusa et al. 2014: 7).

Even though observers feared that the 2012 election of the Georgian Dream Party meant a re-orientation of the country away from the EU and towards Russia, there has not been a significant change neither in discourse nor policy prior to the parliamentary election of 2020. To illustrate, in the 2018 presidential elections, both major candidates accused each other of being pro-Russian, and protests erupted in June 2019 over a Russian speaker at the Georgian Parliament (Radio Free Europe 2018: n.p.; Deutsche Welle 2018: n.p.). In the 2019 Caucasus Barometer, 49% assessed Russia as “the main enemy of the country (Caucasus Barometer 2019). At the same time, 52% respondents supported EU membership, with only 9% not supporting it (25% partial support; Caucasus Barometer 2019). In a survey by the Georgian National Democratic Institute,¹² 78% of the participants supported EU membership in July 2019 (Thornton & Kurmanidze 2019: 79).

However, to which extent the population has become ‘Europeanised’ especially in terms of identity and values has been frequently questioned (Fix 2014: 5). Highly conservative viewpoints on gender identity and equality are furthered by the powerful Georgian Orthodox Church, which has consistently been the most trusted institution in the country¹³ (Caucasus Barometer 2019). Yet, the Orthodox Church has, apart from the opposition to liberal values, not been a significant spoiler to EU-Georgia relations. In part, this can be explained by the former EU Enlargement Commissioner Füle’s assurance to the leader of the Georgian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Ilia II, that the EU would not undermine any of Georgia’s ‘traditional values’ (Lomsadze 2014). In return,

¹² This survey does not include an ‘it depends’ option for EU-support as the Caucasus Barometer does.

¹³ 70% compared to 16% for the parliament, 17% for courts, 20% for NGOs.

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Füle received the Patriarch's verbal approval of Georgia's EU integration and the signing of the Association Agreement" (Fix 2014: 5). In neither of the cases analysed in this thesis did interviewees or documents identify the Orthodox Church as an important actor.

Confronted with the largely hostile public opinion towards Russia, the area of protecting 'traditional values' from Western liberal attitudes is where the Russian government has become most active, rather than resorting to further overt military aggression (Fix 2014; Foxall 2017). Additionally, Russia has funded civil society organizations that promote anti-EU arguments by portraying European values as contradicting the country's cultural and religious heritage (Emerson & Kovziridze 2016: 191). Interestingly, the findings demonstrate that the EU's actions in rural development and agriculture were a tool to address both the alleged lack of Europeanisation 'on the ground' and to counter Russian interference especially in remote areas through EU-funded actions. Indeed, as the empirical chapters explain, this is not coincidental but an intended process.

In addition to the geopolitical re-orientation, Saakashvili set Georgia on a course of radical market liberalisation, primarily to attract foreign investment. Next to targeting the elimination of (petty) corruption, the Saakashvili administration eliminated import tariffs for 84% of products, making its tariff rates one of the lowest worldwide (Emerson & Kovziridze 2016: 2; 31; Delcour 2013: 347). Yet, this opening has largely been argued to not have trickled down to the vast majority of the population. According to the World Bank, 32% of the population lived from less than 2.5 USD per day, with higher rates outside Tbilisi (18.6%; World Bank 2016). Overall unemployment is at 11%, with unemployment in rural areas reported at only 5.5% (Geostat 2019). However, this category, until the third quarter of 2020,¹⁴ categorised subsistence farmers as self-employed, even though they do not generate monetary income through commercial activities:

Agriculture provides a safety net for a very large number of jobless people who might otherwise be starving, and thus serves a very important social function. However, many of those employed in agriculture are individual subsistence farmers (Emerson & Kovziridze 2016: 165).

¹⁴ The operationalization of unemployment is due to change to include subsistence farmers (Agenda.Ge 2020).

This is also reflected in the very small average plot sizes of less than a hectare, which will be discussed in detail later, as they are often named as inhibiting factor for Georgia's agricultural development (FAO 2012). Connectedly, agricultural productivity and the sown area plummeted after 1990 (Koester 2017: 4). All of these factors contribute to a rural context that forms the foundation for the EU external governance processes discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

2.1 Georgia-EU relations in the European Neighbourhood

Formally, EU-Georgia relations started developing in the 1990s, first in a rather piecemeal fashion. From 1993, Georgia was supported through the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS), which aimed to support the economic reform and development process in the country (Demirağ 2004: 92). In addition, relations existed via TRACEA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasia Asia), INOGATE (Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe), as well as through aid mechanisms such as the Food Security Programme and other humanitarian aid (Demirağ 2004: 92). From 1999, EU-Georgia relations were covered by a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which integrated efforts on democratic reforms and economic transition, as well as early stages of multi-sectoral cooperation and thus signified a more concerted effort (Simão 2018: 312). As outlined in section 2.4, the PCA did not contain references to GIs but merely intellectual property rights in general; only regional, not rural development were cited, and agricultural cooperation was mainly targeting the increase of food supply (Official Journal of the European Communities 1999: Art. 42; Art. 55; Art. 66).

Compared to the immediate eastern neighbourhood which would eventually accede to the EU, Georgia, as the other South Caucasus countries Armenia and Azerbaijan, were not prioritised in EU external relations. Relations only expanded with the establishment of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2004. Since its establishment, the ENP, as arguably the widest-ranging EU foreign policy framework, has attracted considerable research interest by scholars in EU external relations (see Schumacher 2018: 3). Relating to the role concepts reviewed in Chapter 3, it has also been characterised as “an expression of, and test case for, the EU's ambition to develop further its actorness and to establish itself as a power” (Schumacher 2018: 3). The ENP is an umbrella framework that encapsulates actions in various policy sectors and is chiefly governed by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement (DG

NEAR; Schumacher 2018: 3). Broadly, the ENP was initially designed to strengthen the “stability, security, and well-being” (Commission of the European Communities 2004: 3) in the neighbourhood. Crucially, it was modelled on the enlargement policy although without providing the same accession perspectives (Schumacher 2018: 4; Demirağ 2004: 98). This trajectory is again important for understanding the lack of change and adaptation of the two instruments for their implementation in Georgia.

In 2009, the Eastern Partnership (EaP; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine), was officially launched, separating it from the Southern Neighbourhood in the Mediterranean. In 2015, the ENP was revised, erasing some enlargement hangovers and in turn focused less on democracy promotion or good governance, and more on less-overtly political issues, relying on “technical means and instruments to address policy issues” (Delcour 2015; Schumacher 2018: 5). The increasing focus on Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) is a case in point.

2.2 Recent EU-Georgia relations on trade and food safety

In June 2014, Georgia and the EU signed the Association Agreement and DCFTA, which completely entered into force in July 2016. As outlined later, the DCFTA also includes the sector of rural development and agriculture. Despite the staunch commitment towards many parts of the *acquis*, convergence remains shallow in various policy sectors, particularly those related to the rule of law and democracy, as pointed out in the 2019 Association Implementation Report on Georgia (European Commission & High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy 2019: 1ff.). Yet, an in-depth discussion of the agreement goes beyond the scope of this essay but can be found in the Georgia edition of the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) Handbook on the topic (Emerson & Kovziridze 2016). Rather, this section focuses on issues closely related to the Common Agricultural Policy: food safety and trade in goods, before the next section engages with EU-Georgia relations on agriculture and rural development specifically.

As to the overall economic goal of the DCFTA, Emerson and Kovziridze note that it should facilitate Georgia’s economic modernisation, boost trade with the EU and other trading partners, and reform economic regulations in line with EU best practices (Emerson & Kovziridze 2016: 2). In turn, the DCFTA should ultimately result in “the highest level of economic integration between Georgia and the EU” (Emerson &

Kovziridze 2016: 2). Article 26 refers to the elimination of customs duties on imports, with exceptions to various products, and even quotas on the import of garlic to the EU (Official Journal of the European Union 2014: Art. 26; Annex II-A; II-B). Nonetheless, considering that, as outlined previously, Georgia had unilaterally opened its market for tariff-free imports since the 2006 Russian embargo, the opening of the EU market through the DCFTA arguably presented “only new opportunities and no risks for Georgia” (Emerson & Kovziridze 2016: 2; Cenusa et al. 2014: 7). Yet, Koester cautions that any additional trade may not trickle down, meaning that “it is not at all clear that the Georgian society gains directly from this additional trade” (Koester 2017: 4).

Considering the trade statistics presented in Figure 1, thus far the DCFTA does not seem to have had a significant impact on Georgian exports to the European Union nor vice versa. With the exception of 2016, when Georgian exports to the EU plummeted by 30.2%, trade flows in goods remained relatively stable, amounting to EUR 599 Million in 2019 (DG Trade 2020: 3). At the same time, the value of trade flows in goods from the EU to Georgia also remained broadly consistent after 2012, after growing on an average of 30% in the three years prior, since then either slightly decreasing or declining (DG Trade 2020: 3). Of Georgian exports to the EU, between 15 and 20% are food products or beverages (DG Trade 2020: 4; 6).

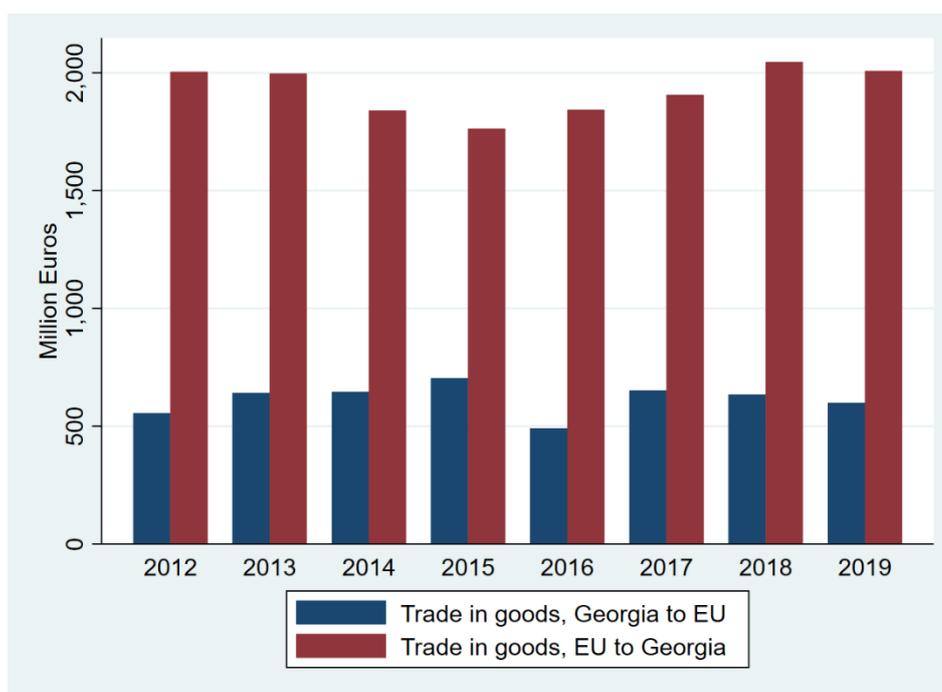


Figure 1 Trade flows in goods between EU and Georgia. Source: DG Trade 2020.

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Even though the DCFTA has not dramatically increased Georgian exports to nor imports from the EU, the EU27 are Georgia's most important trading partner, making up 23.4% of its total trade, comprised of 24.4% of Georgian imports and 21% of Georgian exports in 2019 (DG Trade 2020: 8). Other major trading partners are Turkey, Russia, and China (DG Trade 2020: 8). Since the end of the Soviet Union, Georgia has been highly dependent on imports, which has been frequently raised as an inhibiting factor to the country's economic development (Kakulia 2014: 140). Nevertheless, it is expected that exports to the EU increase further in the mid- to long-term, particularly once Georgian producers meet the EU's technical standards for goods, such as food safety standards for agricultural products (Emerson & Kovziridze 2017: 6).

Food safety regulations, which in the EU are managed as health, rather than strictly agricultural policy, have, as is discussed in Chapter 7, been an obstacle to the CAP's effectiveness in Georgia. More generally, it has been argued that meeting these standards would be "vital for the modernisation and competitiveness of Georgian products" (Emerson & Kovziridze 2017: 6). Within the EU, food safety and SPS are strictly regulated and highly institutionalised, with its external governance often following modes of conditionality or hierarchy (Delcour 2013: 349)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgian food safety protection "quickly proved unsustainable" (Delcour 2013: 350) with a new Law of Food Safety and Control imagining a National Agency for Food Safety and Control modelled after EU standards adopted in 2005 (Delcour 2013: 350; Transparency International Georgia n.d.: 1f.). Yet, due to significant costs related to meeting EU food safety standards, artisan production and processed foods were excluded from this law (Delcour 2013: 350; Transparency International Georgia n.d.: 2). Consequently, strengthening the National Agency for Food Safety and Control, applying existing policies and drafting a new strategy on food safety were presented as EU preconditions for opening DCFTA negotiations in 2009 (Messerlin et al. 2011; Delcour 2013: 350). In turn, Georgian approximation with EU food safety standards started in 2010 (Emerson & Kovziridze 2017: 5). Nonetheless, Delcour argues that "Georgia's convergence with EU norms [...] has been in many respects minimal" (Delcour 2013: 352). For instance, the United National Movement government proposed to restrict the scope of EU-standards to those actors that export to the EU, meaning those that already meet these standards,

anyway (Delcour 2013: 352). Inspections have also been described as limited (Delcour 2013: 352).

One main factor in the government's initial resistance to fully adopt and implement EU-standards, next to the Saakashvili government's libertarian outlook, lacking consumer demand, or the potential limitation of benefits arising from a Free Trade Agreement with Turkey allowing for the cheap import of poor-quality meat were certainly the vast costs of approximation for the majority of Georgian producers (Delcour 2013: 353; Transparency International Georgia n.d.: 3). As highlighted previously, agriculture continues to employ a majority of rural Georgians, albeit mainly subsistence farmers, on small plots with limited technical capabilities to meet EU standards. In a Transparency International report, a former head of the Department for Foreign Trade and International Economic Relations even defended the lax previous law with the prediction that otherwise "90% of local production would be closed" due to the inability to bear the costs of meeting food safety standards (Transparency International Georgia n.d.: 4). Further, the report argues that resulting higher consumer prices would "in many cases be borne by the poor [...] many will simply go without" (Transparency International Georgia n.d.: 4).

Nevertheless, Georgia agreed to gradually approximate the *acquis* on food safety and to cooperate with the EU on approximation and capacity building in Chapter 4 of the DCFTA (Official Journal of the European Union 2014: Chapter 4 Art 50; 55). Further, an SPS Subcommittee of the Association council was established to review the implementation of the SPS chapter (Emerson & Kovziridze 2017: 68). The 2019 Association Implementation Report notes that "legal approximation has proceeded as planned" (European Commission & High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy 2019: 9), that training is ongoing and that the National Food Agency had been heavily involved in monitoring and controlling the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug outbreak that started in 2015 and continues to threaten certain agricultural outputs¹⁵, thereby leading to a positive evaluation overall (European Commission & High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy 2019: 9; Agenda.Ge 2019d). However, despite progress as well as significant technical assistance and budget support to facilitate compliance with EU standards

¹⁵ E.g. hazelnuts (Agenda.Ge 2019d).

since 2012, Chapter 7 will argue that particularly small producers continue to face significant costs and challenges in meeting standards.

2.3 EU-Georgia relations on rural spaces

Looking at the relationship of Georgia and the EU on agriculture and rural development specifically, a vast network of agreements and EU-funding instruments provided an insight into the basic trajectory and rationales of external governance in the sector. As mentioned in the Introduction, EU-Georgia relations started with the 1996 Partnership Agreement (Official Journal of the European Union 1999). However, this agreement only included references to intellectual property rights not GIs per se, and rural development is not mentioned (Official Journal of the European Union 1999: Art. 42). The sector was first explicitly included in the 2006 Action Plan, in which the enhancement of agricultural production and rural development is named a priority. Here, proposed measures also included the promotion of quality production, including GIs (EEAS 2006: 24). Subsequently, the 2007–2013 European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument Strategy Paper and the 2011–2013 Multiannual National Indicative Programme prioritized the areas of trade, regional development, sustainable economic and social development as well as poverty reduction, all of which overlap with issues of agriculture and rural development (European Commission 2013b: 2). Even more explicitly, one of the three priorities for the 2014–2017 Single Support Framework for Georgia was Agriculture and Rural Development, next to Public Administration and Justice Sector Reform (EEAS & DG DEVCO EuropeAid 2014: 5).¹⁶

The 2014 DCFTA stipulates that “the Parties shall cooperate to promote agricultural and rural development, in particular through progressive policies and legislation” (Official Journal of the European Union 2014: Art. 332). Arguing that the Georgian government was reluctant to agree to full approximation in this Article, Emerson and Kovziridze contend that this reluctance primarily followed from the aforementioned agricultural context comprised of a large number of small farms (Emerson and Kovziridze 2016: 162). This indicates that the reluctance is mainly on purely agricultural policies such as income support for farmers, which was, as is discussed in Chapter 5, also a stumbling block during the 2004 EU enlargement process. Nonetheless, the DCFTA entails the agreement to “cooperate to promote agricultural

¹⁶ However, the prioritization of the sector seems to have been dropped in the most recent Single Support Framework (2017 – 2020; EEAS 2018b: 2; European Commission 2018c: 2).

and rural development, in particular through progressive convergence of policies and legislation” (Official Journal of the European Union 2014: Art. 332), with this cooperation also aimed to facilitate “the mutual understanding of agricultural and rural development policies” and share “knowledge and best practices of rural development policies” (Official Journal of the European Union 2014: Art. 333).

Since 2013, the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) has been implemented in Georgia has since become the central framework for EU-Georgia cooperation on rural development and agriculture. In Georgia, the programme’s goals include the improvement of living conditions in rural areas as well as increased agricultural production (Channon et al. 2017: 22). ENPARD thus mirrors the CAP’s dual objective of supporting agricultural production and rural development processes. This was echoed by the former Agricultural and Rural Development Attaché at the EU Delegation in Tbilisi, Juan Echanove in a presentation:

We are very proud of the dual nature of ENPARD in Georgia. On one hand, ENPARD is an economic project and we can measure better production, better food prices, etc. On the other hand, the project is also connected with the social dimension of the country, as we saw poverty is an issue in Georgia (ENPARD 2016b: n.p.).

This supports the EU external literature’s assumption that internal policy modes are reproduced in external relations. However, yet again it is crucial to consider the level of ENPARD as an overarching policy framework. When, as the thesis does later, specific instruments are considered, the picture becomes much more complicated.

ENPARD combines budget and complementary support and has been implemented in three phases.¹⁷ The budget support component includes measures such as the development of cooperatives,¹⁸ improved food safety and quality, as well as the development of initiatives to encourage non-farm rural development (European Commission 2015b: 10). Therefore, this is the relevant component for the two instruments analysed. Complementary support largely refers to the aforementioned assistance provided to the Ministry of Agriculture for drafting and/or implementing the agricultural and rural strategies as discussed in detail in Chapter 6 (European

¹⁷ The thesis’ focus is on ENPARD I and II as ENPARD III had not concluded at the time of writing.

¹⁸ The promotion of agricultural cooperatives in Georgia is another extremely relevant and interesting instrument relating to rural spaces. An EaP factsheet credits EU assistance with the creation of 1,500 cooperatives in Georgia (DG NEAR 2019: 1). Given that it escapes the scope of this thesis, the external governance of cooperatives should be the focus of a separate research project.

Commission 2015b: 10). Interestingly, ENPARD's priorities shifted slightly over time. For instance, agricultural cooperatives were the focus of intervention in the first phase, with this shifting to LEADER in Phase II and the diversification of rural economies in Phase III, as confirmed by representatives of organizations subcontracted by the EU (European Commission 2016c 3; Interviews 10; 11; 14). Indeed, that ENPARD only focused on cooperative development for a short period, before LEADER became the main focus, was one of the main criticisms raised by one of the interviewed organisations who would have preferred longer term projects in order to ensure sustainable transformations in rural areas (Interview 14).

ENPARD I (2013–2016)	52 Million Euros
ENPARD II (2016–2019)	50 Million Euros
ENPARD III (2018–2022)	60 Million Euros

Table 1: ENPARD budget and phases (Channon et al. 2017: 9; Delegation of the European Union to Georgia 2018: n.p.).

Apart from ENPARD, resources for agriculture and rural development were acquired through EU funds for reforms of vocational education, food safety as well as support to internally displaced persons, who often settled in rural border regions to Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Channon et al. 2017: 9). Moreover, governmental actors have received technical assistance in the form of TWINNING and TAIEX programmes. TWINNING projects foster cooperation between public administrations in member and non-member states, hence relating to the concept of functional cooperation (Freyburg et al. 2015). Similarly, the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument (TAIEX) provides workshops, expert missions, and study visits to support both member¹⁹ and non-member states' administrations in the application of EU legislation (European Commission 2020a). In fact, there a TWINNING project for GIs has been implemented in Georgia since 2019 (DG NEAR 2019: 1; Adecia.org 2018). However, due to the timing of the project and the scope of this thesis, this will only be engaged with peripherally.

2.4 Conclusions

This background chapter provided important context for this thesis in terms of not only the Georgian context itself, but also EU-Georgia relations in general as well as policy-

¹⁹ In the framework of administrative cooperation with the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, the Directorate-General for Environment and the Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (European Commission 2020).

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specific terms. After the 2003 Rose Revolution, and acceleratingly from the consequent tensions with Russia, Georgia has, compared to other countries in the region, been following a clear course towards Euro-Atlantic integration and trade-diversification with a particular focus on the EU. The Saakashvili government also pushed forward a radical trade-liberalisation agenda, which in turn meant that the opening following from the 2014 DCFTA has not had a significant impact on imports from the EU. Importantly, as will be also be argued in the empirical chapters, the DCFTA has been comparatively insignificant for the trade between Georgia and the EU thus far. One factor that inhibits the trade especially of food and beverages from Georgia to the EU are the comparatively high EU food safety standards. After a long reluctance to approximate the *acquis* on Food Safety Policy and SPS, the Georgian government has since adopted reforms that progressively align the Georgian system with that of the EU, even though, as explained in Chapter 7, meeting EU standards continues to be challenging particularly for small producers.

Similar to other sectors, EU-Georgia relations in agriculture and rural development began prior to the negotiations and signing of the DCFTA and, as is argued below, the external governance of LEADER and GIs were not significantly impacted by the DCFTA itself. Importantly however, the DCFTA negotiations highlighted the government's reluctance to fully adopt the CAP, in particular when it comes to measures typically understood as part of its first pillar, such as direct income support for farmers. This again reinstates the necessity to focus not only on the two rural development instruments analysed in this thesis, but also the significance of the domestic context in non-member states to the effectiveness of EU external governance. It thereby challenges various assumptions on EU external actions and EU external governance that are presented in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER 3: THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE WORLD: ROLE CONCEPTS, EXTERNAL GOVERNANCE, AND BEYOND

As highlighted in the introduction, there exists a gap in the academic literature investigating the external governance of one of its central - and most discussed - policies, the Common Agricultural Policy. The thesis fills this vacuum by introducing the CAP into the literature on EU external actions. Therefore, this chapter reviews the literature on the EU's role in the world, focusing particularly on the central theoretical framework in this thesis: EU external governance. It argues that the framework is valuable especially for addressing the first two research questions, i.e. how the EU externally governs the CAP and how effective this process is. Yet, it also identifies a challenge to this framework in that external governance understands EU external actions as effective or successful once EU rules are applied in non-member states without analysing the specific consequences that may follow. This understanding of consequences will thus be explored by the third research question, i.e. how the two selected CAP instruments shape rural spaces in Georgia.

The thesis engages with the EU external literature specifically rather than with broader International Relations approaches to norm-dispersion for various reasons. Crucially, the EU external action literature is more appropriate for studying the EU as a special actor. Approaches such as EU external governance capture the multifaceted roles the EU can take in various policy sectors. The thesis also adopts the perspective that the EU is different from states, which generally lack the perspective of enlargement that has been crucial in motivating many states to adopt EU rules, but the EU also differs from multilateral organizations without supranational competences (see Schwok 2013: 91). This means that while generally comparisons with other organizations or actors is possible, for the questions addressed in this thesis, an EU-specific approach is more suitable.

The chapter first discusses the literature proposing various roles of the European Community (EC) or EU in the international context. Indeed, some of the insights of the so-called "founding fathers" (Orbie 2006: 124) of EU external relations, Duchêne, Galtung and Bull, continue to represent the three dominant understandings of the EU as an international actor, as highlighted in Table 2, and were vital for the genealogy of subsequent theoretical contributions (see also Bicchi & Lavenex 2015: 870).

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However, the chapter argues that none of the role concepts offers a comprehensive framework that could be utilised to answer the research questions in this thesis. Instead, the paper positions itself within the external governance literature. The framework that is used was first proposed by Lavenex and Schimmelfennig (2009) and has been applied in various case studies since. The external governance framework offers a helpful, systematic approach towards studying the EU's external relations in various policy sectors. This is particularly true for their understanding of external governance modes and effectiveness which provide a clear structure for empirical analyses. Nonetheless, the chapter also presents additional research which highlights the need to add complexity specifically by investigating the roles of additional actors at the sub-state and international levels. Furthermore, the chapter argues that another layer of analysing EU external governance should be added beyond the original understanding of effectiveness: that of consequences. Notably, even though EU-rules may be adopted and even applied in non-member states, little is known about what these policies actually *do* in these countries and thus what the consequences of external governance are 'on the ground'. Do they result in the outcomes expected by the EU? Do they have any impact on the intended subjects of governance?

Lastly, some recent literatures that address some of these gaps in the framework are presented. Academic contributions on unintended consequences as well as on resilience and local ownership in EU external actions are valuable for redirecting the enquiry to 'on the ground' effects. However, in addition to the timing of the contributions, they were not central to this thesis' analysis specifically because the third research question stretches beyond the concepts of local ownership and unintended consequences respectively by recording consequences for rural spaces. Hence, the spatial heuristics presented in the subsequent chapter are more specific to the question at hand and broader in terms of how or which consequences can be analysed. Overall, the review advances three main arguments. First, various levels and actors need to be more flexibly included in the analysis of EU external actions. Second, effects cannot be merely assumed to follow from the adoption or even application of EU-rules. Lastly, connected to this is the need for an in-depth, open-ended analysis that is capable of observing potential unintended and/or negative consequences of external policy instruments that reach beyond those impacts expected by the EU.

3.1 The European Union in the world

The idea that Europe, in the form of the EC or the EU, exerts an influence on its outside has been an issue of academic debate for decades. Yet, three authors continue to be referenced even in current debates, being rightly dubbed the “founding fathers of present-day conceptualisations of Europe’s international role” (Orbie 2006: 124): Duchêne, Galtung and Bull. Hence, this section outlines Bull’s denial of European power before distinguishing Duchêne’s Civilian Power Europe concept from Galtung’s European superpower approach, arguing they differ in their understanding of what the EU fundamentally is. Additionally, subsequent contributions that emulate those three fundamental arguments are discussed, and the three categories of role-concepts are summarised in Table 2. Although most contributions on Europe as an international actor are highly dependent on the time they were developed, with a chasm between Duchêne’s early 1970s optimism and Bull’s 1980s return to (military) power politics and related denial of European actorness, the three basic stances continue to exist. Importantly, not every role concept paper has been included in this section. Rather, it engages with those relevant contributions that illustrate the three identities as a “non-actor”, civilian/normative power or market that are valuable for this thesis.

Not only would it be negligent to ignore these approaches due to their dominance, but they also help understand the different identities of the EU that consequently shape its place in the global context. Consequently, these contributions are crucial to comprehend the genealogy leading to a sectoral approach as proposed by the external governance literature. They also are valuable as they reflect in the modes of governance: market, hierarchy, and network and, in combination, help illustrate the ways the EU seeks to export the two policy instruments analysed in this thesis, Geographical Indications which are part of a rationale to expand EU rules that benefit its own market actors, and LEADER, which has a much more ‘civilisatory’ angle. Yet, Section 3.3 demonstrates the need to move from European role-concepts towards the external governance approach to explain European influence in non-member states rather than describing and labelling it.

3.2 What type of actor?

To begin with, it needs to be pointed out that there is not necessarily a consensus that the EC/EU represents a fully formed actor at all. Bull denounced conceptualisations of Europe as a power by arguing that Europe can wield influence only because of a

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favourable strategic environment ensured by the military power of states, mainly the United States, out of Europe's control (Bull 1982: 151). As the EC lacked means to provide for their own military security, Bull identified it not as an international actor but a concert of states in which the Community represents an instrument of governmental cooperation (Bull 1982: 151; 163). More recently, Kagan observed the decline of Europe into weakness during the 1990s, specifically through their military incapacity in the Balkans (Kagan 2002: 7). Accordingly, the author argues that Europe pursues a world in which strength does not matter precisely because of their own weaknesses in foreign and security policy, rather than out of normative considerations (Kagan 2002: 10). Finally, Krotz contends that while Europe can act in some policy domains such as trade and customs, to become a "real political actor" would require "autonomous actorhood in the areas of traditional high politics: foreign policy, security and defense" (Krotz 2009: 557). The author assesses this development as distinctly unlikely (Krotz 2009: 557).

Although the EU remains devoid of extensive military capacity or foreign policy means, the denial of European actorness solely on this ground reflects problematic ideas of power and international influence that were uncritically accepted within Realist paradigms (Tsakaloyannis 1989: 242–246). Even so, there have been recent empirical examples of EU action even in traditional security areas, such as EU missions and operations under the Common Security and Defence Policy. As such, adopting a perspective of Bull that restricts the view of power to military aspects is unhelpful in answering the research questions. Rather, the two other dominant understandings of Europe's role in the world are more helpful: those that understand the EU either as a civilian, normative community, and those that view it predominantly as a large market, respectively.

Duchêne's Civilian Power Europe based itself on the assumption that after World War II, (West) European societies became increasingly de-militarised and civilian in outlook (Duchêne 1973: 5; 19). This, Duchêne argued, resulted in the formation of the EC with a chance to exert so-called 'civilian forms of power' that exist beyond a mere political and economic union (Duchêne 1973: 7; 19). Relatedly, for the past twenty years, Manners' Normative Power Europe has dominated the literature. Building on Duchêne's role-concept while rejecting the concentration on Europe's state like properties, Normative Power Europe focuses on cognitive processes with substantive

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and symbolic components rather than institutions per se (Manners 2002: 239). Chiefly, Manners identifies five core norms (peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms) and four minor norms (social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development, good governance) that shape the EU and its external actions (Manners 2002: 242f.). The author sketches the diffusion of these norms abroad through six modes²⁰, translating the normative basis of the EU to a normative power. Manners' influential and frequently debated approach²¹ is insofar important as it moves beyond legalistic evaluations of EU external action.

However, the focus on the normative basis indicates an assumption that the EU acts normatively, neglecting its (material) interests (Youngs 2004: 415; Wiener 2008: 38). Crucially, Manners' concept may even be utilised to defend neo-imperial practices when arguing that Europe diffuses 'universal' norms in a 'good' way (Whitman 2013: 174). Therefore, this normative assumption speaks against the aims of this thesis to both open-endedly explore the consequences of EU external action and to question the unidirectional export of rules from the EU to other states. Rather, it is necessary to be analytically open to both negative and/or unintended consequences of EU actions and to understand that there is a multiplicity of actors involved beyond EU officials and state agents.

Countering these largely positive understandings of Europe as a Normative or Civilian Power is Galtung's perception of a European superpower. Essentially approaching Western Europe as a common market, Galtung argued that it represents a struggle towards a West-European (world) order (Galtung 1973: 17). Hence, the author conceived of Europe as a wolf in sheep's clothing, in which material self-interest trumped normative considerations (Orbie 2006: 73). Building on this approach, Zielonka compares the EU to an empire, imposing its domestic constraints on other actors through domination or formal annexation via enlargement (2008: 475). Accordingly, this influence is exerted not through military means but economic incentives and punishments (Zielonka 2008: 475f.) While this extension of rules may benefit third countries, essentially it follows self-interest rather than a normative motivation (Zielonka 2008: 480). Most clearly, the understanding of the EU predominantly as a market has been formulated in Damro's Market Power Europe,

²⁰ Contagion, informational diffusion, procedural diffusion, transference, overt diffusion, cultural filter (Manners 2002: 244f.).

²¹ For a more recent revisit of the debate see Whitman 2013.

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deliberately labelled as a riposte to Manners (2012; 2015; see Wright 2011, Bretherton and Vogler 2006 for similar arguments). Therefore, the EU principally exerts its power through the export of economic and social market-related policies and regulations (Damro 2015: 1336). Consequently, if pro-Europeanisation groups are exceedingly influential, this progresses Europeanisation further than normative considerations ever could (Damro 2012: 686ff.).

No power	Power through civilian norms	Power through market
Bull (1982)	Duchêne (1972)	Galtung (1973)
Kagan (2002)	Manners (2002)	Zielonka (2008)
Krotz (2009)	Whitman (2013)	Damro (2012; 2015)
→ The EU is no full actor as it lacks military power	→ The EU is based on civilian norms that it exports	→ The EU exerts external power through its market exports

Table 2: Three categories of EU external role concepts; own table

To conclude, although EU role concepts are helpful in conceptualising the various ways in which the EU can be understood, and which may affect how it relates to the world, neither role concept offers a comprehensive analytical lens for answering the research questions investigated in this thesis. Additionally, when approaching the CAP particularly, normative and market approaches become easily blurred, considering for instance its dual objectives of supporting farmers and promoting rural development that are explained in Chapter 5. Correspondingly, considering that there exists little previous research on how the CAP travels outside of the EU, any role may apply. Therefore, sectoral approaches, and especially the EU external governance framework, which combines the various roles outlined above into one analytical approach, are more appropriate for drawing valid conclusions on the CAP's external dimension. Additionally, this combination facilitates, as highlighted below, cumulative knowledge for the EU external relations literature by being applicable to all EU policy sectors.

3.3 Europeanisation beyond Europe and the external governance approach

Having discussed the dominating approaches in the study of the EU's international role, this section presents the external governance approach, developed by Lavenex and Schimmelfennig (2009), as the guiding theoretical framework. As indicated in the introduction, external governance was coined by Lavenex to refer to the expansion of

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the EU *acquis communautaire* to non-member states without the potential for enlargement, thus having to engage with processes beyond (formal) conditionality (Lavenex 2004: 683). Recognizing the end of accession conditionality is not only increasingly important when considering the apparent stalling of extending EU membership even to candidate countries, but it opens the possibility of studying the CAP's external governance also for countries outside the EU's neighbourhood.

The approach accepts a sectoral view, meaning that it focuses on the external governance of specific policy sectors, setting it apart from the role concept literature. Thereby, it overcomes some of the problems previously discussed, particularly by enabling systematic analyses of all EU policies without having to determine the basic role of the EU. Rather, it manages to encapsulate these roles through the proposed modes of external governance (hierarchy, market, network) that were briefly mentioned in the introduction and that are described in depth in the subsequent section. The utility of a sectoral perspective becomes evident through various case studies that have applied the framework previously, which has been a necessary development for comparison across policy sectors and cumulative knowledge generation on EU external actions.

To contextualise, the framework contributes to the broader field of Europeanisation beyond Europe, defined by the research of the "EU's impact on the domestic policies, institutions, and political processes" (Börzel & Risse 2012: 1) of candidate countries, countries in the EU neighbourhood and beyond, as well as on other regional or international organizations. Two approaches which could be considered alternatives to the external governance framework are those presented in the 2012 *Western European Politics* Special Issue on "From Europeanisation to Diffusion", as well as Bauer et al.'s contribution on the policy-analytical approach to differential Europeanisation. Bauer et al. (2007)'s policy-analytical Europeanisation model combines actor-centred and institutionalist elements of previous approaches. Indeed, similarly to Lavenex and Schimmelfennig, they emphasise the importance of governance modes, in addition to a non-member state's ambition to join the European Union (Bauer et al. 2007: 407). The modes developed, Compliance, Competition, and Communication show significant similarities to the hierarchy, market, and network external governance modes, respectively. Arguably, Lavenex and Schimmelfennig's market mode more specifically centres around pressures from private sector actors such as companies,

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rather than administrations as in Bauer et al. (2007: 411), and the network mode extends beyond the communication among national regulatory agents in EU legal or institutional networks (2007: 414).

The second relevant alternative framework is that presented in the *Western European Politics* Special Issue “From Europeanisation to Diffusion”. In the issue’s introduction, Börzel and Risse present the central research objective as the conditions under which the adoption of EU policies result in domestic institutional change, and the extent to which the EU directly induces such changes (Börzel & Risse 2012a: 3). Therefore, they differentiate between direct and indirect mechanisms of Europeanisation, and hence also consider instances of Europeanisation without a direct influence of the EU. This aspect of indirect Europeanisation is included to some extent in the external governance framework, although here it is largely confined to the market mode. Many of the mechanisms Börzel and Risse propose correspond to those presented by Lavenex and Schimmelfennig. For instance, the modes of market and hierarchy are both to some extent included in the “manipulating utility calculations” (Börzel & Risse 2012a: 7) instrument, meaning rewards or sanctions, e.g. through conditionality. The model also presents expectations towards scope conditions for institutional change, i.e. domestic incentives, degrees of (limited) statehood, the democratic quality of a regime, and power (a)symmetries (Börzel & Risse 2012a: 14).

Lavenex and Schimmelfennig (2009)’s framework was selected over these two approaches mainly because it provides a differentiated measure of external governance effectiveness. Börzel and Risse (2007) understand success as institutional change, with institutions being conceptualised broadly as “social structures and systems of rules, both formal and informal” (Börzel & Risse 2012: 3). However, subsequent behaviour is not part of the original framework, even though some contributions to the Special Issue engage with it (e.g. Börzel & Pamuk 2012; Noutcheva & Düzgit 2012). Bauer et al. leave the measure of success more ambiguous and investigate the broader variable “domestic institutional and policy change” (Bauer et al. 2007: 419). As mentioned in the introduction, Lavenex and Schimmelfennig’s framework takes both a more explicit and more differentiated approach to evaluating external governance by distinguishing between rule selection, rule adoption, and rule application. Considering that the second research question investigates the effectiveness of the instruments’ Europeanisation beyond Europe, the external governance framework is most helpful in this regard.

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While the distinct modes and operationalization of external governance effectiveness are valuable for answering particularly the first two research questions, the review of the framework argues that effectiveness needs to be rethought to include the consequences external governance has on the ground. Exploring these consequences is the goal of the third research question. Importantly, rather than, as is the case for external governance effectiveness as conceptualised by Lavenex and Schimmelfennig, who evaluate it in relation to EU expectations, it is argued that the approach, especially during data collection, should be expanded to a fourth, open-ended analysis of a broad range of consequences - intended or not. This connects the thesis to other approaches which have critiqued a linear understanding of EU rule export to non-member states, and which will be outlined in Sections 3.4 and 3.5. Given that these critiques mainly address the underestimation of additional actors, it speaks to this thesis' findings that the mode of governance is less important for both the effectiveness of external governance and its consequences than contextual factors, and that other actors, in this case specifically on the local level, need to be taken more seriously.

3.3.1 External governance modes: how does the EU export its rules?

Initially, Lavenex and Schimmelfennig distinguish three modes of external governance as heuristic devices that shape actors' interactions in EU-third country relations (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 796). First, *hierarchical governance* indicates a formal domination-subordination dynamic with binding rules imposed by the EU (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 797). Since relations with non-members can formally not be attributed to EU-supranationality, the mode instead includes instruments of sanctioning and conditionality. Hence, it can be expected that dominant actors are EU and non-member state governments. Second, the *network mode* applies to formally equal relationships and produces consensus-based instruments, often prescribing procedures of interaction rather than final policy solutions (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 797). Therefore, it includes an institutionalised system of continuous horizontal coordination, leading to influence based on socialization, social learning, communication, and mirroring (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 798; see also Bauer et al. 2007: 420). Dominant actors can be expected to be official EU actors and non-member state counterparts, including also e.g. bureaucrats as this mode can speak towards functionalist extension (Lavenex 2015; Freyburg et al. 2015). Finally, the *market mode* of governance acknowledges the production of regulatory spill overs of the internal market for non-members, leading to voluntary approximation to gain

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access (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 799). Here, private actors, i.e. businesses or business interest organizations can be expected to drive the process of external governance, rather than the non-member state's government or the EU itself. Therefore, the market mode depicts a mode in which the EU does not necessarily actively promote its rules, but in which the attraction of the internal market leads to diffusion akin to what has been described by Börzel and Risse (2012).

These three modes are where the value of the framework is particularly visible. Not only do they integrate the three major role concepts, but they move beyond much of the 'Europeanisation beyond Europe' literature which often focuses on conditionality and socialization as the two fundamental mechanisms (Schimmelfennig 2012: 8; Coppieters et al. 2004: 1). Lavenex and Schimmelfennig's inclusion of a specific market mode can capture processes that cannot be subsumed under the two other mechanisms. Moreover, while hierarchy and network governance are much more closely connected to the actions of state and EU officials, the market mode is distinct as it captures private market actors that push non-member state governments to adopt EU policies. As it will be important for the empirical analysis, it is crucial to note that the sectoral model expects that each policy sector is generally guided by one mode of external governance, even though some instances of external governance may be marked by a 'shadow of hierarchy' (Lavenex et al. 2009: 816; see also Héritier & Lehmkuhl 2008). Therefore, specific policies or instruments within one sector - be it migration, energy, environment and so on - would not be expected to differ in the mode of external governance.

3.3.2 External governance effectiveness: measuring the EU's success abroad

Additionally, the framework operationalises a second variable of external governance: effectiveness. This has three elements to it: rule selection, rule adoption and rule application. First, on the level of international negotiations and agreements, effectiveness is conceptualised as *rule selection*, questioning whether EU rules were the normative reference point and focus of negotiations (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 800). Alternatively, external governance would be less effective if the negotiations were based either on the rules of the non-member state, joint rules, or those of a third actor, for instance the United Nations or World Trade Organization (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 800f.). Subsequently, for the measure of *rule adoption* it is analysed whether the EU rules that were selected for agreements were

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also adopted into domestic legal acts of the non-member state (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 801). Importantly, even though EU rules may be the reference point in negotiations, the non-member state may not follow up domestically, especially when lacking conditionality. Third, *rule application* questions whether these rules have been applied in political and administrative practice (Lavenex and Schimmelfennig 2009: 801). Even if the non-member state adopted EU rules into domestic policy, they may not be implemented (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 801). This level of effectiveness, the authors argue “constitutes the deepest impact of external governance” (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 801) and even though the three elements build on each other, “effectiveness may be interrupted at any level” (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 801).

Alongside the categorisation of modes of governance and the tracing of their effectiveness, the final aspect of the external governance framework is explanatory. Lavenex and Schimmelfennig propose three explanations for external governance modes and effectiveness: the institutionalist, the power-based and the domestic structure explanations (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 802). Even though generally the thesis opted for a more explorative than a strictly hypothesis-testing, deductive approach, some of the themes presented in these explanations resonate in the empirical analysis and will thus be presented briefly. The *institutionalist explanation* bases itself on a common EU external actions literature assumption that external governance is chiefly shaped by how specific rules are applied within the EU (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 802). They argue that:

According to the institutionalist explanation, we thus expect the modes of external governance to reflect the internal structures of policy-making within a given domain. Simply put, if these are based on hierarchy, network, or market modes, so will external governance be (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 802).

The institutionalist explanation is prominent also in other approaches on Europeanisation beyond Europe, which have often also been accused of their assumption of the EU as the central actor (Börzel & Risse 2012a: 1). Indeed, Lavenex and Schimmelfennig call the institutionalist explanation the “most germane to an external governance approach” (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 791). Contrastingly, according to the *power-based explanation*, the mode of governance is determined by interdependencies beyond the EU, for instance towards third countries such as Russia (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 803). In the *domestic-structure explanation*, the approach constitutes the flip side of the institutionalist explanation in

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that it assumes modes to follow the mode of the non-member states' domestic governance (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 804).

When it comes to effectiveness, the institutionalist and power-based explanations expect the hierarchical mode to be most effective. From the institutionalist perspective, the more precise, binding, and enforceable EU rules are, the more likely they are to be effective (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 802; Abbott et al. 2000; Bauer et al. 2007). In power-based explanations, the EU external governance again is expected to be most successful if it has a strong bargaining power (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 804). On the other hand, effectiveness in the domestic structure explanation depends largely on how well EU rules resonate with "domestic rules, traditions, and practices" (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 804), and effectiveness decreases with an increasing number of domestic veto players that incur costs from adopting EU rules (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 805; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2004: 664f.).

3.3.3 Enabling a systematic application across sectors

Next to the benefits that have already highlighted, this section focuses on the benefits of adopting a sectoral perspective and specifically the external governance framework presented here, rather than viewing policies through the lens of one of the role concepts outlined previously. Importantly, a sectoral perspective avoids problems of having to determine what exactly the EU is and what its foundational rationales were. It overcomes role-concepts' either-or characterisations of e.g. market versus normative actor by allowing for both depending on the policy sector in question.

Following from this solution to role-concepts' problems is the frameworks' very broad applicability across issue areas, allowing for a cumulative effort to understanding the EU's external dimension across sectors. Various scholars, chiefly in the 2009 Special Issue but also beyond, have either adopted or built on the external governance framework. For instance, Lavenex, Lehmkuhl and Wichmann reiterate the sectoral perspective through an analysis of external governance of five sectors²² across the European Economic Area, Switzerland and the region of the European Neighbourhood Policy (Lavenex et al. 2009: 814; 817ff). In contrast with other literature that focusses specifically on the EEA or ENP, the authors find that hierarchical, market and network

²² research, transport/aviation, the environment/water, asylum policy, police co-operation.

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modes of external governance depend on the sector rather than the macro-structure of association (Lavenex et al. 2009: 828).

On the analysis of individual policy sectors, in the often-researched policy area of EU democracy promotion, Youngs (2009) argues that the EU uses a hierarchical mode when it can exert bargaining power while in its absence it recurses to a network mode (Youngs 2009: 895f.). However, when analysing the three levels of effectiveness proposed by Lavenex and Schimmelfennig (2009), Youngs finds that although EU democracy principles may be adopted by a non-member, they are unlikely to result in deeply rooted democratization (Youngs 2009: 902f.). Importantly, Youngs emphasises the role of domestic political structures in the non-member states²³ and geopolitical factors, a criticism that will be reconsidered in section 3.3 (Youngs 2009: 900f.). In another analysis of democratization, Freyburg et al. find that democracy norms are exported not necessarily as a conscious move towards democracy but through the adoption of EU sectoral rules (Freyburg et al. 2009: 918). Since EU policies are developed for liberal democracies, they include principles such as transparency which are in turn exported to potentially undemocratic non-member states as a part of the overall “rule-package” (Freyburg et al. 2009: 917). Moreover, they note that the transfer of democratic governance provisions does not depend on size, region, membership potential, political system or power and interest constellations, contrasting Youngs (Freyburg et al. 2009: 928). Yet, Freyburg et al. (2009: 926) also notice a discrepancy between rule adoption and application, again highlighting the importance of revising the measure of effectiveness to include consequences.

Furthermore, Knill and Tosun find that when it comes to environmental policy, the hierarchical mode is indeed most robust in predicting external governance effectiveness (Knill & Tosun 2009: 890). Mugenzi (2015) focuses on multilevel networks in EU external governance of the Common Foreign and Security Policy towards the Great Lakes Region, concluding that leverage (i.e. the hierarchical mode of governance) and linkage (representing a network mode), to be most prominent (Mugenzi 2015: 354). Additionally, the author finds that EU external governance critically relies on domestic characteristics (Mugenzi 2015: 361). Importantly, they contradict more normative approaches by arguing that external governance in the

²³ openness of domestic political structures and the existence of a democracy movement (Youngs 2009: 901).

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region is conditioned by the EU's interest to strengthen security in third countries (Mugenyi 2015: 353). Hence, the paper is relevant for studying the external governance of the EU's understanding and imagination of rural spaces, as potentially normative motivations for small-scale, sustainable, family-farms in marginal areas may be overridden or combined with strategic, e.g. market interests.

3.4 Adding complexity: contexts, actors, levels

This section engages with critiques of the original framework that call for a deeper appreciation for the potential influence of the domestic context, other states and international institutions/organizations, moving beyond a focus on EU institutions shaping what is conceptualised as an essentially linear inside-outside external governance process. It discusses those applications of the framework and broader EU external literature that correspond to the main argument of the thesis, that a more context-based perspective is necessary because linear inside-outside external governance is rarely observed empirically. Additionally, this conceptualisation also takes steps to move beyond EU-as-power role concepts that resulted in “a scholarly treatment of the EU's neighbours as mere objects rather than subjects that possess and display distinct agency” (Schumacher 2018: 7). Similarly, Börzel and Risse contend:

the adoption of and adaptation to EU norms, rules, and institutional models into domestic or regional structures mostly involve active processes of interpretation, incorporation of new norms and rules, and regulations (Börzel & Risse 2012: 8).

Thus, much of the literature presented here limits itself predominantly although not exclusively to engagements with cases in the Eastern Partnership, as it can be expected that insights from this region are at least partly relevant for the cases analysed in Georgia.

Barbé, Costa, Surrallés and Natorki, focus predominantly on negotiations, rather than the entire external governance effectiveness spectrum. First, they observe the already mentioned possibility that depending on how legitimate EU rules are, and how strong the EU's bargaining power is, either EU, third country, or other actors' rules are selected (Barbé et al. 2009: 836 – 839). Importantly, they engage with policy convergence rather than rule or policy transfer, emphasising that policy approximation stems from more complex interactions than a one-directional transfer (Barbé et al. 2009: 836). Accordingly, Barbé et al.'s analysis represents a starting point for the move towards a more empirically-grounded framework that is open to complex processes and additional actors. Concordantly, Browning and Christou argue that the promoted

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inside-out view in the literature of the EU's international role results in a static perception of the construction of identities and borders within, in their example, the European Neighbourhood Policy (Browning & Christou 2010: 110). Rather, they hold that the effectiveness of the instrument depends on the self-location of non-member states on a continuum of positive-negative otherness in relation to the EU, resounding the legitimacy argument promoted by Barbé et al. (Browning & Christou 2010: 109). Thus, the EU influence in its neighbourhood is significantly conditioned by the attitudes, interests, and identities of non-member states (Browning & Christou 2010: 109). Again, the importance of non-member state actors is highlighted, a crucial insight for this thesis.

Zooming in further on these dynamics in non-member states, authors have called for the analysis of various actors on a sub-state level. For instance, Wunderlich's analysis of rule application in the external governance of migration offers a critique of both the linear and dichotomous view in which non-members either adopt or reject EU policies, and the hierarchical understanding of implementation which fails to account for the complex process of external governance (Wunderlich 2012: 1428). Contrastingly, they suggest an organizational perspective that concentrates on administrations in the non-member state that often have considerable leeway in the implementation (Wunderlich 2012: 1414; 1428). Thus, they argue for the significance of third-country institutions (Wunderlich 2012: 1428). Respectively, Korosteleva, Natorski and Simão propose the examination of practices promoted through EU instruments that are subsequently embedded into existing, local social structures (Korosteleva et al. 2013: 259). Thus, the implementation of EU policies relies on non-members' understanding of EU discourses (Korosteleva et al. 2013: 266). Their focus on instruments additionally allows for the study of daily practices of actors in the context of EU external governance (Korosteleva et al. 2013: 260), a pivotal point of this thesis' study of the consequences of EU instruments.

What is striking in most accounts of domestic actors in non-member states is the focus on domestic political elites, "inter alia neglecting the more subtle effects of external policies on societal actors" (Noutcheva 2016: 692). Thus, Noutcheva argues:

both the EU's structural power and the EU's actorness need to be taken into account, and the effects of these influences on both the societal sphere and societal actions have to be considered (Noutcheva 2016: 694).

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This is one of the aspects highlighted also in this thesis, albeit not on society as a whole but more specifically on rural spaces. While it is crucial to take into account the role the EU and government actors play - or do not play - in the processes of external governance, policies are not contained on the state-level but have more pervasive impacts throughout that should be acknowledged in a more holistic approach.

In addition to actors within non-member states, authors have studied the role third countries may have on the process of external governance, or the relationship between the EU and a non-member state more broadly. Third countries, usually conceptualised as global or regional powers, are thought to be able to inhibit the EU's capacity to export their rules by offering competing incentives to non-member states, in some case acting as a spoiler to the EU's efforts. Even though these actors are part of for instance the power-based explanation, integrating a more complex, contextual than a linear perspective can highlight the influences of these actors not only on the adoption of EU policies but the domestic structure itself.

For instance, Delcour and Wolczuk's starting point for analysing the seemingly puzzling adoption of EU rules by Armenia is the observation that the EU external governance literature focuses on conditions of successful EU policy export rather than the conditions of third country adoption, biasing against domestic factors (Delcour and Wolczuk 2015: 492). Highlighting that Armenia was unlikely to adopt EU-induced policy change, the authors explain the surprising alignment with EU policies in the early 2010s, concluding that EU external governance was successful because the Armenian government's cost-benefit calculation resulted in accepting EU rules (Delcour and Wolczuk 2015: 492; 498). The government, pressured by a crisis in the country's political, economic, and geopolitical situation, perceived EU modernisation strategies as necessary for survival whilst implying little political costs for the ruling elite²⁴ (Delcour & Wolczuk 2015: 498). This pro-European attitude changed with an altered cost-benefit calculation due to Russia's objection to Armenia's EU-orientation and resulted in the rejection of the Association Agreement with the EU (Delcour & Wolczuk 2015: 502). Correspondingly, Dimitrova and Dragneva (2009) find the effectiveness of external governance to vary depending on interdependence of the non-member with a (powerful) country such as Russia. Hence, the sectoral differences in

²⁴ Meaning sectoral approximation did not result in democratization pressures (Delcour and Wolczuk 2015: 501).

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interdependence between the Ukraine and Russia resulted in increased EU-approximation in sectors of low interdependence. Conversely, in high interdependence sectors such as energy, Russia exercised power politics to obstruct Europeanisation. Therefore, the authors argue that the degree of interdependence, rather than EU institutionalization, is vital for external governance (Dimitrova & Dragneva 2009: 854).

Further, Ademmer revisits these findings aiming to explain unexpected observations that EU policies travel to countries highly dependent on Russia (Ademmer 2015: 672; see also Hagemann 2013; Langbein 2013²⁵). Consequently, the author contends that if non-members are affected by unilateral changes in cross-border flows with another country but not vulnerable to that country, approximation to EU rules is possible (Ademmer 2015: 672-674). However, a non-member's high vulnerability to another country, i.e. costly policy alternatives, inhibits EU external governance (Ademmer 2015: 675). For example, that the Georgian government prior to the Rose Revolution was headed by a Moscow-supported former foreign minister of the USSR implied vulnerability (Ademmer 2015: 682). Consequently, foreign policy alternatives and an orientation towards the EU became possible due to a changed environment after the Rose Revolution (Ademmer 2015: 682).

Extremely relevant for this thesis and combining both non-member state and third state actors, in her case study of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, Delcour also criticises the literature's concentration on EU variables when explaining the diffusion of EU norms (Delcour 2013: 344). Thus, the author argues that due to Georgia's vulnerability to Russia, the EU, as alternative governance provider, could exert conditionality in the run-up to the negotiations. Hence, this explains the government's acceptance of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area although Georgian political elites favoured a simple free-trade agreement (Delcour 2013: 348). Nonetheless, Delcour observes that the approximation in migration and food safety crucially depended on domestic policy instruments and interests, leading to an intentionally selective approach when implementing EU-rules at first (Delcour 2013: 352ff.). For example, Georgia initially resisted EU food safety norms due to a policy of minimal governance, a preference of the status quo in which low quality meat

²⁵ Delcour and Wolczuk (2015) could also be listed in these studies, although the authors draw a different theoretical conclusion, putting the non-member state's government at the fore.

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resulting from a free-trade agreement with Turkey is sold domestically, and also to avoid significant approximation costs (Delcour 2013: 353). Delcour's study of Georgia, as well as their observation that the importance of the agricultural sector in Georgia factored in the selective adoption and adjustment of EU norms, is crucial to this thesis' appreciation of this country's domestic and specifically rural context that helps explain the external governance of both LEADER and GI. Yet, the findings of this thesis are quite different, given that both instruments are generally implemented domestically requiring little EU pressure.

Governmental actors are not the only vital actors to consider. As Börzel and Risse emphasised, the EU is "rarely the only game in town in driving domestic reforms" (Börzel & Risse 2012: 2). Especially in the field of development, a multitude of actors, from the United Nations, over states' development agencies, to non-governmental organizations and charities crowd the field. This picture also emerges, as is explained in Chapter 6, in Georgia's rural development. Hence, the interaction of the EU not only with the non-member state and third countries but also with these actors must be considered, as they may propose alternative visions of rural space. While the roles of these types of organizations is acknowledged particularly on the stage of rule selection (e.g. Dimitrova & Dragneva 2009: 680; Barbé et al. 2009: 836), Lavenex (2016) proposes a framework to study how the relationship between EU and other organizations can be conceptualised and applies it to sector of migration policies, including stages from selection to application. First, international organizations may serve as counterweights to either complement or correct EU policies depending on their own mandate or interest. Second, they may be subcontracted by the EU to implement projects. Third, they may act as transmitters or transfer agents to diffuse EU rules (Lavenex 2016: 555).

Therefore, it is important to broaden the approach towards EU external governance with a more explicit appreciation for other actors, be it within the non-member state, third countries, or international organizations, on a case-by-case basis. This is also highlighted by the few case studies that exist on the external governance of the EU's Rural Development Policy, specifically to the ENP South. Here, Kourtellis argues for the differentiation of policy diffusion from convergence, and the need to assess the role that domestic policies play more specifically: "Domestic policies respond to political, economic, and social contestations and they benefit specific subgroups of

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farming communities” (Kourtelis 2017: 12). Hence, the author includes, as is done in this thesis, a broader context in the evaluation of external governance and its consequences, albeit focusing on farming communities rather than rural spaces. Subsequently, a later article argues that even though inclusive growth and support particularly to smaller producers was prioritised in the Southern Neighbourhood after the Arab uprisings, the technocratic design and hierarchical mode were unable to alter social relations in rural areas (Kourtelis 2018: 23). Indeed, the EU only interacted with a limited variety of actors, including epistemic communities within the EU and national authorities in the southern neighbourhood, which in turn consolidated bureaucratic power (Kourtelis 2018: 38).

Arguably, the current centrality of EU institutions in the external governance framework follows from its conceptualisation of external governance as policy export, as well as from the operationalization of external governance effectiveness (rule selection, adoption, application) which measure effectiveness according to EU rules. However, the EU need not be dominant or even particularly active in these processes. While this type of external governance is noted particularly for the market mode, this thesis highlights that the EU may even take a less active role in the external governance through networks. Importantly, the framework and related approaches are limited in that they do not evaluate consequences on the ground and focus on the governmental level only. Yet, consequences for regional or local levels are vital as they often represent the spaces in which policies are implemented and should have the most visible impact. Therefore, the subsequent section presents two recent developments in the literature that reflect these considerations.

3.5 Conceptualising consequences of EU actions: recent research pathways

During the 2010s there has been an increasing interest in some of the research gaps this thesis addresses. The two arguably most relevant research directions will be briefly presented here: the literature on unintended consequences in EU external actions as well as discussions around local ownership in EU external ‘resilience building’. The idea of unintended consequences of EU external action was initially introduced by Burlyuk (2017) through her case studies from neighbourhood, migration, and trade policies. As the starting point, Burlyuk questions the assumption that EU external action is per se ‘good’ and maintains that effects beyond “positive impact or no impact” (Burlyuk 2017: 1009) are neglected. From this, a 2019 *International Spectator*

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Special Issue develops the concept further and proposes a set of research questions related to the nature (what), the causes (why) and the management (how) of unintended consequences. Similar to this thesis, the starting point was the realization that studies of EU external actions are rarely focused on the consequences of EU actions:

The mainstream literature frames EU external performance in terms of success or failure to achieve the intended effects (usually defined on the basis of the EU's own declared objectives). Resting on a deeply embedded and uncritical liberal assumption that EU engagement abroad is a good thing, these analyses are framed as 'positive impact or no impact', [...] neglecting frequent, multiple and varied unintended effects of EU policies (Burlyuk & Noutcheva 2019: 1).

Unintended consequences are interrogated according to nine lines of enquiry, including whether the EU could anticipate the consequences, whether the consequence was positive or negative and who was impacted (Burlyuk & Noutcheva 2019: 2 – 5). The Special Issue then engages with a large variety of diverse case studies, which highlight that unintended consequences can often be anticipated and that there are multiple causes for unintended consequences as well as multiple strategies to manage them (Burlyuk & Noutcheva 2019: 8–13). Relating back to institutionalist explanations presented earlier, how pro-active the EU is in the management of unintended consequences arguably depends on how the EU acts in a specific policy area: proactive in trade versus reactive in democracy promotion (Burlyuk & Noutcheva 2019: 12). When considering the latter, again the move beyond the mainstream's focus on whether EU external actions achieve the stated goals is emphasised as "By probing beyond the publicly declared goals of the EU's democracy support policies, the article has found that the EU's impact is varied and sometimes opposite to its official rhetoric" (Dandashly & Noutcheva 2019: 117; 106). In this thesis, the data gathering on and analysis of consequences has, as outlined in the research design, been intentionally separated from both EU expectations and the existing academic literature on the instruments' consequences. Rather, broad spatial concepts serve as heuristics that first facilitated the potential to observe thus far unrecorded consequences, and later structured their analysis.

The divergence between narrative and impact is also a central point in a 2020 *Contemporary Security Policy* Special Issue on the supposed 'local turn' in EU external governance of resilience. Having become a central term in the 2016 EU Global Strategy, resilience is defined as the ability of states and societies to reform in order to withstand internal and external crises, and has since been applied to a myriad of policy sectors from security to the environment (Petrova & Delcour 2020: 342).

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Yet, what is particularly relevant for this thesis is the focus on ‘the local’, even to the level of the individual (Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020: 154) and an argument for “the need to look at how real people feel about and react to change” (Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020: 163). Arguing that resilience cannot be sustainably constituted by external agents but from within via self-governance, the ‘local turn’ challenges previous modernisation theories as well as policy practice (Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020: 163; Petrova & Delcour 2020: 340). Indeed, the contributions and the conceptualisation of ‘the local’ explicitly speak to the previously noted linear conceptualisation of EU external governance. The local turn could alter

the dynamics of governance altogether, whereby external governance becomes not at all about exporting, monitoring, and directing of how better to respond to the needs of volatile and vulnerable communities. Instead, it decenters to focus on the problem at source and deal with it inside-out and bottom-up, at ‘the local’ and ‘the person’ levels (Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020. 162f.).

However, even though the EU’s narratives around resilience, similar to its discourse on rural development, demonstrate a shift towards the local ownership and agency, the Special Issue demonstrates that few substantial policy changes resulted from this narrative change (Petrova & Delcour 2020). This is especially true for the EU’s trade and economic development policies, which are relevant for this thesis:

since 2009, the EU’s core approach to trade and economic development has been premised upon a massive diffusion of the EU’s set of rules, with limited attention to local needs [...] This is because the EU expects its acquis as a blueprint for modernization (Petrova & Delcour 2020: 345).

This last aspect of a “blueprint for modernization” corresponds to one of the findings of this thesis, the construction of student-teacher relations in which Georgian actors are taught the EU’s approach towards rural development, even in the LEADER programme which is explicitly bottom-up. Consequently, these processes are highly relevant for policy and will be discussed in these terms in the conclusion. However, even though the need to expand the focus to the individual is expressed, the Special Issue often refers to ‘local communities’ instead. While expanding the view of local contexts and agency from the previously dominant understandings located at the government level of non-member states, this thesis demonstrates in Chapter 4 that the concept of community risks masking internal heterogeneities. Thus, assuming community in this thesis would risk neglecting the differentiated consequences for various actors resulting from pre-existing power-structures.

3.6 Conclusions

This chapter reviewed the extensive literature on the EU's influence outside its borders and identified the central theoretical framework for the thesis: EU external governance. While role-concepts devised by various authors are no doubt helpful as heuristics when discussing what the EU is, whether predominantly a normative community or a large market, these fundamental understandings of the EU are less useful for analysing EU external policies in practice. Therefore, the thesis applies the external governance as a systematic guide for its empirical analysis. Especially the sectoral perspective, and relatedly the three modes of external governance are valuable in overcoming problems of role-concepts: depending on the sector, EU policies may be externally governed by ways of hierarchy, the attraction of its market, or socialisation via the network mode. Similarly, the three measures of effectiveness, whether EU policies are selected in negotiations, adopted into non-member states' policies, and subsequently applied in practice help to differentiate the extent to which EU policies have indeed travelled beyond EU borders.

Nonetheless, the empirical analysis of LEADER and GIs in Chapter 6 will demonstrate the need for an even more differentiated look beyond policy sectors and towards specific policy instruments as it observes two different modes within the CAP. Moreover, as is noted by the critiques of the original framework and specifically recent contributions on unintended consequences, there is a need to move beyond the three measures of effectiveness when analysing external governance. Instead, consequences 'on the ground' need to be investigated, including the addressees of a policy beyond the level of the central government. It is argued that this analysis needs to be broad and open-ended rather than guided by the EU's own expectations as even the most effective external governance may result in negative and/or unintended consequences where it is implemented. In this thesis, this open-endedness is achieved via the inclusion of 'rural space' as a guiding heuristic. For the rural development instruments analysed in this thesis, rural spaces are where we would expect consequences to be experienced. At the same time, the concept is sufficiently broad and points to a variety of useful transdisciplinary lenses (rurality, place, land, territory) that can capture a multiplicity of consequences, intended and unintended, expected and unexpected. Hence, the subsequent chapter discusses this central concept.

CHAPTER 4: SHAPING RURAL SPACES

Rural spaces and space more generally have been intensely debated concepts for millennia and are current topics in a large variety of disciplines from Geography over Anthropology and Sociology to Political Science. Nevertheless, considering processes of globalization, one could easily expect the significance of rural spaces to wane in policy, research, and daily experiences. Rural spaces around the world are transformed by the move towards increasingly industrialised forms of agriculture, including ever larger farms, the concentration of market power in the hands of few transnational agri-food corporations, consequent shifts in land use, as well as urbanization (Clapp 2012; Bernstein 2010: 70; Zoomers 2010: 442). Thus, one could envisage the globalization and complete standardization of rural spaces to a point of indistinguishability and insignificance (Mormont 1990). Essentially, rural spaces could approximate Casey's disillusion with their urban counterparts:

an indifferent sameness-of-place on a global scale – to the point where at times you cannot be sure which city you are in [...] [D]ifference-of-place [...] has been lost in a worldwide monoculture based on Western economic and political paradigms (Casey 1997: n.p.).

On the other hand, (themselves transnational) peasant movements promote concepts such as food sovereignty and food localization, often in a 'small-is-beautiful' narrative of ideally environmentally-friendly agricultural production in rural spaces (Holt-Giménez 2011: 324; Visser & Spoor 2011: 317, Hall 2013: 143f.). At least in the global North, consumers' tastes seem to shift towards alternative foods, promoting organic or local farming with consequences for rural spaces in which those foods are - or are not - produced. In the global South, conflicts over land between governments, transnational investors and indigenous groups have revolved precisely around the conceptualisation, shape, and regulation of rural spaces (Bernstein 2010: 7; Holt-Giménez 2011: 309ff.). Thus, what rural spaces are and what they should be remains highly contested and politically salient.

Interestingly, the CAP itself, as explored by Chapter 5, sits in an interesting relation to rural space. After decades of focusing primarily on issues of productivity and land, the introduction of rural development considerations re-oriented the policy towards rural development. Importantly, LEADER and Geographical Indications primarily address rural spaces, meaning that investigating consequences for them is vital. For this thesis, the concept of rural space and its various facets also provide the central heuristics for

empirical analysis. Rural space was selected here not only because it is what the two instruments are targeted at, it also opens the analysis up more broadly than an evaluation based on EU-categories or the existing literature on the instruments. Instead, the thesis broadly collects and analyses data regarding consequences for rural spaces. The concepts presented could therefore be utilised by future research on EU external governance more broadly, considering that few contributions in the field have explicitly engaged with geographical approaches (see Clark & Jones 2008). However, as the Europeanisation beyond Europe literature moves beyond state-level consequences, these concepts may be helpful specifically when analysing aspects such as local consequences.

Consequently, this chapter investigates existing understandings of both rurality and various spatial concepts to develop heuristics that guide the research on the instruments' consequences for rural spaces in Georgia. It demonstrates that rurality has conventionally been viewed in connection to notions of periphery, frontier, and backwardness, being juxtaposed to the modern, globally connected city. Subsequently, the chapter divides spatial concepts into three categories: place, which denotes emotional relations to space, as well as land and territory which engage with economic and political power relations relating to spaces, respectively. Overarchingly, it is maintained that a flexible approach towards those terms as heuristics, rather than strictly separating research on each concept, is vital for comprehensively understanding rural spaces.

4.1 What makes spaces rural?

Multitudinous articles, books, journals, and departments are situated in the field of Rural Studies. Rural policy instruments, including the EU's LEADER programme and GIs are intended to support the development of rural areas. But what makes spaces rural? Frequently, rural spaces are, in academic as well as public debates, characterised either by agricultural production, or by what they are not: urban, modern, global. This section discusses these dichotomies, arguing that they are incapable of capturing the heterogeneity of rural spaces. Importantly, it is contended that rural spaces are socially constructed as well as constantly shaped by subjects within or without specific geographic locations and that they are intershot with power relations that have wide-ranging consequences.

4.1.1 Agricultural rurality

One of the most dominant assumed characteristics of rural spaces is that of agricultural production. Undoubtedly, agriculture is a crucial factor for rural spaces, currently and historically. To illustrate, historical analyses in Rural Studies univocally connect the history of the concept of rurality itself to agriculture. For instance, Weis remarks that rural spaces emerged with practices of settled farming around 12,000 years ago (Weis 2005). Similarly, Sick puts this long history of rurality in relation to the utilization of natural resources more generally, as ‘rural people’ were consuming food from agriculture, agro-pastoral practices, fishing or foraging in close geographical proximity to production (Sick 2014: 1). Finally, Hietala and Vahtikari note that in the Middle Ages, agricultural products from rural spaces outside city walls became crucial for towns lacking internal food supply, marking another critical moment in the agricultural²⁶ characterization of rurality (Hietala & Vahtikari 2003: 10).

Yet, the connection of rurality and agriculture is less clear-cut than often assumed. Crucially, rural spaces manifest themselves in more than agricultural production sites and the people that farm them. In this regard, Ramisch’s case study of Kenyan rural spaces notes that the diversification of livelihood strategies, result in rural populations being “neither wholly peasant nor wholly worker” (Ramisch 2014: 14). Correspondingly, Banks and Marsden recognise the increasing demands of consumers from rural spaces not only in food production but environmental and recreational services (Banks & Marsden 2000: 468). Importantly, agriculture itself is hardly stable but constantly redefined, considering for example the industrialisation of agriculture especially during the 20th century, including the specialisation of farmers on a narrow range of agricultural commodities, factory farming, as well as the increasing mechanization and use of pesticides (Clapp 2012). Contrastingly, Marsden notes the ongoing crisis of productivist agriculture and (Northern) producers’ orientation towards local and/or ‘quality’ products (Marsden 1995: 285).

The definition of producers is highly contested. For instance, Bernstein questions the summation of all actors involved in agricultural production in any space within the same category (Bernstein 2010: 2). Consequently, the author argues that farmers vary in type, space, and time, such as full-time or seasonal (Bernstein 2010: 3). Characterisations range from marginal or subsistence farmers, peasants and small-

²⁶ And anti-urban, as explained below.

scale family farmers to large-scale agricultural production sites and plantation owners (Bernstein 2010: 3). Crucially, even these groups cannot be understood as homogenous, considering for example the numerous livelihood strategies of subsistence farmers (Petrick & Weingarten 2005: 5).

4.1.2 The opposite of the modern city

Another striking feature of rural conceptualisations is its frequent juxtaposition with urban spaces and, relatedly, modernity. Falk and Pinhey note that conceptual debates around rurality are centrally grounded in the urban-rural dichotomy (1978: 548, see also Cloke 2006: 18). A case in point are the various rural-urban continua or indices presented for example by Pahl (1966), Cloke (1977), Cloke and Edwards (1985), and Butler (1990). This juxtaposition is also a hierarchy, dominated by urban spaces in academic and policy discourse (Cloke 1997: 368). For instance, Spoor contends that policy makers in post-Soviet countries' transition periods were strongly urban biased, consequently leading to the neglect of rural spaces (Spoor 2009: 54). As elaborated on in Chapter 6, this urban bias also helps explain the absence of a rural development policy in Georgia until 2017. Similarly, Cloke argues that while cities are defined in their own right, rural spaces represent a site of conceptual struggle "where the other-than-urban meets the multifarious conditions of vastly differing scales and styles of living" (Cloke 2006: 18; see also Halfacree 2006: n.p.). The opposition and hierarchy also prevail in the EU's definition of rural areas that are in a first step identified as those areas outside urban clusters²⁷ which themselves are defined by at least 300 inhabitants per square kilometre and a minimum population of 5000 (Eurostat 2015: n.p.).

Crucially, the urban-rural distinction has important implications for understandings of rurality itself. Thus, Sauer contends that under capitalism urban spaces became not only hubs of trade and industry but of ideological and cultural values that stood in opposition to "traditional", rural spaces (Sauer 2012: 87). Therefore, whilst cities are characterised by modernity and openness, rural spaces are commonly associated with conservatism, tradition, and backwardness, left behind by their urban counterparts (Crooke 1997: 368; Sauer 2012: 91; DuPuis et al. 2011: 300). In fact, in his case study of Brazil, indigenous communities' struggle for land has been characterised by urban

²⁷ It then distinguishes between predominantly rural, intermediate and predominantly urban areas depending on the share of population living in a rural area.

elites as a fight for backwardness in hindering agribusiness expansion (Sauer 2012: 93). Thus, “[t]he city, in opposition to the backwardness of the rural areas, is considered the fundamental space for economic development and the construction of citizenship” (Sauer 2012: 90). At the same time, historical examples have defined rural backwardness even as desirable, specifically through the notion of rural idyll. In both the UK and US, the notion of rural idyll was mobilised to oppose industrial projects (Wiener 1981). In fascist Italy, rurality was constructed as nationalist in political rhetoric, set as antithesis to the decadence of cities (Pratt 1996: 76).

However, strict conceptual distinctions between rurality and urbanity are increasingly blurred in practice: transport and communication technologies, migration, mass media and the internet connect rural to urban spaces not only in terms of goods but also people and their ideas (Cloke 2006: 18; Sick 2014: 3; Ramisch 2014: 29). Therefore, “the idea of rurality as an isolated island of cultural specificity and traditionalism has become anachronistic” (Cloke 2006: n.p.). Similarly, Gkartzios et al. note that the urban-rural divide does not necessarily translate to countries that did not follow trajectories of intense industrialisation processes, such as Greece where urban and rural spaces were never completely severed in practice or discourse (Gkartzios et al. 2017: 23).

In fact, Hoggart argues that urban and rural spaces are similar in most respects, for instance considering the challenges for public services or the existence of place-specific traditions both in villages and cities (Hoggart 1990: 245; 253f.). Hence, the author deems the rural-urban divide as inappropriate distinguishing factor, argues that the concept of rurality conceals heterogeneities within rural spaces, and even suggests that researchers should “abandon the category rural as an analytical construct” (Hoggart 1990: 246). While strict rural-urban dichotomies are difficult to uphold conceptually, the construction of rural spaces as a political process has important consequences, as will be argued in section 3.1.4., and is observed in this thesis. After all, the distinctions between urban and rural spaces are perpetuated by various actors, including policymakers, both in narrative and regulatory practice, and therefore need to be analysed.

4.1.3 Remote local-ness rather than connected globality

Being juxtaposed with the modern city has another implication for rural spaces, in that this separation implies a narrative of cities as global, while rural spaces are mostly understood as local. Urban spaces are assumed to be highly connected globally, while

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globalization is perceived as an intrusion to “authentic” rural lives (Woods 2007: 489). Thus, this local-global dichotomy evokes imaginaries of rural remoteness and connects rurality to the concepts of frontier and periphery.

The concept of frontier illustrates various important themes of rurality as peripheral. For instance, Hall characterises frontiers as far from geographical centres of power, often close to borders or coasts, and sparsely populated (often by ethnic minorities; Hall 2013). Consequently, frontiers are often areas where state administrative control is incomplete (Hall 2013). As a result, in *Land's End: Capitalist Relations on an Indigenous Frontier*, Murray Li describes the objective of ruling regimes to incorporate frontiers and its people into state territory by drawing maps, conducting censi, issuing identity cards or, in her case, implementing development projects (Murray Li 2014: 12f.). At times, the control over frontiers is also targeted strategically to counter efforts by other states or secessionist movements as well as the potential to extract resources from these spaces (Hall 2013). Concordantly, Hall argues that governments increase controls over frontiers due to the (narrative) obligation to extend citizenship and (their version of) development to frontiers and integrating them into the nation (Hall 2013). This theme of government control over the frontier is prominent in Georgian politics, for instance regarding the occupied/secessionist areas of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the aforementioned region of Samtskhe-Javakheti which was feared to develop secessionist movements in the wake of the 2014 Association Agreement (Fix 2014). Moreover, the instruments are, as described in Chapters 6 and 7, often narrated as tools to strengthen government control in rural areas, specifically those in border regions.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that rurality and frontiers are not identified by a certain material distance from the border or the center, respectively. Not every area that exists beyond a certain geographical distance can be characterised as at the frontier, and neither is every rural area outside the reach of governments. Rather, frontiers, as rural spaces, can be understood as socially constructed spaces of difference or ‘otherness’, associated with periphery or remoteness. The construction of being at the frontier, being remote, being peripheral is often internalised both by those at the centre, who view villagers as backwards, and by those living in rural areas themselves, who see themselves excluded from influencing the centre (Hall 2013).

To reiterate, these strict distinctions between local and global, central and peripheral, connected and isolated have been called into question. In fact, globalization is highly visible in localities otherwise constructed as rural. Examples include the migration of agricultural labourers across borders, the global transport of tropical fruits, or international tourism (Woods 2007: 488-490). Clearly, these rural spaces are not strictly local, peripheral, or isolated. Hence, while rural spaces continue to be imagined as peripheral and backwards, they are embedded into vast networks connecting them to cities and across borders. This relation to globalization then can be expected to be heterogenous between and within spaces (Woods 2007: 491):

The reconstitution of rural spaces under globalization results from the permeability of rural localities as hybrid assemblages that are never wholly fixed or constrained at the local scale (Woods 2007: 499).

4.1.4 Constructing rurality: a political process

Thus, the main uniting factor for rural spaces is their heterogeneity. It is doubtful whether rural spaces that vary regarding climate, geology, ecology, let alone culture, economy, and political systems can be analysed similarly under the umbrella of being rural (Amekawa et al. 2010: 211). Meanings of rurality are nationally, culturally, and historically diverse (Pratt 1996: 70) and vary across linguistic contexts (Gkarzios et al. 2017: 22; Cloke 1997: 373). They are affected in different ways by forces such as capitalism (Murray Li 2014: 9), globalization (Woods 2007: 485), and economic shifts in agriculture (Rigg 2012 & Vandergeest: 7; Gray 2000: 35).

Questioning any material rurality 'out there' to be discovered, this thesis agrees with ideational understandings of rurality being unstable and constantly (re-)produced (Pratt 1996: 70f.; Halfacree 2006: n.p.). Hence, rural spaces are connected to cultural meanings ranging from idyllic to oppressive, and shape parts of everyday lives of people related to spaces deemed rural (Cloke 2006: 18; Falk & Pinhey 1978: 551). Representations and narratives of rurality are visible not only in policy but also in novels, newspapers, films and photographs, advertising materials, maps as well as in rural myths and ethnographies (Cloke 1997: 370f.). In fact, it has been pointed out that symbolic notions of the rural are increasingly detached from the geographical locations they supposedly refer to (Cloke 2006: n.p.). Thus, Cloke argues:

Rurality as socially constructed suggests that the importance of rural lies in the fascinating world of social, cultural and moral values which have become associated with rurality, rural spaces and rural life (Cloke 2006: n.p.).

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These associations are shot through with power relations, and again, a political differentiation between centre and periphery (Falk and Pinhey 1978: 549; Gkarzios et al. 2017: 23, Pratt 1996: 69; Goverde et al. 2017: n.p.). Although people who live in areas which are deemed rural may not buy into specific representations of rurality, they can be affected by powerful external imaginaries of what rurality is (Goverde et al. 2017: n.p.). In Halfacree's three-fold model of rural space, "formal representations of the rural" are expressed by bureaucrats, politicians, and capitalist interests (Halfacree 2006: n.p.). These formal representations then are different from and try to dominate fractured "everyday lives of the rural" (Halfacree 2006: n.p.). Pratt illustrates:

Though we may not be able to point to a 'true' rurality, it may be possible to identify certain discourses about rurality that service to enable and support the reproduction of particular uneven social relations, economic distributions and social stratifications (Pratt 1996: 70).

In short, though a fixed, positivist conceptualisation of rurality is problematic, it is constructed by various actors who themselves act as if it exists (Rigg & Vandergeest 2012: 19). Necessarily then, the significant heterogeneities and continuous (re)construction of rurality necessitates a case and context-specific analysis of the EU's external governance, as it cannot be assumed to have uniform consequences across rural spaces.

4.2 Spatialities: land, territory, and place

The thesis now moves beyond the conceptualisation of rurality by also engaging with broader spatial concepts as a way to capture the empirical consequences of EU external governance 'on the ground'. As outlined, three broad categories of spatialities can be distinguished: place, land, and territory. While the former captures perceptions, connections, and experiences towards spaces, land and territory both conceptualise relations of control and power over spaces, with land speaking towards issues such as property and economic profit, and territory encapsulating more overtly political power. As mentioned previously, the history of thought regarding concepts such as space, place, land, and territory spans several millennia. Hence, this chapter does not discuss conceptual histories (see Casey 1997; Elden 2013), nor revisit ontological and epistemological debates on the subject in detail (see Crang & Thrift 2000). Since these discussions reach beyond the scope and objective of this thesis, the chapter broadly teases out core debates around central concepts to utilise them as heuristics in empirical analysis. It suggests a flexible and pragmatic reading of relevant spatial concepts as loosely-bordered constructs that can be categorised according to whether

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they refer to economic or political power relations, i.e. land or territory respectively, or perceptions of and connections to space, i.e. place.

When it comes to the Europeanisation literature, Clark and Jones noted that “a geographical contribution to these debates is lacking” (Clark & Jones 2008: 300), and that:

the absence of a geographical contribution to these debates is unfortunate, for the scales and spaces of Europeanisation and their socialisation and learning foundations represent an important research agenda, ripe for empirical analysis (Clark & Jones 2008: 301).

The thesis therefore contributes to the utilization of geographical concepts in studies of the EU. In their article, Clark & Jones focus primarily on the “construction and projection of Europeanisation by ‘EUropean’ elites” (Clark & Jones 2008: 301), including beyond the EU (Clark & Jones 2008: 310). For instance, discussing the ENP (South), they argue that Europeanisation here is articulated via constructing the neighbourhood space to the Mediterranean ‘other’ (Clark & Jones 2008: 312). The authors focus especially on what this thesis conceptualises as territory, with their key variables being territory/territoriality, patterns of governance and government (Clark & Jones 2008: 304). However, the empirical analysis in this thesis moves beyond territory through the concepts of land, place, and rurality, which can be applied also by future empirical analyses of EU external actions in (rural) spaces.

4.2.1. Land

One way to approach the politics of space is to consider the property relations that give rise to the ownership of land and thereby structure capital accumulation. In terms of rural space specifically, this is reflected in the literature occupied with class dynamics of agriculture. Ultimately, this concept has been related to the enclosure of land in 16th-century England, resulting in the transformation of land into private property, and the decisive rupture towards commoditization and capitalization (e.g. Marx *Das Kapital* 1, Ch 27). Bernstein argues that ‘land as property’ does not require full translation into law, but only de-facto acceptance as private for its commoditization develop (Bernstein 2010: 102f.). Therefore, power relations and questions of control are interwoven with the concept of land as property, prompting questions of who controls the land, how and what for (Akram-Lodhi et al. 2007: 217). Correspondingly, Elden understands land as a finite resource over which there is competition of allocation as it cannot be created or extended but only divided (Elden 2010: 804f.). Therefore, the

author argues that the ownership of land determines power and vice versa (Elden 2010: 805).

In fact, Akram-Lodhi and Kay see changes in land tenancy relations and ways of production on land as key mechanisms of rural transformation itself (Akram-Lodhi & Kay 2007: 13f.). Land's characteristics therefore change due to modifications to access (Akram-Lodhi et al. 2007: 214; 217). Ultimately, they contend that social relations are most visible in the distribution of land between individuals (Akram-Lodhi et al. 2007: 214). One impressive example is offered by Tania Murray Li in her ethnography of the Lauje highlanders in Indonesia, which traces the capitalisation of land that led to the dislodgement of farmers from formerly collectively owned land (Murray Li 2014). Interestingly, Murray Li highlights how these farmers lost control over the land not through spectacular land grabs but through the seemingly mundane planting of tree crops and the consequent individualization of land rights in an attempt to become more profitable (Murray Li 2014).

Reducing land strictly to owning it and/or profiting from it may be overly simplistic. For instance, market powers arguably do not fully permeate land. Often, Bernstein notes, farmers often refuse to sell their land, as they conceive it as guarantor of (food) security as well as a marker of cultural values and identity, also alluding to the category of place that is discussed below (Bernstein 2010: 109). Nonetheless, what is central about land are the process of commodification and land's utilization for capital accumulation. This includes the owning and selling of land, but also that at least in non-subsistence agricultural production, products originating from land are sold on markets. Therefore, various actors along the value chain may accumulate capital through land's commodities, whether they own the land, or not. For the purpose of this thesis then, we can ask whether GIs or LEADER shaped rural space on the dimension of land. For instance, were land parcels increased in size to increase the profitability of farms on which GIs are produced? How were the relations of ownership affected: was there a move towards community land ownership? And, importantly, who profited from land and the commodities produced on it?

4.2.2 Territory

While land, similarly to agriculture, is a vital aspect of understanding rural spaces, restricting the analysis to this concept would neglect other dimensions of control and authority. Here, the concept of territory fills important gaps. Even though land is

frequently related to issues of control, it is the concept of territory that is most directly connected to political authority. Despite being a relatively recent, Western concept, becoming significant only from about the 17th century, the division of the world's surface into state territories is now taken for granted (Soja 1971: 13–16; Elden 2013: 6). Centrally, Lefebvre conceptualises territory as “state space”, maintaining that national territories result from articulations between the state, contested processes within it, as well as the space it controls (Lefebvre 1991: 228). The author understands state and territory to be mutually dependent: there would be no state without a territory to control, and no territory without a controlling state (Lefebvre 1991: 228; see also Hall 2013). Similarly, Elden argues that territory is shaping and shaped by processes of regulation and governance (Elden 2013: 17) and Sassen contends that territory is constructed together with the authority of a national sovereign (Sassen 2006: 4).

In this vein, Brenner and Elden conceptualise territory as form of politico-spatial organization, as a strategic feature of politics (Brenner & Elden 2009: 356). They connectedly view the production of a nation by the state as a process of (re-)shaping territories into unities through various political techniques, including mapping (Brenner & Elden 2009: 363).²⁸ The complex socio-spatial organization that is produced through the modern state consequently imposes homogeneity to create a seemingly objective, calculable grid that can be controlled and exploited (Lefebvre 1992; see also Halfacree 2006). What has been framed as “abstract space” thus attempts to appear natural and neutral whilst being inherently political (Brenner & Elden 2009: 373; Malkki 1992). In this regard, Agnew notes a set of unquestioned, conceptually constraining assumptions regarding territory, understanding them as the “territorial trap”: assumptions that the state commands sovereignty over its entire territory, that political life is neatly separated into domestic and foreign, and that economy and society are enclosed by state boundaries (Agnew 1994). However, when turning to the uneven state control at the frontier, these assumptions are questioned.

Importantly, understandings of territory that are wed to statehood are problematic for this thesis' objective of analysing the EU's impact on spatial authority relations outside of its typical borders. Can the EU wield authority over territory, especially outside its borders? Is there EU territory? In relation to this, Bialasiewicz and Elden investigate the draft constitution of the EU, noting a profound ambiguity between different

²⁸ It is therefore related to the concept of the frontier that was described in Section 4.1.3.

understandings of territory (Bialasiewicz & Elden 2005: 333). Accordingly, the authors argue that European integration is at once an effort to transcend existing territorial divisions between states internally and an effort to re-inscribe territory through border controls towards its outside (Bialasiewicz & Elden 2005: 335). Hence, the EU portrays territorial ambitions and should be included in investigations of territory. Moreover, Clark and Jones, as mentioned above, engage with territory as a crucial variable to be used by future Europeanisation research, connecting it to power as “the lineaments of power are central to territorial and governance conceptions” (Clarke & Jones 2008: 304). Indeed, they review more mainstream contributions to Europeanisation precisely regarding views on territory, for instance those authors who have conceptualised Europeanisation as “the reconfiguration of territorial bases of authority” (Clarke & Jones 2008: 307; see also Adshead 2005; Schmidt and Radaelli 2004; Tonra 2001).

Thus, what is crucial about territory is that it informs relations of political control. These processes do not necessarily have to be situated at the level of national governments. Instead, territory may be shaped by supranational organisations, as well as by subnational forces, such as regional and local governments, non-governmental organizations, secessionist groups, or other influential local actors. Again, as outlined above, these non-state authorities are particularly relevant for rural spaces, given their construction at the remote, peripheral frontier over which the central government may have more limited control compared to ‘the centre’. Additionally, this broader concept of territory allows inclusion of actors such as third influential states or local actors that were suggested in the review of the external governance literature. Again, we could ask how GIs or LEADER shaped rural spaces on the territorial dimension. Who were the central decision-makers in Local Action Groups? Was there competition between governmental agencies, the EU, third countries, and non-governmental actors when it comes to the establishment of rules on GIs? What role did different levels of government play?

4.2.2 Place

Having discussed those concepts that are distinctly wedded to relations of power, the concept of place reflects more ideational relations, by encapsulating perceived connections to and representations of space. Place is an important concept for rural spaces, especially considering the processes of globalisation that were outlined in the

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introduction of this chapter, which some considered to have created an “inauthentic relationship between people and place” (Johnson et al. 2013: n.p.). As a result, attempts to ‘re-localise’ food precisely imply a (re-)connection of food to place in production and consumption (DuPuis et al. 2011: 284). Often, these notions tie to local food notions not only of ‘good place’ but ‘good society’, highlighting the social relations imaginatively contained in these places (DuPuis et al. 2011: 294).

Place in this thesis is understood as the perceived relations to space, for example through a sense of belonging. Casey notes that “we live in places, relate to others in them, die in them. Nothing we do is unplaced” (Casey 1997: n.p.). Conversely, place could imply negative emotions of exclusion, the ‘placelessness’ Casey experienced in global metropolises, or when homogenizing narratives of places give rise to stereotyping or defensive localism (Casey 1997; Paasi 2010: 2299). These deep connections people feel to place evoke associations with identity (Paasi 2003: 478; Hudson 2001; Johnson et al. 2013). In fact, place awareness, attachment and place-making have been argued to be crucial human activities and deep human needs:

Place attachments result from accumulated biographical experiences: we associate places with the fulfilling, terrifying, traumatic, triumphant, secret events that happened to us personally there (Gieryn 2000: 481; see also Price 2013).

Thus, the supposed forced individualization in globalised spaces is argued to motivate a stronger and/or renewed attraction towards place as well as the construction of “identities of resistance” against this “generalized condition of homelessness” (Gupta & Ferguson 1992: 9; Paasi 2003: 475). Consequently, whilst ideas of culturally distinct places or the attachment of imagined communities to imagined places become ever more salient, constructed remembered places also serve as emotional anchors for dispersed people (Gupta & Ferguson 1992: 10f.).

Resembling the other relevant spatial concepts, place is (re-)constructed via representation and experience. Representations often include notions of places as unique and inherently different from others either in the past, present, or future (Paasi 2013: 1208f.). For example, potentially place-shaping representations can be found in tourism-brochures, novels, songs, or TV series, as has been noted also for the concept of rurality. Place is also lived and experienced by people, with representations of space often producing romanticised, idyllic narratives of places that are far removed from such experiences (Price 2013). Relatedly, place can have crucial political implications, as political elites frequently utilise spatial notions of belonging when persuading their

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constituents of their internal homogeneity to justify collective actions on their behalf (Brubaker & Cooper 2000: 4f.). Further, these strategies relate to the important distinction between inside and outside that places create:

Place-making, by setting up boundaries, gives rise to the polarities of 'in' and 'out', 'us' and 'them'. Being 'in', an insider, is good; being 'out', an outsider is bad (Tuan and Strawn 2009: 30).

Therefore, it is vital to not uncritically accept notions of place-bound communities as emerging naturally, but to analyse how places and the people relating to them are constructed in specific power configurations (Gupta & Ferguson 1992: 6). Rather than viewing village communities as internally homogenous, more detailed analyses stress internal conflicts and heterogenous distributions of power (Kalandides 2011: 34; see also Massey 1993). Consequently, this thesis emphasises the fluid and heterogenous relations to place that rarely map neatly onto a specific geographic site. Places are constructed in ways that are neither neutral, natural, homogenous, nor clearly bounded. The concept describes perceptions of and relations towards spaces, such as a sense of belonging or exclusion stemming from representations and lived experiences, not necessarily material locations. Setting this in relation to the aims of the thesis, it could be investigated whether the two instruments shaped place for instance by asking what representations of place were evoked by them and how these representations mapped onto lived experiences. Did LEADER tap into people's felt responsibility towards place? Did it make rural spaces more 'attractive'? How did GIs change insiders' and outsiders' perceptions of a specific area? Did they increase producers' pride over their products?

4.3 Conclusions

To conclude, rurality, land, territory, and place provide heuristics for empirical analysis that are broad enough to capture the wide range of consequences that could be expected to follow from the introduction of EU rural development instruments in Georgia. Rural spaces are constructed through narratives, representations and lived experiences on various levels, by multitudinous actors, in a process shot through with power relations. As argued above, rurality has been continuously defined both as a synonym for locations of agricultural production, or as spaces that are not-urban, not-modern, and peripheral. Land can be understood through relations of property and its utilization in capital accumulation. Territory then represents political power processes of regulation and governance. Lastly, place denotes relations towards space, such as

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representations and experiences of belonging or exclusion. All these dimensions can be shaped by the EU instruments, as will be explored in-depth in Chapter 5. For instance, LEADER was based on the assumption of place-bound communities who feel responsible for ‘their area’. At the same time, the introduction of Local Action Groups may shape local power relations. GIs are evidently related to the concept of land, given that EU narratives promote them as supporting smaller producers. In turn, rather than relying on the literature on EU external governance or the instruments specifically, the concepts open potential for the observation of alternative consequences and explanations. Thereby, these heuristics can also be utilised beyond the case of the CAP itself. As highlighted in Chapter 3, there exists significant room for explorations of consequences ‘on the ground’. The spatial concepts presented here could be valuable starting points.

CHAPTER 5: THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY, LEADER AND GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS: FROM PRODUCTIVIST AGRICULTURE TO RURAL SPACE

Before delving into the analysis of how instruments of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) are governed in non-member states, it is vital to understand the CAP's main institutions and its reform trajectory within the European Economic Community (EEC) and the EU. The CAP is regarded as one of the most developed EU policies with remarkable historical continuity and budgetary resources, peaking at 73% of the EEC budget in 1985 (Daugbjerg & Roederer-Rynning 2014: 38; Garzon 2006: 1; European Commission 2018a: 1). At the same time, the CAP has always been intensely criticised, attacked precisely for its enormous budget, its contribution to surpluses resulting in so-called butter mountains as well as environmental harm (Ackrill 2000: 19f.; Zschache 105: 253; Matthews 2013: 1). Hence, this chapter provides an overview of the CAP's initiation and its earlier reform-aversion. Due to the scope and purpose of this chapter, not every reform is engaged with in detail. Instead, the main argument is that increasing budgetary and international pressures, as well as the entrance of new actors to the agricultural arena triggered the decoupling of production and support, and simultaneously introduced a focus on rural spaces through the concepts of multifunctionality and rural development. Despite allegations of this narrative constituting a mere smokescreen to shield it from criticism, it has become an important both in discourse and policy practice, both internally and beyond EU borders, in non-member states and international organizations. Therefore, the CAP's attention shift to rural spaces warrants scholarly attention.

One of the most visible results of this transformation was the creation of the so-called Second Pillar of the CAP. Broadly, Pillar I, currently under Regulations 1306/2013, 1307/2013, and 1308/2013, has been understood as the purely agricultural measures of the CAP, including for instance direct payments for farmers and the common organisation of the markets in agricultural products, while Pillar II (mainly Regulation 1305/2013) is generally referred to as the Rural Development Policy. However, this separation is not helpful for the empirical analysis of external governance consequences. This is because there is considerable overlap between the pillars. Measures that move beyond concerns with agricultural productivity, e.g. environmental conditionality, are included in Pillar I, whilst some agricultural activities can also be funded through the second pillar's European Fund for Rural

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Development (EAFRD; Swinbank 2016: 9). Rather, the defining difference of Pillar I and Pillar II is not their objective (agriculture vs. rural development), but funding. While direct payments to farmers under Pillar I are fully paid by the EU, Pillar II requires co-financing from member-states. However, this does not have implications for the external governance of the CAP, given that these are, in this case, funded through the European Neighbourhood (Policy) Instrument (ENI/ENPI). Therefore, the thesis moves beyond the pillar structure, by engaging with the overarching shift of the CAP from an exclusive focus on productivist agriculture to a more holistic engagement with rural spaces that is visible in all parts of the policy framework.

The chapter also engages with two instruments that represent this shift towards a focus on rural spaces. While GIs are more directly connected to agricultural production, their positive effects are intended to spill over to entire rural areas. Indeed, they have been argued to provide identity to rural spaces and sometimes product and space even become synonymous (e.g. Champagne, Bordeaux). LEADER addresses rural spaces as a programme supposedly promoting local ownership and building on the assumption that people feel responsibility toward ‘their’ rural area. Finally, this chapter applies the spatial dimensions (rurality, place, land, territory) to the consequences observed by existing case studies on LEADER and GIs.

While the CAP has, as mentioned in the introduction, been frequently criticised for its external impact, hardly any literature engages with the external governance of the policy (for exceptions, see Kourtelis 2017; 2018). Instead, various authors have discussed the importance of international dynamics, e.g. WTO negotiations, for CAP reforms. For instance, the contributions in Elgström and Smith (2006)’s *The European Union’s Roles in International Politics* only ever refers to agriculture in relation to international negotiations on the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), World Trade Organization (WTO), or the EU’s relations to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO; Manners 2006: 79; Kerremans 2006). Similarly, Orbie (2009) only mentions the incoherence of the CAP’s internal price support with policies in the area of international development (Orbie 2008). In the more recent report for the European Parliament’s Agricultural Committee, “*The Interactions between the EU’s External Action and the Common Agricultural Policy*”, Swinbank only analyses how the CAP has been influenced by EU external actions, rather than engaging with the CAP as a policy through which the EU acts externally. Although the ENP is

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mentioned, the report only engages with Preferential Trade Agreements with Mediterranean countries, the sanctions the EU imposed on Russia after the annexation of Crimea, and the consequent emergency package for EU producers impacted by the Russian ban on EU agricultural products (Swinbank 2016: 43). In the aforementioned *Deepening EU-Georgian Relations*, while Emerson and Kovziridze describe the DCFTA's stipulations on agriculture and briefly mention the ENPARD programme, they do not analyse the consequences of either (Emerson & Kovziridze 2016). Therefore, even though this chapter engages with the general reform trajectory and how it has been affected by external dynamics, it also presents a steppingstone for empirical analyses the CAP in external governance that future contributions can build upon.

The chapter's main points are threefold. First, it describes the main tenets of the CAP. Secondly, it argues that from the 1990s, various simultaneous processes triggered a shift from a purely productivist agricultural policy agenda to one addressing rural spaces more broadly, highlighting the relevance of this dimension for analysis. Thirdly, it illustrates this altered focus with the cases of two prominent instruments of the CAP, Geographical Indications and LEADER, and traces their potential consequences for rural spaces as conceptualised in the previous chapter. While the chapter's focus is not primarily on the CAP's external dimension, its engagement with the processes that led to the emergence of rural development as a central element to the policy, as well as the review of the literature on the two instruments provide the necessary foundation for the empirical analysis that ensues.

5.1 The CAP's emergence and a thirty-year status-quo

After years of tackling post-war food security problems through national policies, the Treaty of Rome (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, TFEU), signed in 1957, stipulated that agriculture should be included in the common market (Cunha & Swinbank 2011: 7; Ackrill 2000: 25ff.; Official Journal of the European Union 2012: Art. 38). In Article 39,²⁹ the objectives of a future CAP were defined as increasing agricultural productivity, ensuring a fair standard of living for the agricultural community, market stabilization, as well as guaranteeing availability and reasonable prices for consumers (Official Journal of the European Union 2012: Art. 39). Hence, the CAP's initial focus lay on boosting productivity as well as shielding European

²⁹ The articles were re-numbered in the Treaty of Nice, previously Article 33.

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producers from global competition (European Commission 2012: 3; Candel et al. 2014: 48; Garzon 2006: 23). Indeed, it reflected central themes of aforementioned urban-rural relations:

with food shortages fresh in the public's mind, a high price policy, coupled with major gains in productivity had the advantage of delivering a growing supply of food to an increasing, and increasingly prosperous urban population (Cunha & Swinbank 2011: 7).

Thus, the CAP, from its official launch in 1962, was based on higher-than-world-market price support,³⁰ high import tariffs or non-tariff barriers, as well as buying surplus produce and an increased use of export subsidies (Cunha & Swinbank 2011: 5; Lovec 2016: 1f.). Yet, this policy is widely considered to have triggered various negative consequences. The ever-expanding CAP budget constituted one major problem.³¹ Furthermore, the early CAP primarily benefitted larger producers through support that was coupled to production, rather than focusing on structural issues within the agricultural sector let alone rural areas (Garzon 2006: 25). Therefore:

by stimulating production growth based on the introduction of capital-intensive means, they increased income pressure on the majority of farms and farm labour. Those who could benefit from price supports were large producers and owners of land where intensive means could be applied efficiently, as well as the agro food industry which sold technical means to farmers and bought food from them (Lovec 2016: 4).

Additionally, the growing surpluses, supported by export subsidies, were increasingly dumped on the world market while at the same time high external tariffs prevented produce entering the European market (Lovec 2016: 1f.; Daugbjerg & Swinbank 2016: 266; Boysen et al. 2016: 377; Boysen et al. 2016: 378).

Already in the 1960s, Agricultural Commissioner Mansholt highlighted that an agricultural policy based solely on price support was unable to address underlying problems of the sector and rural areas (Cunha & Swinbank 2011: 7). From the early 1980s, criticisms on the CAP's productivist and protectionist practices triggered first reforms that weakened the early agro-productivist paradigm (Daugbjerg & Swinbank 2016: 270; Potter & Tilzey 2005: 588). Yet, it was not until the late 1980s, when budget issues and frictions with international partners became overwhelming, that momentum for reform emerged and the EU agreed to negotiate agriculture as part of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade's (GATT) Uruguay Round (Daugbjerg & Swinbank

³⁰ Some products were only protected by common external tariffs rather than price support (Garzon 2006: 23).

³¹ In its early years, unanimity (through the Luxembourg compromise) was practically required in European decision making on agriculture, leading to a tendency to achieve compromise by increasing price support (Ackrill 2000: 36; Matthews 2013: 4; Lefebvre et al. 2015: 2094; Garzon 2006: 17).

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2016: 271; Daugbjerg & Roederer-Rynning 2014: 38; Cunha & Swinbank 2011: 10; Garzon 2006: 28ff.; 128). As a result, the 1995 Agreement on Agriculture restricted trade-distorting measures in the agricultural sector by reducing admissible tariffs, curbing trade-distorting types of support,³² and restraining export subsidies (Ackrill 2000: 103ff).

Within the EU, the 1992 MacSharry reform and the Agenda 2000 began the decoupling of payments for farmers from production and replaced it with direct payments, meaning basic income support to active farmers based on farm size³³ (Matthews 2013: 4f.). These two reforms also built the foundations that moved the CAP away from being a purely agricultural policy. When the WTO's Doha Round was launched in 2001, it was expected that agricultural trade was to be liberalized even further (Lovec 2016: 124). Consequently, the 2003 Mid-Term Review³⁴ and 2008 Health Check furthered the decoupling of support (Matthews 2013: 4; 7). As a result, the reforms not only shifted patterns of public expenditure but gained the EU a negotiating advantage within the WTO, appearing open to compromises (Potter & Tilzey 2005: 589; 593). This is illustrated by Commissioner Fischler's speech for the COMAGRI parliamentary committee:

if we move early and take a proactive approach to the WTO negotiations, we can fight to protect the *European model of agriculture*, making it easier to obtain the concessions we are seeking on non-trade issues. By waiting until later to move, we instantly place ourselves at a disadvantage as regards pressure from others, and also weaken our hand (Fischler 2003: n.p.; italics added).

These reforms eventually resulted in the concept of multifunctional agriculture, i.e. the "European model of agriculture" that is discussed below as well as the shift towards rural development. Hence, this change in focus had an interesting external dimension from its beginning, following from the necessity to react to an EU-averse international environment at the WTO. Indeed, especially GIs continue to be hotly debated in the same international fora, chiefly between the US and the EU, which, as this chapter later explains, resulted in their inclusion in bilateral trade agreements.

³² The Agreement on Agriculture created three 'boxes' of domestic support. While trade-distorting amber box (linked to production) payments were to be reduced, blue box (direct farm payments) and green box (decoupled from production) payments were admissible (Daugbjerg & Roederer-Rynning 2014: 45f.).

³³ Some additional funds are received e.g. by young farmers. 30% of direct payments are reliant on farmers fulfilling so-called Greening measures, meaning activities that benefit the climate and environment.

³⁴ The Mid-Term review was additionally motivated by the prospective eastern enlargement (Gorton et al. 2009: 1309), as outlined below.

5.2 Not just about production: multifunctional agriculture

International trade negotiations as well as dwindling internal legitimacy not only led to decoupling, but also introduced a new focus on rural spaces more generally, rather than retaining the post-World War II focus on productivist agriculture. Most clearly, this is seen in the concepts of multifunctional agriculture³⁵ and rural development. While there was an early recognition of rural issues already in a 1975 directive on Less Favoured Areas that aimed to ensure continued production particularly in mountainous areas and thereby prevent their depopulation, narratives did not shift significantly until the late 1980s (Matthews 2013: 4f.; Council of the European Union 1975). Crucially, from the 1992 MacSharry reform, these issues were highlighted in a more concerted way through the concept of multifunctional agriculture (Lefebvre et al. 2015: 2088; 2094). In short:

Multifunctionality asserts that agricultural production produces a range of valued outputs including not only food but also environmental protection, landscape preservation, rural vitality and other public goods (Matthews 2013: 7).

Multifunctional agriculture encompasses measures such as cross-compliance with environmental protection or initiatives such as the EU's nature protection area network Natura 2000, as well as rural development measures outlined below (Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Articles 28–30). Hence, multifunctionality signalled that agriculture not only provides food but serves rural areas and communities by preserving their traditions and guaranteeing the survival of living, diverse rural landscapes (Petrick & Weingarten 2005: 2; Van Zanten et al. 2013: 5; 7; Schure & Arts 2012: 5).

Some commentators contend that the multifunctionality concept was primarily developed to shield the CAP from concessions in international trade negotiations, reiterating that external dynamics were vital for the policy's development within the EU (Garzon 2006: 124; 131f.; Daugbjerg & Roederer-Rynning 2014: 49ff.; Matthews 2013: 7). This becomes particularly clear when considering the connection of multifunctionality to a "European model of agriculture" (Fischler 1999: n.p.; see also Garzon 2006: 129f.). It was argued that in while in the European Community there was an expectation for agriculture to provide public goods beyond food, this was not the case in other countries, providing European producers with an undue disadvantage

³⁵ Due to limited scope, this section only gives a broad overview of the central tenets of multifunctionality. For a more comprehensive review of the discourse see especially Garzon 2006 and Lovec 2016.

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(Potter & Tilzey 2005: 590; Petrick & Weingarten 2005: 12; Daugbjerg & Swinbank 2016: 272). The legitimacy of this narrative was in turn questioned by non-EU countries, and, as CAP support was increasingly decoupled, its use by negotiators on the international level decreased (Garzon 2006: 132; Matthews 2013: 7). Nonetheless, the European model of agriculture concept demonstrates that the EU perceives and promotes itself as exceptional when it comes to agriculture and rurality, laying the basis for the Europeanisation of non-members' rural spaces through the external governance of CAP instruments. It also reflects in the teacher-student attitude the EU has taken for rural development's external governance, as will be explained in Chapter 7.

Next to responding to external pressures, multifunctionality was utilised as the legitimisation of a for various reasons increasingly internally contested CAP. Crucially, new actors entered a debate that previously was dominated solely by agri-food interests (Lovec 2016: 3; Garzon 2006: 121). Non-governmental actors concerned with the environment, animal welfare and adverse effects on developing countries criticised the CAP's productivist and protectionist character, while anti-globalisation movements emphasised the importance of local traditions threatened by agricultural standardisation (Potter & Tilzey 2005: 590; Cunha & Swinbank 2011: 12f.; Garzon 2006: 31f.). Moreover, food scares such as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy emboldened consumer organizations to lobby for CAP reform (Garzon 2006: 122f.; Ackrill 2000: 187). Therefore, as agriculture's economic significance particularly in the 'old' Member States decreased, the multifunctionality concept became necessary to defend the CAP's relevance while recapturing public support (Garzon 2006: 124; European Commission 2012: 2; Lovec 2016: 144f.). Arguably, multifunctional agriculture appealed to a large diversity of interests within the EU, from farmers to environmental NGOs and consumer organizations, implying that it was largely successful in restoring the CAP's legitimacy and ensuring its survival (Garzon 2006: 136).

Particularly in more recent reforms, the concept was adopted into an even broader spatial discourse on sustainable rural development (Garzon 2006: 131; Lovec 2016: 137; Potter & Thomson 2010: 216f.; European Commission 2010). As will be argued, although these discourses were utilised primarily to gain legitimacy and not to overturn the CAP's base as farm support policy, they were vital in introducing a broader

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concern beyond a productivist agriculture paradigm into the policy. Corresponding to multifunctional agriculture, the broader and more explicit focus on rural development can be described as an attempt to redefine the previously purely agricultural CAP and was indeed regarded as its main future direction (Gorton et al. 2009: 1308).

On the CAP's rural development dimension, the Cork Declarations of 1996 and 2016, drafted at meetings of EU and Member State representatives, as well as stakeholders such as environmental NGOs and farmers' unions,³⁶ are perceived as the guiding principles (Garzon 2006: 129; Potter & Tilzey 2005: 590; Daugbjerg & Swinbank 2016: 272). To illustrate the move towards a broader engagement with rural spaces, the 1996 Declaration states that "rural development must address all socio-economic sectors in the countryside" (European Conference on Rural Development 1996: 1). The Declaration maintained that rural areas were in a unique position to respond to European citizens growing attention to "quality of life" issues such as leisure, health, safety, and personal development (European Conference on Rural Development 1996: 1). Similarly, it argued that "rural areas [...] are characterised by a unique cultural, economic and social fabric, an extraordinary patchwork of activities, and a great variety of landscapes" (European Conference on Rural Development 1996: 1). Through these statements, the Cork Declaration explicitly moved the CAP beyond the conceptualisation of rural spaces as synonymous with spaces of agricultural production outlined in Chapter 4.

Further, it stipulated a ten-point agenda for EU rural development including amongst others the call to strengthen the importance of sustainable rural development on the European agenda and increase its resources to reverse rural out-migration, combat poverty, and stimulate employment (European Conference on Rural Development 1996: 2). Additionally, an integrated, multi-disciplinary, multisectoral, and therefore spatial rural policy was supported (European Conference on Rural Development 1996: 2f.). Following a similar focus on the sustainability of rural areas, the second Declaration of 2016 voiced concern

about rural exodus and youth drain and the need to ensure that rural areas and communities (countryside, farms, villages, and small towns) remain attractive places to live and work by improving access to services and opportunities for rural citizens and

³⁶ The Declarations are not formally endorsed by agricultural ministers. In fact, Wakeford argued that a survey of the (in 2010) 27 rural development ministers would not reveal a consensus about the desired outcomes of the EU rural development policy (Wakeford 2010: 39).

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fostering entrepreneurship in traditional rural domains as well as new sectors of the economy (European Commission 2016a: 1).

This focus on the ‘rural exodus’ and the consequent call for places to become or remain attractive are important for two reasons. First, rural depopulation and the potential of the two instruments to retain people in ‘their areas’ has been voiced both by the EU, the academic literature on the instruments, and governmental actors in Georgia as highlighted later. It also invokes the dimension of place by making spaces more ‘attractive’ to bind otherwise exiting populations. Similarly, the policies should build on and give value to the identity of rural areas whilst also enhancing social inclusion, local development and strengthen rural-urban linkages (European Commission 2016a: 2f.). Importantly, these themes resonate with both GIs and LEADER and resurface in the empirical analysis of the two instruments’ implementation in Georgia.

What is striking in both declarations is not only their connection to a multifunctional idea of rural spaces but also their engagement with notions of community and rural identity. For instance, the declarations refer to cultural identity as part of rural landscapes, and “the creativity and solidarity of rural communities” that can be harnessed” (European Conference on Rural Development 1996: 3). This image of a “unique cultural and social fabric” (European Conference on Rural Development: 1) has implications for LEADER and GI, as their consequences specifically relate to the assumed homogeneity of rural spaces and neglect differentiated power dynamics in terms of land and territory.

Following the declarations, Regulation (EU) 1305/2013 currently represents the main legal text on rural development support through the EADRD (Ragonnaud 2017: 1; Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Art. 1). Reiterating the theme of rural spaces, EAFRD aims to

contribute to the development of a Union agricultural sector that is more territorially and environmentally balanced, climate-friendly and resilient and competitive and innovative. It shall also contribute to the development of rural territories (Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Art. 3).

Therefore, in the 2014–2020 framework, the Rural Development Policy follows six priorities including promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction, and economic development (Ragonnaud 2017: 1f.; Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Title 1 Chapter 2). To receive EAFRD co-financing³⁷, Member States or their regions

³⁷ Up to 85% EU co-financing rate in least-developed regions, outermost regions and smaller Aegean islands (Ragonnaud 2017: 3).

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must draft rural development programmes, selecting from a list of options (Ragonnaud 2017: 1f.; Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Article 7; Gorton et al. 2009: 1308). These include measures such as trainings, physical investment e.g. in infrastructure, renovation of villages, setting up producer groups, and, importantly, local development support under the LEADER programme (Ragonnaud 2017: 2f.; full list in Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Title 3 Chapter 1 and Annex IV).

Even though multifunctionality and rural development feature frequently in EU narratives, authors have questioned whether they can indeed be attributed to a meaningful shift from a productivist, agricultural paradigm of the CAP or whether they were merely devices to superficially diverge internal and external criticism. For instance, Daugbjerg and Swinbank's central argument is that despite the outlined changes, concepts such as multifunctionality never challenged the CAP's core function of supporting farm incomes³⁸ (Daugbjerg & Swinbank 2016: 267; 275; see also Daugbjerg and Roederer-Rynning 2014: 38; Zschache 2015: 257). Similarly, Potter and Tilzey argue that rather than representing a shift to post-productivist rural spaces and agriculture, the CAP continues to favour a productivist regime (Potter & Tilzey 2005: 581; 595). There is certainly evidence to support this argument. For instance, in 2017 Commissioner Hogan argued that the 'new CAP' would emphasise digitization, research, innovation and precision agriculture, while not mentioning rural development (EU Agriculture 2017: n.p.). This direction was mirrored in the 2018 Agricultural Outlook Conference, DG AGRI's main annual event, which was boycotted by major NGOs for its digital agro-productivist focus and lack of engagement especially with environmental issues (Birdlife International, European Environmental Bureau, Greenpeace, WWF, Slow Food Europe, Compassion in World Farming 2018: 1).

Moreover, scholars deny any paradigmatic shift based on the relative financing for Pillar I and Pillar II measures (Dwyer et al. 2002: 13; Matthews 2013: 2; Matthews 2017: 18; Daugbjerg & Roederer-Rynning 2014: 42). For the 2014–2020 period, the EAFRD is allocated circa EUR 90 billion, and currently funds 118 Rural Development Programmes³⁹ (Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Article 58; Ragonnaud

³⁸ There is of course also a debate on whether the measures directed at rural areas are effective at all e.g. Brümmer & Koester 2004; Renwick et al. 2013; Matthews 2017.

³⁹ This includes 20 national programmes and the regional programmes of eight member states (Ragonnaud 2017: 2; at the time of writing: 28 Member States)

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2017: 2; European Commission 2013b: 3). This stands in contrast to the circa EUR 300 billion Pillar I ceiling (European Commission 2013b: 3). Although rural concerns are not solely tied to Pillar II, and even though the funding for rural development is still high compared to other EU policies, this difference is considerable. An additional challenge of the alleged paradigm shift within the CAP towards a broader engagement with rural spaces pertains to the distribution of rural development measures themselves. In particular, scholars highlight that even Pillar II expenditure continues to revolve around agricultural production (Buller 2002; Shucksmith et al. 2005: 152; Lovec 2016: 129). To illustrate, data from 2016 revealed that the three most selected options from the EAFRD ‘menu’ related to agricultural production: physical investment, agri-environment measures, and payments for areas subject to natural or other specific constraints (Ragonnaud 2017: 3).

Despite the continued financial dominance of agricultural and productivist concerns, the centrality of broader rural space concerns in EU discourse is striking. It certainly is important enough to warrant a closer look at rural development in EU external governance. First, the mere existence of a strong rural development narrative would have been unimaginable in the early years of the CAP. Therefore, the shift towards multifunctional agriculture and rural development did challenge the previously astonishingly durable policy paradigm of productivist agriculture (Lovec 2016: 3; Garzon 2006: 121; 124). Indeed, Matthews argues that despite the dominance of Pillar I funding, there “appeared to be a logic in the CAP reform process whereby resources would be gradually transferred [...] to [...] Pillar 2” (Matthews 2013: 2; see also Gorton et al. 2009: 1309). Connectedly, EU expenditure for rural development increased significantly from 4% of the total CAP budget in the 1990s to 25% in the beginning of the 2010s, and even though this is still dwarfed by Pillar I expenditure, reflects the growing strategic and societal demand for the CAP to address challenges of rural spaces (Lefebvre et al. 2015: 2094). Similarly, Daugbjerg and Swinbank argue that while funding for measures directed to broader rural space concerns was very limited, “the signalling effect that the CAP was more than just farm support was considerable” (Daugbjerg & Swinbank 2016: 272). As elaborated by Potter and Tilzey:

It is [...] as a counternarrative to the neoliberal vision for European agriculture that a stronger, and more environmentally and socially specific, version of the multifunctionality discourse has gained momentum in recent times (Potter & Tilzey 2005: 590).

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To summarise, while policy makers continued to support the reproduction of productivist agricultural spaces, they also challenged them through the concepts of and policies around multifunctional agriculture and rural development (Potter & Tilzey 2005: 596). Therefore, the CAP today cannot be characterized as merely an agricultural, but as a rural policy with remarkably strong spatial narratives. Importantly, it is in the area of rural development that the EU is particularly active in its external actions, especially as measures such as direct income support for farmers has proved challenging for post-Soviet agricultural contexts.

5.3 The failures of the CAP in EU enlargement

The external effects of the CAP's subsidy regime, price policy, or more recently direct payments have been extensively discussed for instance regarding developing countries' economies (Boysen et al. 2016; Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation EuropeAid 2013; Matthews 2008), land use (Renwick et al. 2013; Meyfroid et al. 2010; Eickhout et al. 2007; Khatun 2011), as well as biodiversity and livelihoods (Schure & Arts 2012). Yet, little attention has been paid to how exactly the EU governs one of its central policies externally. In fact, it is precisely because of aforementioned failure of protecting an EU-exceptionalist 'European model of agriculture' at the international level that the EU had to shift its efforts from the international level to bilateral efforts.

One avenue through which the EU expanded its agricultural policy was of course EU enlargement. How the CAP has been exported to the newer and especially post-Soviet member states has been highly criticised. This is mostly due to the lack of adaptation of the CAP to the vastly different local contexts, resulting in an ill-suited application. Even though agricultural sectors and histories differ between post-Soviet states, this section therefore gives some indications regarding the problems that will later be observed for the CAP's external governance in Georgia. While enlargement has been argued to have at least partly motivated CAP reform in the 1990s, the contexts of the newer member states especially in Central and Eastern Europe were insufficiently accommodated, which was a result of these countries not being represented in CAP reform negotiations (Gorton et al. 2009: 1305; 1308, see also Petrick & Weingarten 2005: 3; Lovec 2016: 126ff.).

The CAP in turn failed to address underlying structural problems of rural spaces in Central- and Eastern Europe. Neither did it acknowledge the vastly different socio-

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economic conditions compared to the EU-15, as well as significant divergences in farm structures, and inadequate bureaucratic capacities to implement rural development measures that were novel to countries which previously either completely neglected rural development or governed rural spaces in a centralised top-down manner contrary to the EU's decentralised approach (Gorton et al. 2009: 1306; see also Brümmer & Koester 2004: 19f.). In the design of rural development programmes, various contributions note that they are farm-centric, rather than addressing a variety of rural concerns (Gorton et al. 2009; Râmniceanu & Ackrill 2007: 428f.). This has been explained by the lack of influence of rural development departments at Ministries of Agriculture, a lack of engagement with interests outside of the agricultural sector, for instance from environmental NGOs, as well as the general lack of experiences with bottom-up rural development programmes (Gorton et al. 2009: 1314). Even though this thesis engages with rural development measures, rather than policies such as direct income support, it is noteworthy that also the adoption of these strictly agricultural instruments was problematic in the newer member states, given that they were originally designed to support Western-European medium-sized farms and proved inadequate for post-Soviet farm structures characterised either by large state farms (e.g. Czech Republic) or fragmented small farms (e.g. Poland, Baltics; Gorton et al. 2009: 1312). In its relations to non-member states, measures such as direct income support are usually not included precisely because supporting a minimum income for a large number of fragmented farms under one hectare in size is perceived as an insurmountable strain on countries' often already limited agricultural budgets.

Given this failure to adapt its rural policies to the realities in the newer member states of Central and Eastern Europe and the absence of meaningful implementation of rural development concerns by these countries, it is somewhat surprising that the EU, as outlined in this thesis, seems to not have changed direction when it comes to the external governance of its rural development measures. Despite the challenges of enlargement and struggles on the international level, the EU continues to bilaterally govern the policy externally while assuming a simplistic inside-outside policy export. Connectedly, the literature presented in the subsequent sections demonstrates that also the application of LEADER and GIs has resulted in various unintended consequences for rural spaces that were left unaddressed prior to their subsequent expansion to non-member states.

5.4 LEADER

The LEADER programme is the instrument that can perhaps most clearly be associated with the CAP's broadened attention towards rural spaces. Initiated in 1991, it has been expanded in scope from particularly disadvantaged regions to all rural areas and been renewed continually⁴⁰ (Ray 2000: 164; European Commission 2017b: 8). Since the 2007–2013 period, LEADER must be integrated into all national and regional rural development programmes and at least five percent of EAFRD funding allocated to it (European Commission 2006: 5; 17; European Commission 2014a: 5; Dax et al. 2016: 65). This obligation not only signifies the importance attached to the instrument, but also suggests a hierarchical element in LEADER's internal governance, meaning that a similar dynamic would be expected by institutional external governance explanations, as hypothesised in Chapter 6. Further emphasising its stellar reputation, in the current 2014–2020 period LEADER was integrated into the European Structural and Investment (ESI) funds framework⁴¹ as the blueprint for all EU-internal development policies (European Commission 2014a).

Broadly, LEADER's idea revolves around mobilising local rural communities to design rural development actions. This design is expected to result in more efficient and sustainable solutions because local actors are assumed to not only know best which actions are required but also feel responsible for the development of 'their' area (European Commission 2006: 5: see also High & Nemes 2007: 108). Therefore, the programme, rather than prescribing a fixed set of measures to be implemented, sets procedural guidelines in its aim to be decidedly 'bottom up' (Kopoteva & Nikula 2014:103; Ray 1998a: 80). This idea, as well as LEADER's connection to the broader engagement with rural spaces, are reflected in the first Cork Declaration:

The emphasis must be on participation and a 'bottom up' approach which harnesses the creativity and solidarity of rural communities. Rural development must be local and community-driven within a coherent European framework (European Conference on Rural Development 1996: 3).

LEADER became identified by seven core features:

- (1) area-based local development strategies,

⁴⁰ LEADER II from 1994 – 2003; LEADER+ from 2000 – 2006; integrated into RDP since 2007; For the 2014 – 2020 period, LEADER is part of Regulation 1305/2013 (Art. 42 – 44) and Local Action Groups are also referred to in Regulation EU 1303/2013 (Art. 42).

⁴¹ Including the EAFRD, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

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- (2) its bottom-up approach, with a wide range of local actors participating in decision-making about those strategies,
- (3) its coordination by Local Action Groups (LAGs)
- (4) facilitating innovation,
- (5) integrated and multi-sectoral actions,
- (6) networking to share best practices,
- (7) and cooperation in joint projects within the EU or with groups in non-member states (European Commission 2006: 8 – 14; European Commission 2014a: 3; High & Nemes 2007: 107).

As their central coordinating mechanism, LAGs decide the direction and content of the local development strategy as well as which local projects to fund (European Commission 2006: 10; 16). LAGs should equally include actors from local administrations, local businesspeople and ‘the broader public’, including civil society, and should be representative of local interests across socioeconomic sectors (European Commission 2006: 10). As its baseline, no more than 50% of members voting on funding decisions should be from one of the sectors (European Commission 2006: 10). At the time of writing, there were over 3,000 Local Action Groups in the EU, relatively proportionate to both population size and rural areas (European Network for Rural Development 2020: n.p.). The countries with the most LAGs are Germany (348 LAGs), France (337), Poland (324), Spain (284), Romania (261), and Italy (235), with Malta (3), Cyprus (4), and Luxembourg (4) on the other end of the spectrum (European Network for Rural Development 2020: n.p.).

Overall, LEADER is presented as the posterchild for CAP rural development, with the EU citing high acceptance all over Europe (European Commission 2014a: 1) and calling it a “rural champion” (European Commission 2017b: 22). Some academics also cite its widespread positive reception among local actors (Granberg et al. 2016a: 10), its importance in local politics (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 66) and refer to it as having a “pioneering role in a new type of governance” (Granberg et al. 2016: 1). Importantly, while the specific case selection rationales were outlined in the introduction, it can be reiterated that LEADER resonates with various important themes of this thesis. First, it is founded on the assumption that people are intrinsically connected to a rural space and take responsibility over it, resounding the concept of place. Second, arguably more than any other instrument, LEADER reflects the CAP’s change from a purely

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productivist rationale to one that includes broader themes of rural development. Therefore, it is particularly apt in capturing the dynamics outlined previously in this chapter. Third, it is implemented at the local level rather than by central governments, meaning an analysis of its consequences on the ground is necessary. Lastly, relating to the EU external actions literature, it reflects the narratives on local ownership that have been evaluated by the literature on the EU's promotion of the concept of resilience. Given this local ownership dimension, it also makes it an interesting case to study when it comes to EU external governance, especially its modes and therefore its driving actors.

5.4.1 Exporting LEADER

Importantly, and making it relevant for a thesis on EU external governance, the EU started to export the instrument following LEADER's widespread perceived success. In fact, former Agricultural Commissioner Hogan stated that:

LEADER [...] has been recognized *worldwide* as best practice when it comes to empowering local communities to actively design and implement their own development strategies (European Commission 2017a: 3; italics added).

Overall, the programme has been implemented in (former) non-member states through four ways. First, new member states after 1990, especially in the 2004 and 2007 enlargement rounds were introduced to the LEADER model primarily through the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD), before implementing LEADER gradually upon accession (for an in-depth description see Râmniceanu & Ackrill 2007). Since 2007, some candidate countries have been promoting LEADER through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development (IPARD), e.g. by establishing LAGs and implementing small projects, co-financed by the EU (European Commission 2012b: n.p.; European Commission 2017a: 9f.). In the 2014–2020 period, Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey received assistance under IPARD.

However, a second group is more relevant for this thesis and involves countries within the European Neighbourhood Policy that implement ENPARD (European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development), although thus far only Georgia and more recently Moldova have implemented the LEADER method. While ENPARD Georgia aims to more broadly support the improvement of living conditions in rural areas as well as rural economic development, it includes very distinct LEADER-features, including the establishment of Local Action Groups, their

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development of Local Development Strategies, as well as the participation in LEADER-conferences and workshops. Despite the challenges of enlargement mentioned previously, LEADER in the EaP is expected by EU officials to follow the same implementation and present the same consequences as its implementation in old and new member states (Interviews 1; 2; 5).

Third, the LEADER model has been exported through research projects in individual locations. For instance, researchers at La Plata University in Argentina introduced the LEADER model in Punta Indio (Fernández et al. 2017). More prominently, such a research project has been carried out in the Russian Ladoga region (Kopoteva & Nikula 2014). Finally, LEADER has been expanded to non-member states through transnational joint projects in which an EU-LAG cooperates with a non-EU group e.g. to organise exchange visits or specific projects (European Commission 2006: 14; Ray 2002: 282).⁴²

As mentioned in the introduction, the EU is also currently planning to externally govern the programme in member states of the African Union. Thus, the EU-funded Task Force Rural Africa in their report “An Africa-Europe Agenda for Rural Development” argued that

Europe can share its own experience with the EU LEADER programme, which has proven to be a successful initiative for local and regional development in Europe over the past 30 years (Arnold et al. 2019: 65).

To summarise, LEADER is a highly ambitious programme in particular because of its broad focus on rural development, but also on democratization and the improvement of local governance or even to transform the “local economic and social system” (Fernández et al. 2017: 158; Papadopoulou et al. 2011: 663; Gorton et al. 2009: 1314). Thus, the following section reviews previous case studies regarding the observed consequences for rural spaces along the dimensions of rurality, control over and relations to spaces.

5.4.2 Overcoming remoteness and constructing local identity

First, LEADER has been, albeit rarely, put into connection with the concept of rurality and especially related assumptions on periphery and remoteness. For instance, LEADER has been credited with increasing connectivity between rural spaces

⁴² However, these partnerships are rare due to financial and administrative obstacles (Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Art. 44; European Network for Rural Development Contact Point 2014: 17; 78; 94; 130; European Commission 2006: 14).

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themselves. This feature of LEADER, to overcome periphery, is part of its design, as the networking component of different LAGs is assumed to forge “links between people, projects and rural areas and so can help overcome the isolation faced by some rural regions” (European Commission 2006: 13). For the case of Romania, researchers expected both the decrease of economic disparities between rural and urban areas via rural economic development, as well as a higher connectivity between villages through LEADER’s networking component (Badea et al. 2015: 370; Alecu et al. 2015: 376).

In its application in Spain, it was observed that LEADER indeed played a crucial role in creating an instrument for inter-municipal cooperation, which did not exist previously: “It was practically the first time that neighbouring municipalities had a forum for discussion and debate about common problems and aspirations” (Esparcia et al. 2016: 42). These dynamics of overcoming remoteness and connectivity also speak to notions of the frontier that views remote spaces outside the centre’s control (Hall 2013): because locals are the central decision-making actors over rural development actions, power is decentralised. Thereby, LEADER has been argued to shape territory and subvert remoteness at the ‘rural frontier’ through a sense of independent empowerment that could be particularly valuable for regions “where the self-confidence of the local population has been undermined by centuries of cultural and political repression” (Ray 1998a: 86). Similarly, it has been argued that it not only fosters connectivity between people but that the programme promotes the Europeanisation of rural inhabitants, which in turn would garner support for the spatial components of the CAP (Ray 2002: 283ff.). This dynamic is particularly interesting especially for LEADER’s external applications and one crucial observation in Georgia, as explained in Chapter 7.

As mentioned, the central idea of LEADER is to tap into feelings of ownership and responsibility towards an area. Therefore, it is closely connected to the concept of place: the attachment of locals to ‘their’ area is expected to result in increased commitment, better knowledge of needs and in turn more effective solutions. Various case studies also highlight consequences of LEADER on place. For instance, Ray (1998a) found that LEADER made people feel better about their area and increased their sense of belonging. Echoing this, Kopoteva & Nikula found in that the Russian Ladoga LAGs were successful in rallying locals around a common interest, sometimes even without external funding (Kopoteva & Nikula 2014: 95; 109). In Greece,

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participants understood themselves as important stakeholders and contributors of local knowledge, evocating feelings of pride (Papadopoulou et al. 2011: 671).

Connected to this, local identity is expected to flourish within the programme (Ray 1998a: 80; Shucksmith 2010 210). However, in some cases constructing local identity is required as a first step to even establish the LAG. Where LAGs cut across local administrative and cultural boundaries, creating a community narrative is necessary to receive LEADER funding, although it may indeed lend “deeper meaning to individual and community development” (Ray 1998a: 82; 84f.). This construction of community and local identity can in itself have positive and negative consequences. While in Hungary and Russia, the consequence of a strengthened local identity revitalised local culture (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 74; Granberg et al. 2016b: 121), it had more problematic consequences elsewhere. For instance, Ray highlights that the identity construction of LAGS in the Scottish Isles was based on historical revisionism, which supposedly represented ‘better’ values than those of modernity or English culture and borrowed techniques from ethnic nationalism (Ray 1998a: 82; 84). Generally, it has been noted that spatial identity risks excluding those not subscribing to it:

The very process of symbolic construction of culture-territories will exclude and disempower some residents of these localities if they do not feel affinity with the constructed local identity (Shucksmith 2000: 210).

This exclusionary potential ties into the dimension of territory as discussed below.

5.4.3 Land and territory: the expectation of empowerment

On the dimension of land, a clear example of how LEADER shaped spaces was the funding for projects that create public goods, and specifically the building of so-called community spaces that benefitted large parts of the population rather than e.g. serving specific business interests (Shucksmith 2000: 208; Kearney et al. 1994). In the Russian Ladoga initiative, most projects centred around the construction of e.g. playgrounds, cultural clubs, museums, etc. that could replace public spaces which had previously closed or fallen into disrepair (Granberg et al. 2016b: 121). While these community spaces have implications for the concept of rurality as spaces often neglected by central governments, what stands out here is the willingness of locals to pool resources⁴³ in order to create public property. Precisely because the authors note a mentality of

⁴³ The LAGs did not have sufficient funding for the projects.

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passivity, due to a long history of central state control (Granberg et al. 2016b: 123), it is notable that these community spaces were funded through local activism.

The strongest expectations from LEADER arose on the dimension of territory. As set out by the Commission, LAGs should include, in equal parts, participants from municipal administrations, local businesses, and civil society or the wider population that should be engaged in inclusive decision-making through all stages of the programme (European Commission 2006: 9; European Commission 2014a: 3). Ideally, this should lead to the transformation of local power relations and facilitate local democratic learning (Zago 2014: 1; Papadopoulou et al. 2011: 663; Granberg et al. 2016a: 8; Nousainen 2016: 100; Ray 2002: 280). The motivation to empower a wide range of locals and to transform local power relations is particularly well illustrated by a quote from an EU publication on IPARD:

At its heart, the LEADER method is not just about delivering EU funding; it aims to mobilise women, young people, private and public stakeholders, the social partners and the non-governmental sector [...] to participate actively in the development of their local rural areas (European Commission 2017a: 2).

Indeed, when considering how LEADER shapes territory, various case studies observed shifts towards more inclusive decision making. In Finland, it indeed appeared to empower people that were previously not at the centre of local politics (Nousainen 2016: 96). Similarly, in the Ladoga initiative, the largest group of volunteers were “ordinary people” and particularly women which in turn were argued to cave new spaces of agency in the “traditional Russian patriarchal culture” (Kopoteva & Nikula 2014: 110). Mirroring the CAP’s general attention shift towards rural areas, Kovách and Csurgó observed that most actors in one of the investigated Hungarian LAGs were members of local civic organizations and non-agricultural enterprises (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 61). In Greece, compared to traditional top-down rural development programmes, LEADER was described as less hierarchical, meant that actors were more communicative and cooperated better across sectors (Papadopoulou et al. 2011: 663–671). Similarly, Ray describes a feeling of participatory democracy and the possibility to directly impact EU policymaking developed in the area (Ray 1998a: 85).

However, whether LEADER indeed challenges existing power relations remains an empirical question. Often, local elites dominate the processes, and in turn exclude marginalised groups (Shucksmith 2000: 210). To illustrate, in West Brittany, local councillors and local economic players were central to the LAG, while in Denmark

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LAG members were mostly older, highly formally educated men (Ray 1998a: 81; Thuesen 2010: 31). In Hungary, some LAGs were controlled by “local notables”, including local politicians (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 65-69). In Greece, while it has been observed that LEADER implies less hierarchical power dynamics than traditional development programmes, LAG hierarchies have been observed to significantly depend on informal ties, opening spaces for local elites who likely have central positions in these networks (Papadopoulou et al. 2011: 669). Rather than challenging local power structures, LEADER frequently confirms them:

Many informants emphasise that, because of the political interest of the president of the LAG local governments with a politically left or not-strong right interest have a better position in the LAG (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 69).

The potential capture by political interests or utilization of the LAG to further individual political aspirations has also been highlighted in Spain (Esparcia et al. 2016: 46), Finland (Nouisainen 2016: 104), Poland (Michalcewicz-Kaniowska et al. 2017), and Estonia (Aunapuu-Lents 2013: 141).

Indeed, this elite dominance follows from the design of LEADER itself. While LEADER is arguably less bureaucratic and more flexible than traditional rural development programmes (Papadopoulou et al. 2011: 670), it nonetheless needs to conform to EU rules in terms of funding. Therefore, while LEADER aims to ensure that “especially those in vulnerable areas with limited capacity are enabled to fully participate” (European Commission 2014a: 5), the required technical, administrative and social skills are held by a limited number of actors (Kopoteva & Nikula 2014: 105; Dax et al. 2016: 58; 66; Granberg et al. 2016b: 123, Sykała et al. 2015: 16; Fernández 2017: 168). For instance, this issue has been noted in Germany (Pollermann et al. 2017: 2), the UK (Shucksmith 2013), Ireland (Commins & Keane 1995), and Bulgaria (European Commission 2017a: 15). In this respect, Csurgó and Kovách have referred to an emerging ‘project class’: English-speaking university graduates involved in LEADER whose main motivation is to further career aspirations through employment with an EU programme rather than interest in rural development per se (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 54). This argument has been supported by Maurel’s analysis of LEADER in Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic which observed the dominance of project managers hired by LAGs over the development process, as well as practices of paternalism and the formation of interest groups that monopolise the access to grants (Maurel 2008: 528).

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Connecting both territory and land, because projects have to be co-funded by local actors, wealthier local businesses were observed to benefit particularly (Ray 1998a: 83; see also Pollermann et al. 2017: 4 for Germany; Kopoteva & Nikula 2014: 108 for Russia; European Commission 2017a: 9; 15). To illustrate, in Ireland it was noted that LAGs merely supplemented funds for actors already in the process of starting or expanding their enterprises (Commins and Keane 1994). Overall, participation “strongly depends on the financial capacity of actors. Actors with capacity have an important involvement [...] but without capacity they are crowded out” (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 68).

As local notables and members of the ‘project class’ occupy positions of power within the LAG, they close spaces for participation of people not belonging to this group or their network (Shucksmith 2000: 215; Granberg et al. 2016b: 112; 114). While middle-aged, educated men are frequently observed to dominate LAGs, the excluded groups vary on a case-by-case basis (Pollermann et al. 2017: 4; Thuesen 2010). That said, women were frequently observed as lacking access to LEADER decision-making. Across various countries, LAG boards have fewer than 25% female members (Thuesen & Derkzen 2016; Pollermann et al. 2017: 5). The lack of female participation in LEADER has also been observed in detail in Spain (Esparcia et al. 2016: 46) as well as in Denmark, where women are less likely to participate in LAGs in more conservative and remote areas (Thuesen & Derkzen 2016: 143; see also Thuesen 2010).

Again, the women who participate were themselves likely to be part of local elites and/or highly educated. In the case of the Ladoga LAGs, female participants were generally middle-class, and often teachers with high social capital (Kopoteva & Nikula 2014: 109; Granberg et al. 2016b: 121). In the cases where female participation was comparably high, it was observed that LEADER was simply perceived as too insignificant for men, especially from the business sector, to participate (Granberg et al. 2016b: 119). In fact, Bock argues that this marginalization of women is a deeper running thread in EU rural development policy that “adds something for women” rather than engaging in-depth with local gender structures at the root of non-participation (Bock 2015: 731; 733). For instance, due to the required representation of local administrations and businesses, in which women are often underrepresented, they are excluded from LAGs (Bock 2015: 736). At the same time, women may be

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wary of the male dominated political culture, leading to self-exclusion (Bock 2015: 736f.).

Another frequently excluded group are young people, again contradicting the expectations voiced by the EU and arguably undermining LEADER's aim to make rural spaces more attractive particularly for younger people, in turn preventing their migration to cities and abroad. However, case studies observed that young people were excluded from LEADER and often perceived as problems that need to be controlled rather than empowered (Shucksmith 2000: 209; Esparcia et al. 2016 for Spain). Finally, there has been work on the non-inclusion of ethnic minorities as even if LAG projects targeted them directly, they were not included in the decision-making (Morell 2016).

As its central feature, LEADER is expected to not only alter power relations within but also across spaces by giving local areas more autonomy vis-à-vis central governments, as well as the EU itself. For instance, the Commission only sets procedural guidelines with an "ethos of much latitude for local discretion in implementation" (Ray 2000: 165; Shucksmith 2010: 3f.; Granberg et al. 2016a: 2; Goodwin 1998: 6). At the same time, rural areas potentially attain greater input into policies aimed at them, "extending and deepening the relationship between the sub-state level and the Commission" (Ray 1998a: 80). However, not only does that mean that the national level essentially may rid itself of its responsibility for rural development, pushing it onto municipalities and private actors (Shucksmith 2010: 4; Kopoteva & Nikula 2014: 105), some authors have challenged this notion of decentralization in LEADER (Ray 2000: 167; Ray 2002: 279; Granberg et al. 2016a: 9). Often, rather than empowering local actors, the role of the central government remains crucial and LAGs' autonomy varies depending on institutions⁴⁴ and attitudes towards local development (European Commission 2006: 12; Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 54). Granberg et al. summarise:

The bottom-up approach of LEADER is heavily emphasised in the literature. In its practical implementation, however, LEADER also has an important top-down component because of the strong role of the government in funding, planning and setting the rules for national LEADERS (Granberg et al. 2016a: 8).

While present in Spain (Esparcia et al. 2016) and Wales (Shucksmith 2000: 212f.), this issue was particularly pronounced in post-Soviet contexts considering long traditions

⁴⁴ E.g. importance/history of a rural development department within the Ministry of Agriculture.

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of strong, centralised control, the deep lack of trust in any governmental institutions. This has been noted for instance in the Russian case (Kopoteva & Nikula 2014: 109; Oedl-Wieser et al. 2016: 49). In Poland, local governments perceived non-governmental organizations as rivals rather than partners (Furmankiewicz 2009) and Hungarian state offices' decision-making on LEADER grants was described as overly bureaucratic (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 56f). As a result, LAG participants perceived themselves as mere recipients of funding rather than as central decision makers (Csurgó & Kovách 2016: 62f.; 73f.), contradicting not only the expectation of decentralization but also that of ownership. Indeed, potential obstructions by the central government were anticipated for Georgia as well (Oedl-Wieser et al. 2016: 49), which makes it even more puzzling that the instruments' design was not adapted.

Clearly then, LEADER has had mixed consequences on all dimensions of rural space, i.e. rurality, place, territory, and, to a lesser degree, land. It has been frequently argued that the programme makes rural spaces more attractive, by alleviating a sense of backwardness and isolation. LEADER also tapped into notions of place by assuming that locals feel responsible for 'their' area. For the dimension of land, the programme is predominantly mentioned for the construction of so-called community places and profits for local entrepreneurs. On the dimension of territory, LEADER was assumed to have the most significant consequences, expected to empower specifically marginalised groups, as well as decentralise decision-making within the state. Yet, previous research has found mixed results. While LEADER indeed may be less top-down than traditional rural development programmes, LAGs are often dominated by 'local notables', or highly formally educated, English-speaking members. Given these differentiated findings across all cases, including variations across post-Soviet states reiterates the need to study consequences on a case-by-case basis.

5.5 Geographical Indications

Broadly, Geographical Indications⁴⁵ protect foods and drinks of a delimited geographical area from external counterfeits and appropriations of their name. Popular examples within the EU are Parma Ham and Champagne, which can only be produced under that name in respective geographical areas in Italy and France. Products related to a certain geographical location have become increasingly popular in the EU, with a

⁴⁵ Other terms include Labels of Origin, Appellation of Origin, Designation for Origin, Denomination of Origin. The thesis uses GI as a blanket term throughout to limit confusion, except for when the distinction is important.

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2017 Eurobarometer survey indicating that 75% of respondents find knowing the geographic area from which their food comes important (European Commission 2018b: 95). The increasing popularity of GI products reflects a broader trend towards the so-called relocalization of food:

Placing or localizing food and drink is our bulwark against the incredible (and increasingly menacing) unknowns of our independent global food system. Locating food makes it ours (Trubek 2008: 12; see also Lambin et al. 2014: 133; Goodman 2003: 2).

The EU itself, in Regulation 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs notes that:

citizens and consumers in the Union increasingly demand quality as well as traditional products. They are also concerned to maintain the diversity of the agricultural production in the Union. This generates a demand for agricultural products or foodstuffs with identifiable specific characteristics, in particular those linked to their geographical origin (Official Journal of the European Union 2012b: 1).

While strictly an intellectual property right, GIs have been promoted by the EU and others as a rural development instrument. To illustrate, Regulation 1151/2012 notes that quality schemes such as GIs

are able to contribute to and complement rural development policy as well as market and income support policies of the common agricultural policies. In particular, they may contribute to areas in which the farming sector is of greater economic importance, and, especially, to disadvantaged areas (Official Journal of the European Union 2012b: 1).

Regulation 2081/92 connects GIs to the concepts rurality and place by noting that GIs

could be of considerable benefit to the rural economy, in particular to less-favoured or remote areas, by improving the incomes of farmers and by retaining the rural population in these areas (Official Journal of the European Communities 1992: 1).

Next to the EU, a report for the International Trade Centre even more forcefully argues:

GIs may be as close to a comprehensive, equitable and market-oriented rural development package as we have seen [...] GIs can be the organizing principle or centrepiece of regional and local development initiatives (Giovannucci et al. 2009: 5; 8).

As noted previously, Regulation 2081/92 represented the first legal basis for GI protection on the European level (Ilbery & Kneafsey 2000: 220; Council of the European Union 1992). Since then, the EU system has become the most institutionally developed GI regime and central example for sui generis protection of place-based products (Gangjee 2017: 13; Moir 2017: 1025). Currently it is governed by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, 1308/2013 for wines, 110/2008 for spirit drinks and 251/2014 for aromatised wines (see European Commission 2016b for further legislation). Within the pillar structure of the CAP, GIs and their promotion can be funded through the EAFRD Regulation

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1305/2013, making it also a Pillar II measure. One central factor of the EU's GI protection, and one that is particularly contentious on the international level, is the prohibition of qualifiers such as “-style” (as in e.g. Feta-style cheese).

Another distinguishing factor is the way it is applied for and connected to a specific geographical location rather than a company, which sets it apart from trademarks. In general, producer groups, often agricultural cooperatives, apply for registration with national authorities, specifying the product's name, its geographical area and evidence of origin in the delimited area. Further, the application includes a specification of production processes and details on the link between the product's quality and the delimited area (Kireeva 2011: 74). Contrasting with the trademark system, the EU's *sui generis* protection means that products are ‘owned’ by the area, rather than by individual producers. Thus, the right to use the name cannot be sold, nor can production practices be altered, or production moved outside the area without losing rights to the name (Barham 2003: 129). Typically, public authorities provide technical guidance or bureaucratic assistance in the process (Gangjee 2017: 12f.; Lambin et al. 2014: 133).

In the EU, two types of GIs exist: Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI). While for PDOs all production, i.e. both growing and processing, must be concluded in the denominated area, for PGIs it is only one of the two steps. There also exists the label of Traditional Specialty Guaranteed (TSG) within the EU, which denotes products that are produced with traditional methods but not tied to a geographical location. As of March 2020, there were 3,322 GIs registered in the EU eAmbrosia register,⁴⁶ of which 1,473 were food, 1,607 wines, and 242 spirit drinks (European Commission 2020).

Geographical Indications have a distinct French history which, as explained later, is particularly relevant for the external governance of GIs in Georgia. Since 1905, products can be protected as *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* (AOC), lobbied for and first utilised by winemakers from Champagne and Bordeaux, and culminating in the establishment of the National Institute for Appellations of Origin (INAO)⁴⁷ in 1935

⁴⁶ eAmbrosia has only been developed recently, replacing the previously separate registers DOOR (food and drinks), E-Bacchus (wines), and E-Spirit Drinks. It also includes various single products from non-member states such as Tequila (Mexico) but apparently not GIs protected via trade agreements, e.g. from Canada and Georgia.

⁴⁷ Institut national de l'origine et de la qualité, previously Institut National des Appellations d'Origine.

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(Bowen 2015: 12f.). Consequently, the model was exported to other European countries, first Italy and Spain, and then ultimately embedded in European Union legislation. In France, the linkage of geographical location to specific qualities of foods and drinks is argued to have developed into “a type of cultural common sense” (Trubek 2008: xv) through the notion of *terroir*. While not directly translatable, *terroir* can broadly be understood as the unique combination of environmental characteristics and human factors (e.g. traditional know-how) that give foods and drinks their distinctive and superior qualities (Barham 2003: 131; Gade 2004: 849; Trubek 2008: 9). However, it has been questioned whether the French notion of *terroir* is applicable in other countries, especially where the access to food was frequently limited for instance due to famines (e.g. Ireland), and in turn less attention was paid to specific geographic qualities (Trubek 2008: 15f.). Again, these internal differences posit the question of whether an instrument developed in one specific context can be easily translated to another - a central question for the EU external relations literature.

5.5.1 GIs abroad: international contestations

The European Union’s GI regime has been extremely contentious on the international level. As is explained in more detail below, the EU failed to cement its strong position on GIs into multilateral agreements. Since then, the EU has adapted their approach by pressing for the inclusion of their GI system and the protection of EU GIs in bilateral trade agreements. Here, GIs have proved a major stumbling block, with the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) as the most prominent example.

While the EU system represents the most comprehensive model on GI-protection, there exist international agreements which include protections for place-based foods and drinks. Two of the central international agreements on GIs are the 1958 Lisbon Agreement and the 2015 Geneva Act. The Lisbon Act addresses Appellations of Origin, similar to the EU’s PDO label, and the Geneva Act extends it to products that in the EU are protected as PGIs. Through the Lisbon Agreement and the Geneva Act, GIs are protected by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) which includes the product in its register and notifies other contracting states of new additions that can then be appealed (WIPO 1958: Art 1; WIPO 2015: Art 4.; Chapter 2; Chapter 3). Similar to the EU system, the registered product cannot be imitated even with qualifiers (e.g. Feta style cheese; Article 3). However, only 28 states have signed the

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Lisbon Agreement, including ten EU member states⁴⁸ and, notably, Georgia. Crucially, the EU joined the Geneva Act (not the entire Lisbon Agreement) in November 2019 (WIPO 2019).

A second international GI protection is included in the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) which in Article 22 includes the right to exclude others from using a geographical location misleadingly and Article 23 prohibits qualifiers⁴⁹ for wines and spirit drinks (World Trade Organization 2017). However, this international agreement has been highly controversial, in particular between the EU that promotes stronger GI protections and the United States that push against it⁵⁰ (Moir 2017: 1021). In the United States, products associated with specific locations are not protected via a *sui generis* system but rather as a trademark, meaning it is owned by producers, not geographical areas as is the case for GIs (Matthews 2014). Moreover, many of the products that are protected as GIs in the EU, including very prominent ones such as Feta and Parmesan (Parmigiano-Reggiano) have been introduced to the US by immigrants and have since become generic rather than connected to their original locations of production.

In fact, the lack of agreement on GIs between the two ‘blocs’ has been one of the stalling points for the Doha Round of trade negotiations (Raustiala & Munzer 2007). On the one hand, this demonstrates the importance GIs have for the EU and on the other hand its failure to export the system into binding and enforceable multilateral agreements. Thus, GIs mirror the EU’s failure to export its preferences on the CAP as a whole, and especially the protection of the ‘European model of agriculture’ on the international level. As a result of this failure, the EU turned towards the inclusion of GIs into bilateral trade agreements, as EU officials interviewed for this thesis confirmed (Interviews 1; 3; see also Advisory Group International Aspect of Agriculture 2012: 6). One *Politico* article echoed this: “To increase the exports of its cheese and other food products abroad, the EU has long pushed to lock trade partners into its system of geographical indications” (Moens et al. 2020: n.p.). The importance

⁴⁸ Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain.

⁴⁹ A well-known example for qualifiers is ‘Feta-style cheese’.

⁵⁰ Brazil, India, China, and Switzerland also favour a stronger protection of GIs while Canada, Australia, and various developing countries resist strong *sui generis* GI protection (Advisory Group International Aspect of Agriculture 2012: 6).

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of geographically expanding the EU's GI-system has also been connected to the EU's international standing:

Europe's quest for supremacy in the gastronomic Great Game hinges on intellectual property rights. Each time the EU signs a trade deal, it pushes to lock its partners into its ecosystem of geographical indications (Livingstone 2018: n.p.)

Indeed, GIs occupy significant portions of most agreements, which include annexes of protected product lists that stretch hundreds of pages (Moir 2017: 1030). The inclusion of GI protections beyond TRIPS stipulations into the KOREU agreement between South Korea and the EU has even been characterised as inciting a “new generation of FTA” (Park 2020: 24). Here, the EU's strategy on GI's was described as “aggressive” (Park 2020: 27), while Korea was described as “vulnerable” (Park 2020: 25) due to their relatively recent recognition of GI's potential, meaning that “Korea had no choice but to agree to asymmetric protection of GIs in its FTA” (Park 2020: 23).

GIs also triggered various disputes in the negotiation of trade agreements, chiefly in the failed EU-US TTIP, which was marked by dispute over the protection of Feta cheese (Matthews 2014; Moens et al. 2020). The EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), GIs were similarly controversial, which was resolved between Canada and the EU by limited GI protection for some products (e.g. Feta), and the exclusion of others (e.g. Bavarian beer and Parmesan; Matthews 2014; Livingstone 2018). One last case is that of Manchego cheese, which proved a stumbling block in trade talks with Mexico (Moens et al. 2020). While both the US and Canada were reluctant to agree to the EU's GI-system, the lack of protection also resulted in EU-internal conflicts, as the Greek government threatened to veto TTIP over the lack of GI-protection for Feta, and the Italian government threatened to not ratify CETA for the same reason (Michalopoulos 2016; Rios 2018). The recent rejection of CETA by the Cypriot parliament on the ground of allegedly insufficient protection for Halloumi is discussed below.

Centrally, the EU's goals in bilateral agreements are for them to include the EU's sui generis system, administrative enforcement and strong protection most importantly for a limited number of crucial food names including controversial GIs such as Roquefort, Parmesan, Champagne, and Feta (Advisory Group International Aspect of Agriculture 2012: 5; Moir 2017: 1030; 1035). While for candidate countries the adoption of a GI-system is part of accession conditionality, for others acceptance has largely differed depending on the pre-existence of similar systems and agricultural tradition (Advisory

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Group International Aspect of Agriculture 2012: 9; Moir 2017: 1035). This also led to different lists of protected products for each trade agreement. One EU official who was interviewed for this thesis lamented that this “makes enforcement a nightmare”, especially when different levels of protection are applied (Interview 3). Nonetheless, trade agreements with the EU have been stimulants even for previously opposed countries with vastly different agricultural sectors to adopt GI-systems, as has been noted for the case of Australia where wine areas were established to protect and enhance sales of wines with regional descriptions in preparation for a future trade agreement (Raftery 2017: 349).

Again, when considering the external governance of GIs, it is vital to remember the EU’s framing of GIs as a rural development instrument:

Geographical indications are becoming a useful intellectual property right for developing countries because of their potential to add value and promote rural socio-economic development (European Commission 2013a: n.p.)

Indeed, this narrative has been successful in so-called developing countries where GI system are becoming more frequently utilized, and where increasing numbers of GIs are protected (Lambin et al. 2014: 133; Bramley et al. 2009). This is possible because even without bilateral trade agreements, producers can apply for protection within the EU (Kireeva 2011: 74f.). The motivation has been argued to largely result from the perception of GI’s economic benefits for producers, observed for instance for Darjeeling Tea in India (Besky 2013), Coorg coffee in India (Marie-Vivien et al. 2014), and Tequila in Mexico (Bowen 2015: 3). Again forming part of the broader picture of external governance, the EU assists Caribbean, East and West African as well as Pacific countries in the establishment of GI-systems and works with the African Union to “promote GIs as a development tool that can protect the identity of local and indigenous products throughout Africa” (Advisory Group International Aspects of Agriculture 2012: 10).

5.5.2 GIs as rural tradition and guardians of local identity

As highlighted previously, GIs directly relate to rural spaces as protections for products are based on their area of origin or production. Furthermore, the protection of products as GI have, as is argued in the literature, important consequences in terms of rurality, place, land, and territory.

Considering conceptualisations of rurality as backwards and peripheral, what is particularly striking about GIs is that these attributes are reconstructed as positive

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features: the remote is special, traditional and should be shielded from standardizing, anonymising forces of globalization. Circling back to the emergence of the French system, the notion of *terroir* was popularised in particular from the early 20th century by so-called ‘tastemakers’ such as cookbook writers, food journalists or chefs, who promoted traditional, small-scale, regional cuisines they saw threatened by modern cities (Bowen 2015: 10; Freidberg 2003: 99; 105). Similar narratives remain visible in current GIs, often championed as the guardians of traditional products and local heritage (Barham 2003: 87; Bowen 2010: 210). Illustratively, Gade equates GIs to efforts to protect a local language or species from extinction (Gade 2004: 848). A particularly illustrative example of the protection from modernism is that of foie gras⁵¹ which became protected as a GI precisely because farmers felt threatened by animal rights groups and industrialised agriculture (DeSoucey 2010: 444).

Moreover, the central argument for GIs as a rural development instrument, that they result in price premiums, is vital on the dimension of rurality. As will be outlined later, GIs, via higher prices, are assumed to particularly benefit small farmers’ competitiveness in otherwise destructive global markets (Bowen & Zapata 2009: 117; Goodman 2003: 1; Sick 2014: 6). Thus, rather than giving in to the supposedly exploitative global food system, GIs challenge it through notions of quality, value, and tradition (Bowen & Zapata 2009: 109). In particular, GI protection has been argued to benefit producers especially in those most peripheral rural spaces where, for example due to slope, temperature or soil condition, intensifying agriculture is no alternative (Barham 2003: 131ff.; Lamarque & Lambin 2015: 707). Therefore, GIs reconstruct undesirable characteristics of rurality into a positive: backwardness becomes tradition, remoteness becomes specialty.

GIs are, due to their inextricable connection to specific locations by default relate to the concept of place. Yet, consequences on this dimension stretch even further, as GIs may provide a sense of belonging or pride connected to the area of production. Entire groups of locals, producers or not, can claim ownership over ‘their’ product. In turn, producers of other commodities and non-agricultural businesses, for instance in tourism may profit from the construction of a region as fostering authentic, artisanal, quality production (Moran 1993: 272; Gade 2004; Ray 1998b: 10; 14; Ilbery &

⁵¹ Canard à foie gras du Sud-Ouest (Chalosse, Gascogne, Gers, Landes, Périgord, Quency; European Commission n.d: n.p.).

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Kneafsey 2000: 229). Importantly, this has been argued to potentially alleviate aforementioned problems of rural depopulation. For instance, the Comté GI-area presents significantly lower out-migration compared to other rural areas, due to the higher product prices and related better employment opportunities in cheese production, but also in sectors such as tourism (Bowen 2015: 10). Indeed, culinary tourism has been argued to have been a major beneficiary of GIs, for instance in the French foie gras production area DeSoucey labelled a “foie gras Disneyland” (DeSoucey 2010: 446).

However, the connections to place evoked by GIs move beyond economic benefits and include emotional dimensions and attachment (Ray 1998b: 11; DeSoucey 2010: 442). Often these emotions are romanticised. For instance, Gade maintained that Cassis vineyards “radiate a sense of stability” (Gade 2004: 852) in the area, which for the author legitimized its protection despite the rather problematic delimitation process that was based on personal networks amongst producers and with authorities rather than merit (Gade 2004: 859-865). This romanticisation was picked up by one of the EU officials interviewed for this thesis who argued that with GIs “all class barriers break down” for consumers, and that they “would hate to see GIs becoming exclusive to elite consumers” (Interview 3). Here, they specifically referred to Champagne which is clearly a luxury product. Another illustrative case is that of Darjeeling tea, where previously ostracised Nepali tea workers were re-narrated as holders of valuable traditional knowledge through marketing campaigns (Besky 2013: 94). Furthermore, the relations to spaces frequently stretch beyond the GI area itself, as “national symbols” such as Champagne or foie gras illustrate (Gangjee 2017: 13; see also DeSoucey 2010: 433).

However, especially this romanticisation of GIs has been heavily criticised. Some see GI-areas as being transformed into rural museums or as mentioned, GI-Disneylands, marketed particularly to urban tourists and privileged food consumers (Barham 2003: 132; DeSoucey 2011: 446; see also Bowen & DeMaster 2011). Disruptions to the idyllic place, such as exploited labourers or mistreated animals are routinely silenced (Bowen 2015: 23; DeSoucey 2011: 443; Eurogroup for Animals 2018: n.p.). One illustrative example is again the foie gras GI, which has been attacked by international animal rights groups for the forced tube-feeding of ducks. Rather than defending the production as cruelty-free, foie gras advocates offered a narrative distinctly related to

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the concept of place: they described it as an authentic French food associated with a sense of belonging and national tradition that needed to be protected (DeSoucey 2010: 446). Moreover, rather than protecting historic production in homogenous regions, GI production is often standardised, and traditions actively constructed in the application process (Gangjee 2017: 9; Gade 2004).

5.5.3 Power relations and the narrative of saving small farmers

Turning to the dimension of land, the central argument for GI-protection is the creation or protection of price premiums, supposedly shielding farmers from cheaper competition (Besky 2013: 86; Moir 2017: 1024). In turn, extensive production, meaning production with fewer inputs e.g. of labour and capital, which therefore relies heavily on natural conditions such as soil fertility would be supported (Lamarque & Lambin 2015: 714). This, it has been argued, would particularly benefit smaller landholdings (Lamarque & Lambin 2015: 714). A case study of Australian wines observed that GIs shielded ‘premium’ wines from the need to expand farm sizes against the trend of a sector dominated by “supermarket oligopolies” (Raftery 2017: 362). Similar processes of providing economic viability to smaller, less industrial producers were predominantly noted for French GIs, including Tome de Bauges cheese, Cassis liqueur, and Comté cheese (Lamarque & Lambin 2015; Gade 2004; Bowen 2015). However, Bowen notes the possible idiosyncrasy of the French context in which area-based foods play an important cultural role and where farmers have been historically politically influential (Bowen 2015: 14).

In other cases, the expectation to protect small producers and extensive production has been challenged. Here, large corporations co-opted the GI and crowded out smaller players (Ilbery & Kneafsey 2000: 218; Bowen 2015: 23). Moir notes that “while much of the literature and policy discussion on GIs implies that most GI producers are small, it is clear that for some product lines very large producers play an important role” (Moir 2017: 1030). For instance, small farms produce less than 2% of Tuscan olive oil (Rangnekar 2004: 5). Similarly, Chontaleño cheese is mostly produced by industrial producers and large dairy farmers (Mancini 2013). However, the most illustrative example of this process is Tequila. In this case, large commercial success attracted transnational liquor companies that consequently excluded farmers from the supply chain and seized control over the industry from local actors (Bowen & Zapata 2009: 109; see Bowen 2015 for a detailed case study on the Tequila GI). Large companies

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either farmed agave from their own plantations or subcontracted local farmers, which in turn prevented independent farmers from selling their produce (Bowen & Zapata 2009: 111). Therefore, the latter lack resources for continued production and either lease their land to companies or enter into said contracts which were argued to have little positive effects on small farmers' incomes (Bowen & Zapata 2009: 114; 117). Therefore, the consequences of GIs should not be assumed to benefit smallholders.

Often, the processes of bordering GI areas are highly political, evoking the notion of territory. As the application involves drawing boundaries around an area and method of production, 'being on the outside' means that actors are prevented from using the name of a food they have produced (DeSoucey 2010: 442). The delimitations of geographical locations and production practices within may be strategic, manipulative, and directly aimed at the exclusion of competitors (Gangjee 2017: 19). As a result:

the exact boundaries and definition of [a GI] can be controversial among producers. Some who participated in the [GI] request find themselves outside the final boundaries. 'Free riders' may appear demanding to be included. Neighbours who follow slightly different processing methods may find that one of them is included while the other is not (Barham 2003: 136).

For instance, intense conflicts were observed within the Cassis cooperatives and the fear of being excluded from GI-production groups in Australia was "keenly felt by many wine makers and grape growers" (Raftery 2019: 357; Gade 2004: 863ff.). Here, the dimension of territory overlaps with that of place, given the threat of exclusion from a space.

Moreover, as mentioned previously, there is potential for political conflict between countries over the right to use GIs on a specific product. A prominent case was the dispute between Greece and Denmark over the appropriation of Feta (Sapp 2005). Most recently, the EU-Canada CETA was rejected by the Cypriot parliament over Halloumi cheese, which is not protected as a PDO in the agreement (Politico 2020). On the other hand, the Halloumi GI, shared between both parts of the island of Cyprus, has been argued to have been a unifying and confidence building measure by former European Commission President Juncker:

This step demonstrates the commitment of both communities of Cyprus to work together on projects unifying the whole island. [...] The common understanding reached [...] is highly symbolic and it confirms the willingness of the two parties to work together with the help of the Commission to build confidence with concrete measures. Halloumi/Hellim cheese symbolises the shared heritage of the island of Cyprus. It is a tradition which has linked the communities living here for centuries (European Commission 2015: n.p.).

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Clearly then, GIs interact not only with notions of land as a space of production and capital accumulation, but distinctly political processes in terms of territory.

5.6 Conclusions

The CAP is not only one of the oldest, most debated, and most expensive EU policies, it also follows a curious reform trajectory. After decades of stability with an agricultural productivist paradigm, the 1990s and early 2000s challenged the status quo through the concepts of multifunctional agriculture and rural development. This process was explained by both internal and external pressures. Confronted with a liberalising agenda in international trade talks, the EU pursued a multifunctional agriculture narrative in order to continue shielding its producers from international competition. Even though this narrative failed on the international level, it successfully responded to internal legitimacy concerns. Subsequently, narratives around rural development became central to the policy's internal and external identity. Critically, it has been primarily rural development instruments that have been exported beyond EU borders, for instance through LEADER and GIs, both of which are perceived as rural development instruments and promoted as such externally. Thus, the instruments are relevant not only in and of themselves, but for the overall CAP trajectory.

When considering the academic literature on the instruments' consequences, two conclusions can be drawn. First, both instruments aim to shield spaces from outside influence and emphasise locality. While LEADER aims to limit powers of the central government, GIs more have the goal to combat supposedly anonymizing forces of globalization. Secondly, consequences vary widely across cases, desirable and undesirable consequences can often even be observed within the same country unit. The academic literature notes complicated and diverse consequences for both instruments, especially on the dimensions of land and territory. Within LEADER, it is often comparatively powerful local actors, not previously marginalized groups, who are central in LAG decision making. Similarly, while GIs ensure the continued existence of some small farmers, other cases see the capturing of GI benefits by large corporations.

These observations are even more interesting in the context of external governance. The EU has in the past and present frequently assumed similar consequences to materialise across countries and regions, highlighted for instance through the recycling of instruments utilised in the enlargement process to the European Neighbourhood

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Policy (in this case SAPARD and ENPARD; see also Schumacher 2018: 4; Blockmans 2015; Kochenov 2008). At the same time, as has been argued in Chapter 3, the external governance literature is itself has largely avoided the evaluation of consequences on the ground. Therefore, the chapter reinvigorates the need for case studies that analyse consequences. Indeed, the chapter, by stratifying the existing literature on the two instruments specifically in terms of their internal and external governance and their consequences for rural spaces, provides a contribution in itself, both to the literature on Europeanisation and on the CAP.

Thus far, the thesis has reviewed the existing literature on the EU's role beyond its borders as a crucial theoretical building block. It argued that a sectoral is most appropriate to study the external governance of the CAP and answer the first two research questions in Chapter 6. Yet, the third research question expands the framework and asks what the consequences of EU actions had for rural spaces. Therefore, the subsequent chapters present the original empirical contributions of this thesis.

CHAPTER 6: EXPORTING THE CAP'S RURAL DIMENSIONS: GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AND LEADER IN GEORGIA

Having introduced the theoretical and conceptual frames of this thesis, as well as having traced the CAP's development towards a rural focus and its connection to EU external governance, this chapter connects the case studies' empirical findings with the external governance framework. It therefore answers the second and third research questions of how the EU governs the instruments externally, and how effective this governance was. As highlighted in the previous chapter, both LEADER and GIs are an integral part of the CAP and have been promoted externally due to the perceived benefits they have for rural spaces. As outlined in Chapter 3, Lavenex and Schimmelfennig divide the modes of external governance into hierarchy, network, and market. At the same time, the authors propose to measure the effectiveness of external governance through rule selection in negotiations, rule adoption into non-member state policies, and rule application into policy and administrative practice. Finally, they propose three explanations for both modes and effectiveness: the institutionalist, power-based, and domestic-structure explanation. The focus of the chapter will be on institutionalist explanations, as the "most germane" (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 791), to external governance. Nonetheless, a clear benefit of the framework is the capacity of the three explanation to capture respective broader literatures and therefore, the thesis connects findings with these explanations and the broader literature where appropriate.

From the framework and adjacent literatures, some expectations on the modes and effectiveness of EU external governance for GI and LEADER were formulated. Most fundamentally, given that external governance is a sectoral framework, it could be anticipated that both CAP instruments analysed here followed the same modes of external governance. However, this explanation contradicts the institutionalist assumption that the external governance mode is determined by its internal one. As Chapter 5 demonstrated, LEADER and GIs are governed differently within the EU, through network and market mode respectively, although both have a significant hierarchical component.

If the external governance of the CAP meets institutionalist expectations, two modes or a mix of them, can be expected for GIs. The strict rules and processes that apply to GIs within the EU suggest a hierarchical external governance mode. At the same time,

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the adoption of GI-rules within the EU is in large part driven by producers who aim to profit from the protection of their products, and who apply for GIs. Hence, the market mode can also be expected. Turning to LEADER, the network mode is most likely because the programme follows a bottom-up design within the EU, and because some of its features, such as best practice sharing, reflect this mode. Additionally, as a complex rural development programme, by design a large variety of actors, ranging from government to businesses, civil society actors and 'the general public' are involved, making the network mode most likely. Nonetheless, some hierarchical elements can also be expected, as the programme's adoption in the EU is required to receive EAFRD funding.

Lastly, in line with both the institutionalist and power-based explanations, as well as findings by Lavenex & Schimmelfennig (2009), Lavenex et al. (2009), and Knill & Tosun (2009), it can be expected that the presence of clear and enforceable rules in the hierarchy mode makes it more effective than the network and market modes. Consequently, two scenarios can be expected for the cases studied here. First, if one of the instruments is governed by the mode of hierarchy, can be anticipated to be externally governed more effectively than the case with fewer hierarchical elements. Second, in the case that neither instrument is externally governed through hierarchy, it can be anticipated that neither is exported fully effectively.

Subsequently, the chapter first introduces some basic tenets of the main Georgian policies towards rural spaces, and their orientation towards the CAP. Moreover, the network of other international actors, and the centrality of the EU in these networks, is explained before the theoretical framework is applied to the cases. Several surprising findings were observed. Contrary to expectations the external governance of GIs did not correspond to any proposed mode, with the government assuming an entrepreneurial role. On the other hand, LEADER was guided by a network mode as expected. Therefore, the expectation that policy sectors are characterised by one overarching mode of governance is questioned. At the same time, the hierarchical elements that are expected by both institutionalist and power-based approaches were missing from both case studies. In fact, the EU appeared surprisingly passive in the external governance of both instruments. Strikingly, even though neither instrument was guided by the hierarchy mode, both instruments were selected, adopted, and applied. Rather, findings indicated more complex processes: it was a broader

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construction of historical context, narratives around agricultural traditions, as well as the central government's preferences and the interplay of various actors in a multi-level system that determined both the modes and effectiveness of the CAP's external governance.

6.1 Rural policies in Georgia

This section presents the three major rural policies of Georgia: the Strategy for Agricultural Development, the Rural Development Strategy, and the Regional Development Strategy. The EU was, as is discussed in more detail below, crucial in the development of these policies as all three were funded through the 2007–2013 European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (European Commission 2013b: 20; 27). Moreover, technical assistance was provided to the agricultural ministry, and the FAO and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) were subcontracted by the EU to support the government in the development of the Rural Development Strategy (Government of Georgia 2017: 7; Chaudhry & Gviniashvili 2018: 7). In turn, many of the CAP's objectives found their way into the agricultural and rural policies of Georgia.

What is particularly striking about the most relevant Georgian policy frameworks governing rural spaces is how recent they are, especially compared to the CAP. Even though agriculture has been an important social security net for Georgians especially since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the sector was continuously neglected in policy making (Emerson & Kovziridze 2016: 162). Only in 2015 did the government publish a first broad strategy document through the Strategy for Agricultural Development in Georgia 2015–2020 with the declared objective:

to create a developmental model for the country's agricultural sector that will ensure provision of affordable and quality food to the Georgian population, as well as maximizing the use of its export potential in commodities where the country has a competitive advantage (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2015: 12).

From these objectives the strategy delineates its vision which includes increased competitiveness, as well as the elimination of rural poverty through the development of agriculture and rural areas (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2015: 12). Measures include funding for agricultural extension services, trainings for the food and agriculture sector, the support of cooperatives, and creating a farm registry. Therefore, the Strategy for Agricultural Development is reminiscent of the ambitions of earlier CAP versions that were discussed in Chapter 5. Both centred around a productivist

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paradigm that primarily promotes food provision in a time of food deficiency. Furthermore, the policy not only follows similar objectives as the CAP, it also refers to the approximation of EU rules at various points (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2015: 28; 34; 37).

In the second document, the Rural Development Strategy, the prolonged neglect is particularly apparent, considering that no explicit rural development policy existed until 2017. In an interview with a Georgian official, this was attributed both to a lack of pre-existing understanding of rural development issues separate from those of agriculture, the assumption rural issues would solve itself through general economic development, and the belief that it “sort of worked” (Interview 17). The strategy quotes as its vision:

Ensuring the constant improvement of the quality of life, and the social conditions of the rural population, based on a combination of increased economic opportunities, more accessible social benefits, a rich cultural life, environmental protection and the sustainable management of natural resources (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 53).

As such, it outlines three priority areas: economy and competitiveness, social conditions and living standards, as well as environmental protection and the sustainable management of natural resources (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 53), and thus overlaps with the agricultural strategy. The aforementioned relation of the policy documents to the EU was particularly explicit in the Rural Development Strategy whose formulation was “significantly assisted” (Government of Georgia 2018: 3) by the EU (see also Ministry of Environmental Protection of Agriculture of Georgia 2018: 3; European Commission 2015b: 3). Consequently, the Strategy’s second sentence already refers to “evidence from the experience of the European Rural Development Programmes” (Government of Georgia 2017: 5; see also ENPARD 2015b: 6; UNDP 2017: n.p.). Planning and implementation meetings for the strategy also explicitly referenced the EU. For instance, a 2017 workshop focusing on the implementation of the Rural Development Strategy and elaboration of the 2018-2020 Rural Development Action Plan, had as main theme:

to identify the best suitable model for integrated rural development in Georgia and to ensure its alignment with the European Union Policy Framework on Rural Development (UNDP 2017: n.p.).

The third relevant document is the Regional Development Programme of Georgia (2015–2017). However, due to the document’s distance to the instruments of LEADER and GIs, it is not explicitly analysed here. The document overlaps significantly with

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the agricultural and rural development strategies, as for instance rural development was identified as a priority of regional development (Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia 2015: 41). Again, the document explicitly refers to the EU, viewed as being “of vital importance within the framework of ongoing and planned cooperation between the EU and Georgia” (Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia 2015: 3f.; see also Government of Georgia 2014: 24; Government of Georgia 2015b: 23).

6.2 The EU as centre of a network of organisations

In the sphere of agriculture and rural development in Georgia, the EU is certainly not “the only game in town” (see: Börzel & Risse 2012: 2) but part of a complicated network of numerous actors. As highlighted by various contributions to the EU external actions literature that were discussed in Chapter 3, these actors should not be neglected, especially as international organisations may provide alternative policy solutions on the stage of rule selection (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 800f.; Barbé et al. 2009: 836-839; Dimitrova & Dragneva 2009: 680). As delineated by Lavenex, they could criticise the EU, but also exist in parallel or overlap, or even act as a transmitter of EU rules (Lavenex 2016). Nonetheless, as this section shows, the EU not only provides the most funding but also is central to the network of international organizations operating in Georgian rural spaces (European Commission 2015b: 5; Millns 2013: 20). Consequently, while the World Bank in 2005 described donor coordination as ineffective, marked by conflicting and overlapping programmes (World Bank 2005a: 10), activities were streamlined by converging around the EU in two ways. First, the EU subcontracted implementation activities to third actors such as international organisations and international NGOs. Secondly, international organisations and NGOs acted as transmitters that diffused EU models and policies by frequently referencing them in their work, even when they were not funded by the EU to do so (see: Lavenex 2016: 555).

For subcontracted actors, most important were the FAO and UNDP. As mentioned above, the EU subcontracted both to cooperate with the government on the Rural Development Strategy (Government of Georgia 2017: 7; Chaudhry & Gviniashvili 2018: 7). Furthermore, from ENPARD I to III, the FAO was subcontracted to provide assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture for the adoption and implementation of the Strategy for Agricultural Development of Georgia and the final evaluation of

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ENPARD I argued that the FAO played a key role in elaborating the strategy (FAO Regional Office for Europe and Asia 2012: 19; Channon et al. 2017: 32). The UNDP, active in Georgian rural development since the mid-2000s, was tasked with implementing ENPARD actions in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, which has devolved powers for agricultural policy, although it is aligned with the national framework. This was likely also due to the inclusion of the same EU subcontractors in policy development through EU technical assistance, reiterating the central role of the EU model for the general direction of rural policies in Georgia (Chaudhry & Gviniashvili 2018: 7; Channon et al. 2017: 14; UNDP n.d.: n.p.). Additionally, the UNDP supported local NGOs active in LEADER, such as the Green Valley rural development association in Borjomi or the organic agriculture NGO Elkana in Adjara (Borjomi Local Action Group 2016: 12).

In addition to the FAO and the UNDP, various international and national non-governmental organizations were subcontracted to implement aspects of ENPARD, and were organised in several consortia, led by Oxfam, CARE, People in Need and the Mercy Corps (Chitaia 2014: 2). One interviewed official from an organization that had been subcontracted by the EU noted that the priorities of the involved organisations and the EU in the area of rural developments overlapped, while highlighting at the same time that the EU - meaning Commission officials rather than the Delegation - drove the agenda (Interview 14). They also observed the necessity to use EU terminology and described difficulties with monitoring (Interview 14). While subcontracted organizations increasingly needed to indicate direct impacts in their activities because “Brussels is very conscious of achieving impacts” (Interview 14), the representative argued that the monitoring was too frequent, taking up important resources, and that the indicators were often not suitable for measuring specific results.⁵²

By subcontracting organizations, the EU fulfilled two functions. First, subcontracting facilitated the extent to which the EU was active on the ground. The EU Delegation in Tbilisi would have been unable to implement broad and distinctly local programmes such as LEADER, considering the limited numbers of staff alone. Additionally, EU-officials on the ground hold less expertise particularly on technical issues, which is

⁵² The monitoring requirements, and their consequences for the LEADER programme specifically, will be discussed in more details below.

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concentrated in DG AGRI, compared to specialised international organizations, NGOs, and developmental agencies. Second, the EU to some extent avoided being seen as an actor that dictates policies to the Georgian government. The UNDP and FAO were generally perceived as legitimate, neutral, and competent on these issues by government officials, as one interviewed official confirmed (Interview 15). Therefore, even though the agricultural and rural strategies closely mirror the CAP, and even though the “progressive convergence” (Official Journal of the European Union 2014: Art. 332) of the policies was included in the DCFTA, the UNDP and FAO were useful middlemen.

Interestingly, in addition to subcontracted actors, other organizations transmitted EU rules even without receiving specific EU-funding through ENPARD.⁵³ One example for this is the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), which became especially active on GIs. For instance, the EBRD implemented a joint project with the FAO on dairy GIs. Even though the EBRD was not financed by the EU for this project, the EU's GI-model and preferences were promoted. However, the EU and EBRD more closely cooperated on other activities. For instance, the EU-supported the 2018 Dairy Congress that was chiefly organised by FAO and EBRD (FAO 2018b: n.p.). Additionally, the EBRD worked with the EU on an DCFTA Adaptation Programme that trains dairy producers on quality, food safety and SPS requirements (FAO 2018b: n.p.).

Next to these organisations, member states' agencies and embassies implemented bilateral initiatives in the area of agriculture and rural development (Borjomi Local Action Group 2016: 12; World Bank 2018: 10). One crucial example is the involvement of the French embassy and French governmental agencies in the adoption of GIs. However, member states' actions were advised to be coordinated with the EU and meetings between the EU Delegation, and embassies are to take place regularly, reinforcing the central role of the EU in the donor network (EEAS & DG DEVCO EuropeAid 2014: 8). In addition to member state embassies, third country agencies and embassies have been involved in the sector. Often, these actors cooperate with

⁵³ However, sometimes these actors cooperate with EU-subcontracted actors and/or rely on EU funding such as the EBRD. However, they were not specifically funded for rural development activities through ENPARD.

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member states, as was the case for a French-Swiss-Georgian event that promoted Georgian wines and GIs (AgendaGe 2017).

However, what was striking about the transmitters of EU rules, was that this category also included organizations that could at first glance have been expected to compete with EU actions. One such organisation is the World Bank which has been active in agricultural development in Georgia since the 1990s, before EU engagement started, and thus could have been expected to lead on these issues (World Bank 1997: 4). However, recently the World Bank avoided overlaps with EU actions, in line with their own criticisms of an overcrowded donor-sector (World Bank 2005a: 10). For instance, the Poverty Reduction Support Operation (2007–2008), or the Development Policy Operations (2009–2012) either did not mention agriculture and rural development altogether or they focused on very distinct objectives such as infrastructure development that did not overlap with the EU's actions in those sectors (World Bank n.d.; World Bank 2012: 9). Strikingly, in those instances where rural development and/or agriculture were explicitly cited, the EU is presented as the reference-point even to the World Bank itself. The EU for instance provided technical assistance to the World Bank's Regional Development Project (World Bank 2014: 3f.).

Another central example for this dynamic is the involvement of the WIPO in the development of GIs, in which the organisation presented the government with the EU model, as will be explained in detail below. This demonstrates that even where the EU did not directly fund other organizations' activities, EU-models and ideas remained pervasive. Various motivations for those organizations to transmit EU norms and ideas without direct subcontracting could be conceived. First, as Lavenex points out, often these organizations rely on EU-funding in their general operations (Lavenex 2016: 567), as is the case for instance for the EBRD. Secondly, as noted previously, the World Bank itself noted the inefficiency of the existing donor network in Georgia, meaning that learning effects may have taken place.

To summarize, organizations fulfilled both subcontracting and transmitting roles, which, as outlined by Lavenex “provide normative frameworks that blur and legitimise EU policy transfer in the guise of (quasi) universal commitments” (Lavenex 2016: 566f.). As a result, the EU may be perceived as less invasive to non-member states' Eurosceptic constituencies. This also implies that EU policies were perceived as effective and applicable. This is crucial considering the EU's role - both active and

passive - in the external governance of LEADER and GIs. To some extent, as discussed later, the perception of EU policies as global best practices prevents the adaptation of the instruments to the specific Georgian context.

6.3 Geographical Indications: securing export opportunities while defending national heritage

Having introduced the general context of Georgian policies towards rural spaces, general EU-Georgia relations, and the network of various international actors, the thesis now turns to the application of the theoretical framework to assess the external governance modes and effectiveness for the two instruments. For GIs, it is crucial to note that they predominantly apply to the Georgian wine sector. As elaborated below, the protection of wine GIs followed from perceived threats to and opportunities specifically for GI wines. Importantly, wine is central to narratives of Georgian traditions, and it is at times even explicitly connected to national identity. To illustrate, Alice Feiring, author of one of the best known English-language books on Georgian wines, *For the Love of Wine: My Odyssey Through the World's Most Ancient Wine Culture* noted that “wine is the Georgian’s poetry and folklore, their religion and their daily bread [...] I have never been exposed to a country where wine was so profoundly woven into customs and daily life” (Feiring 2016: xii; xc).

Georgian producers, officials, and wine experts pride themselves on the country’s 8000-year long continuous wine producing tradition. Indeed, this claim was recently supported by biomolecular archaeological findings of organic compounds in pottery (McGovern et al. 2017). Characterisations of Georgia as “the birthplace of wine” are utilised as the main marketing catchphrase abroad (Granik 2019; Georgia Tourism 2018: n.p.; St. Fleur 2017: n.p.).⁵⁴ In 2017, even a wine exhibition in Bordeaux referred to Georgia as the “cradle of viticulture” and the “roots of modern winegrowing and winemaking” (La Cité du Vin 2017), which was seen by government officials, wine experts, and member state embassy officials as a major development for Georgian wine (Interviews 8; 15; 18; 19; 20). Contributing to this image of an ancient wine producing culture is the traditional skin-contact fermentation⁵⁵ in so-called Kveri or

⁵⁴ Indeed, the claim is supported by findings of biomolecular archaeologists who analysed organic matter such as grape seeds retrieved from ancient Georgian pottery (Mercer 2017).

⁵⁵ For other wines, the skins are pressed off immediately, for Kveri wines, skins remain for up to eight months (Feiring 2016: 2).

Kveri, clay vessels, which are permanently buried underground.⁵⁶ This results in highly tannic wines, with white varieties producing amber wines whose popularity especially in Europe and North America has surged in recent years (Woolf 2018; Holm 2015: n.p.). One wine expert explained that even though Kveri wines used to be produced entirely for personal and family consumption because of the difficult cleaning process, international interest has spiked in recent years (Interview 19). Of course, Kveri themselves have an interesting spatial dimension, in that they are buried underground and thus cannot be removed from their place. However, it needs to be noted that not all Kveri wines are GI-protected, and that not all GI wines are produced in Kveri.

Despite the continued dominance of wine GIs, protection in Georgia has expanded to include dairy products, vegetables, potatoes, and mineral waters so that 48 products were registered as GIs by September 2019. To provide a basic understanding of the institutional arrangements, the competent executive authority for elaborating and enacting GI legislation in Georgia is the Ministry of Agriculture,⁵⁷ which oversees some crucial agencies such as the National Food Agency and the National Wine Agency (Mujiri 2017: 11; FAO 2018a: 9f.). The National Wine Agency is tasked with verifying specifications in wine GI applications, quality control of wines designated for export through its tasting committee as well as the promotion of Georgian wines abroad (FAO 2018: 10). Another crucial actor is Sakpatenti, the national intellectual property agency, which oversees the application process and informs other countries' regulating bodies⁵⁸ of counterfeits (Martens 2013: 8; FAO 2018: 9).

6.3.1 Mode of external governance: the central government as entrepreneur

To reiterate the expectations following from the theoretical framework, the hierarchy and/or market mode were expected to guide the external governance of GIs. This is largely due to the clear regulations surrounding the instrument in the EU, and the centrality of producers in the internal GI process, respectively. However, these theoretical expectations did not materialise in the Georgian case, as this section

⁵⁶ The wine is then extracted with ladles or tubes.

⁵⁷ The Ministry of Agriculture has been frequently re-named and given different portfolios (e.g. environment) since independence. To ensure consistency, the term "Ministry of Agriculture" will be used throughout.

⁵⁸ E.g. DG AGRI in the EU.

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explains. Rather, a mode was observed that resulted from the parameters of the Georgian rural context.

Central to this rural context is its Soviet history, which had pervasive impact on its agricultural sector and place-based wine production specifically. From 1936, larger Georgian vineyards, previously often held by noble families, were collectivised, and production geared towards large volumes (Feiring 2016: 59; Rimple 2019: n.p.). As a result, interviewees, including government officials and wine experts, explained that even though historically around 563 indigenous grape varieties were recorded in Georgia, this number shrank to seven, with high-yield semi-sweet red Saperavi and white Rkatsiteli grapes being the most popular (Interviews 18; 19; 20; 21; Rimple 2019: n.p.). Another consequence of the focus on productivity were practices such as the use of grape concentrates and sugars, which decreased the wines' quality (Feiring 2016: 62), which is important to note for the subsequent trade embargoes discussed below.

Consequently, wine became produced predominantly in two ways, which did not include the previously noted commercial production by Georgian nobility or other producers on medium-sized vineyards (Hines 2018). Rather, production was either concentrated in large state factories, or restricted to personal consumption from garden-sized plots (Hines 2018; Feiring 2016: 7). Generally, the focus on quantity over quality and diversity resulted in a state-mandated erasure of place-based products, given that Rkatsiteli and Saperavi were grown across the country without consideration of *terroir*, and in turn crowded out lower yield grapes and wines. Indeed, the 'Soviet occupation' is frequently connected to the 'uprooting' of a supposed Georgian way of life when it comes to wine: "The slow, natural qveri cycle - an extension of the Georgian lifestyle - didn't fit Joseph Stalin's five-year economic plans" (Hines 2018: n.p.).⁵⁹ This is particularly important when considering the urgency with which the Georgian government protected GIs in the 1990s, the narratives that connect wine to national struggle, and consequences for the concept of rurality, as explained below and in Chapter 7.

Following Georgia's independence, agricultural land reform was initiated through the Land Privatization Decree in 1992 which split land into highly fragmented parcels

⁵⁹ Ironically, Stalin himself is argued to have preferred products with '*terroir*': wine from specific micro-zones, sheep from a small area in Imereti, apples from "one particular village (Feiring 2016: 58).

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(Ebanoidze 2003: n.p.). Thus, parcel sizes until today are typically smaller than one hectare and used for subsistence, not commercial farming, which was frequently raised as hinderance towards agricultural productivity (Forkel 2009: 29; European Commission 2014b: 25; Millns 2013: 5; FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia 2012: 9; ENPARD 2016c: 1; Emerson & Kovziridze 2016: 165). At the same time, due to restrictions on interest groups during the Soviet Union as well as collectivization, the Georgian agricultural sector in the 1990s was characterised by a vacuum of organised farmers' groups that could have lobbied the government for GI legislation as was the historical trajectory in Europe. In fact, these groups have hardly formed even now, and an FAO report reasoned that this absence continues to diminish the ability of producers to advocate their interests (FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia 2012: 26). Furthermore, interest groups were not mentioned in the Strategy for Agricultural Development and any steps to initiate them are driven by international donors. For instance, ENPARD supported the Georgian Farmers' Association through capacity building so they could become a "reference for advocating farmers' rights" (European Commission 2015b: 4; ENPARD 2015a: 2).

This absence of interest organizations was further amplified by a lack of cooperation between producers on the local level. Crucially, farmers were described as resisting cooperatives and other forms of cooperation mainly due to negative experiences with Soviet collectivised farms, *kolkhozes*, which were argued to elicit memories of forced labour (Chitaia & Khuntsaria 2017: 5; Martens 2013: 10; FAO & EBRD 2017: 11). Despite significant funding through ENPARD, one representative from a subcontracted organization argued that "there has been no dramatic change in the attitudes towards cooperatives" and that the ones that exist are "new and fragile" (Interview 10). The lack of cooperatives not only contrasts the trajectory of GI-protection in the EU, it also contributed to a GI-system that mainly benefits large producers, as argued in Chapter 7.

In absence of private market actors, it was the government that assumed an entrepreneurial role and adopted the EU's GI system in Georgia. This presents a novel finding for the external governance framework, which does not foresee governments as central actors for the market mode of external governance. Arguably, the government's behaviour can be explained by two factors: the threat of counterfeits and the diversification of exports. First, the government feared that famous Georgian wines

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would be counterfeited in other Post-Soviet states and that subsequently their names would become generic (Gabunia n.d.a: 12). One government official argued that in the 1990s, the private sector “was not ready” and because of the “pressing issue of potentially losing the names that were being counterfeited, the government had to act” (Interview 15). Government officials and wine experts also agreed that the products were deemed too essential for Georgia’s food traditions and indeed national identity to be left unprotected (Interviews 15; 18; 20; see also Sakpatenti chairman Gogilidze in EastAgri 2017b: n.p.). This is discussed in more detail in Section 6.4.2 when the reasons for external governance effectiveness are delineated.

Second, the government perceived GIs as an appropriate tool to achieve their goal of diversifying Georgian export markets. Interviewed government officials and wine experts agreed that one important factor was the perceived volatility of Russia as essentially the sole market for Georgian GI-products⁶⁰ (Interviews 15; 17; 18; 19). One government official urged that the export markets for Georgian wine should be as diverse as possible, as especially in Russia “there is always the potential for bans” and:

Dependence always gives tools to manipulate the government and that isn't good. The EU is a better alternative because it has bigger purchase power and it provides political security. It would guarantee that the collapse of any other market wouldn't be so problematic (Interview 15).

From the 1990s, Russia has been utilizing trade embargos over alleged quality concerns with Georgian agricultural products, especially wines and mineral waters, to increase its political leverage (Forkel 2009: 28; Martens 2013: 2; Interview 15; 21). After tensions and earlier embargoes such as in 1998, the confrontation erupted in the 2000s surrounding the Russo-Georgian war in 2008. In 2006, Russia announced a boycott on Georgian wines due to alleged food safety concerns, which were largely viewed to have followed political considerations (BBC 2006: n.p.; Anderson 2013: 2; Cenusa et al. 2014: 7; Henderson 2018). Nonetheless, the narratives could tap into existing perceptions of Georgian wine as low quality, due to the aforementioned utilisation of grape concentrate and sugars in the Soviet Union. The embargo was cited as a major reason for declining agricultural growth in Georgia, thus contributing to rural poverty (FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia 2012: 9; Forkel 2009: 28; Granik 2019: n.p.; Millns 2013: 17). In 2019, the issue re-emerged when protests erupted after a Russian Duma member took the speaker’s chair in the Georgian

⁶⁰ Especially wines and mineral waters. Most Georgian wine is still exported to Russia (National Wine Agency 2018: 4).

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parliament for the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (Agenda.Ge 2019c: n.p.). These protests were branded Russophobic by Russian officials and subsequently, the Duma Committee on Foreign Affairs called for a halt of wine and mineral water imports from Georgia, with the Russian agency for consumer protection announcing amplified inspections on alcoholic drinks imported from Georgia, referencing quality concerns (Agenda.Ge 2019b: n.p.; Agenda.Ge 2019c: n.p.).

Even though the boycotts occurred after GI legislation had passed, ongoing tensions with Russia were perceived as a crucial motivation to increase promote GIs in order to compete in alternative markets by interviews with officials and reports (Interviews 15; 16; Holm 2015: n.p.; Cenusa et al. 2014: 7f.). At the same time, the Russian embargo on Georgian wines in 2006 was unanimously perceived by interviewees as turning point in the wine sector towards diversifying production (Interviews 15; 18; 19; 20; 21). One wine expert argued that due to the closure of the market, new ways had to be found, and one government official argued that prior to the embargo “the big companies were lazy” (Interview 18; 19), and that the embargo triggered the industry to diversify their grape and wine production (Interview 18). Therefore, what is interesting in this process of external governance is that it contrasts other cases of Russian interference that were discussed in Chapter 3 (Delcour & Wolczuk 2015; Dimitrova & Dragneva 2009). Even though Georgia was arguably vulnerable to Russia (Ademmer 2015), as evidenced by the 2008 Russian military aggression, the embargo facilitated, rather than obstructed, the acceptance of EU rules.

In contrast to Russia, government officials considered the EU as stable, reliable and with the necessary purchasing power for GI-products (Interview 15; 16). Moreover, the EU was perceived by the government as occupying “leading positions in the domain of protection of geographical indications” (Gabunia n.d.b.: n.p.). Consequently, diversification especially towards the EU was deemed necessary to avoid future crises resulting from Russian embargoes, and GI products were argued to be particularly competitive (EastAgri 2017a: n.p.; Government of Georgia 2015a: 30; Government of Georgia 2015b: 9f.; Holm 2015: n.p.). It was argued that “approving Georgia-made products with geographical indications was important as it showed Georgian products were of high quality and allowed the goods to be better position in European Union (EU) markets” (Agenda.Ge 2016b: n.p.). This rationale for enhancing Georgia's place in global markets continued in relevant policy documents. For

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instance, the Rural Development Strategy argues that “in order to increase export volume and the competitiveness of agricultural products, the protection of geographic indications and appellations of origin is very important” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 21f.; see also Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2015: 12; Government of Georgia 2018: 20; Government of Georgia 2014: 25; Government of Georgia 2015a: 22; Government of Georgia 2015b: 13). Hence, the expected market mode did not fully materialise due to the absence of private players in the process. Rather, the observations point towards a required broadening of the mode to include entrepreneurial motivations by governments.

The second expectation was that due to the extensive institutionalisation of GIs within the EU, external governance would have hierarchical elements that would be enforced through international treaties. However, the EU's GI system was adopted in Georgia before formal negotiations started. As elaborated in the subsequent section, Georgia adopted a GI law similar to the EU's already in 1999. Interviews with government officials confirmed that the EU itself was hardly involved in the process at this time, even though some member states, especially France, advised the Georgian government on its GI-regulations (Interviews 15; 18). The involvement of the French government and especially the INAO was perceived as ‘natural’, given the overlaps in understandings of terroir as explained in the subsequent section. This connection is also visible in the reference of the law to ‘Appellations of Origin’ that has a French origin rather than the EU-term PDO. Here, it needs to be remembered that the EU-system itself is based in exactly these French place-based protections for food, as has been elaborated in Chapter 5. Thus, even though since 1992 the EU GI-system has been governed from the EU-level, this did not mean that member states have not been involved in this external governance process.

Formal EU-Georgia relations on GIs began only in 2006, when the EU/Georgia Action Plan referred to the initiation of “a dialogue to explore the possibility for the negotiation of a bilateral agreement on geographical indications, including the wine and spirits sector” (EEAS 2006: 25). As a result, Georgia and the EU initiated negotiations on a stand-alone GI agreement in 2007 and finalised them in 2011, a year before negotiations on the DCFTA started into which the agreement became incorporated (Commission of the European Communities 2008: 12; Commission of the European Communities 2009: 13). Hence formal relationships in which the

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hierarchical mode could have been exerted did not exist until after the Georgian law was adopted, meaning the hierarchical mode did not apply.

Not only did the external governance of GIs occur before typical elements of hierarchy emerged, interviews with EU and Georgian government officials described negotiations on GIs as remarkably straightforward compared to other trade agreements (Interview 1; 15). As a result, the 2012 agreement included the entire list of EU products, including Feta, Manchego, and Champagne - GIs that were difficult to protect with Mexico and Canada, let alone the US, as has been highlighted by one interviewed EU official (Interview 1; Official Journal of the European Union 2012a: 14; 17; 60; see also Moir 2017: 1035; Advisory Group International Aspect of Agriculture 2012: 9). While the power asymmetry between Georgia and the EU can be assumed to have played a role particularly in the scope of EU-products protected, what was crucial was that the GI-system itself had already been adopted long before. This supports similar findings by the academic literature on other negotiations (Moir 2017). Interviewed officials argued that the previous adoption of Georgian GI legislation, as well as the Georgian understanding of *terroir* facilitated the full protection of EU GIs in the agreement (Interviews 1; 15; European Commission 2014b: 26). One EU official contrasted Georgia and the US specifically, arguing that "Georgia always understood GIs" (Interview 1). In turn, it can be concluded that, contrary to the institutionalist expectation, hierarchy did not factor into the external governance of GIs. Rather, the EU was surprisingly passive in the process.

Since the implementation of a GI system in Georgia, the EU has become more actively involved in the external governance of GIs. As mentioned previously, it funds a TWINNING programme to increase Georgian bureaucrats' familiarity with EU-GI processes. Even though the EU's direct involvement has been relatively recent, with the project operating since 2019, it could indicate a shift towards a networked mode of external governance in the phase of implementation. At the same time, one government official highlighted that the leading role 'on the ground' was not played by the EU but the FAO and the EBRD: "I would like to see more involvement on the side of the EU. I would like to see them do more practical work [...] The FAO goes directly to farmers and they help create the production that satisfies GI requirements" (Interview 15). Nonetheless, the increasing involvement by the EU through funding TWINNING projects indicates that external governance modes for a specific instrument may differ

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depending on the stage and effectiveness of external governance. While the EU may be less active prior to the adoption of an EU-rule in a non-member state, they could increase their engagement in implementation, and vice versa. Thus far, this shift of modes has not been researched extensively, and therefore could provide interesting future research avenues.

To conclude, the section's empirical results correspond to neither mode presented by the original framework. Although the motivation to adopt EU-rules on GIs was based on market rationales, the process was driven by the central government that wanted to protect products that were perceived as crucial to Georgian identity from counterfeits, and who saw the diversification of export markets as a priority. Private actors who could have advocated for GI protections were and are absent, contrasting the trajectory of GIs in Western Europe, and expanding the original understanding of the market mode of external governance to include governmental actors. This finding likely extends beyond the case of Georgia itself, considering shared Soviet histories with EaP countries and other Eastern and Central European member states. These observations therefore suggest the necessity of an in-depth analysis of non-member states' domestic contexts which requires increased flexibility on how, when, and by whom external governance is practiced.

6.3.2 External governance effectiveness: GIs as national narrative and connection to Europe

Having engaged with the mode of external governance for GIs, the thesis addresses the framework's measures of effectiveness: rule selection, adoption, and application. Therefore, this section answers the second research question of how effective the external governance of GIs was in Georgia. It argues that the external governance of GIs was effective, mainly due to the aforementioned narratives constructing GI-products as national heritage, and the consequent perception of a sui generis GI system as 'natural choice'.

Turning to *rule selection*, asking to what extent EU or other rules were accepted as reference point in negotiations with the third country, it is necessary to reiterate that in Georgia, GI adoption occurred before formal negotiation processes with the EU on the matter. Hence, for this analysis, it is useful to combine the analysis of this measure with that of *adoption* into domestic legislation, as the laws themselves took the EU as reference. The central 1999 Law on Appellations of Origins of Goods and

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Geographical Indications includes various key aspects that reflect the EU's GI regime. For instance, Appellations of Origin refer to products that originate within a specific geographical area, exhibit specific qualities and features that are “essentially or exclusively due to a particular geographical environment and human factors” and necessitating that all steps of production, processing and preparation take place within the specified area (Legislative Herald of Georgia 1999: Art. 3). Therefore, Georgian Appellations of Origin correspond to Protected Designations of Origin in the EU. Similarly, the Georgian definition of Geographical Indications echoes the EU's Protected Geographical Indication definition, in which one of the production, processing, or preparation steps has to occur in the designated geographical area (Legislative Herald of Georgia 1999: Art. 3). Finally, the application process, including the necessity to evidence specific product characteristics, as well as the evaluation process are similar to those in the EU (Legislative Herald of Georgia 1999: Art. 7; 8; see also FAO 2018a: 3f.).

Various sources confirmed that the Georgian GI system was modelled after that of the EU. Explicitly, David Gabunia, former Director General of Sakpatenti stated that:

The Law on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications of Goods enacted in Georgia in 1999, was drafted in conformity with the legal principles and norms applicable in the European Union and protects two kinds of GIs – PDO and PGI (Gabunia n.d.a: 12).

Additionally, this evaluation of rule selection was supported by an FAO report:

the Georgian law was developed in line with principles and provisions laid down in the European Union regulations on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products in foodstuffs (FAO 2018a: 9).

There exists one major difference between the two systems, as mineral waters can be protected as GIs in Georgia but not in the EU. This is predominantly due to the continued popularity of Borjomi mineral water in some post-Soviet countries (IDS Borjomi International 2019: n.p.; Martens 2013: 3). Yet, this difference was not identified as a stumbling block in negotiations due to the rare counterfeiting of this product in the EU, as one government official highlighted: “it's not that big of a problem because there's not that many GI mineral waters and counterfeiting from other countries is unlikely” (Interview 15). The commitment to EU-rules was reiterated in the 2012 bilateral GI agreement that initially included 18 Georgian wine GIs (Official Journal of the European Union 2012a: 3; 6; European Commission 2014b: 28). Later, the 2012 list was included in the Association Agreement, which also emphasises the potential to introduce future GIs, and which establishes a GI Sub-Committee to

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intensify the cooperation on GIs (Official Journal of the European Union 2014a: Art. 171; 179).

Furthermore, what was striking was that other actors that could have been expected to lead on the process of implementing a *sui generis* GI-system in Georgia, and therefore challenge rule selection and adoption, themselves promoted the EU model. The WIPO which maintains the Lisbon Agreement, itself cited the EU as a reference point, prior to the adoption of the Georgian GI law. In 1996, a meeting record of the Georgian government with WIPO highlighted a document on the “Protection of Geographical Indications in France and in the European Community” as an underlying meeting document (WIPO 1996: n.p.). Therefore, the blueprint even for a WIPO meeting were EU-rules, with the organization acting as a transmitter.⁶¹ Moreover, Georgia only acceded to the Lisbon Agreement in 2004, five years after the GI law passed. Turning to the second potential competitor, the WTO's TRIPS agreement, which is narrower than the EU-system, was viewed by the Georgian government as an insufficient compromise (Interview 15). Therefore, the 1999 law reaches beyond TRIPS Article 22 and 23 in that it forbids the use of qualifiers such as “like” or “style”, a key characteristic of the EU system (Legislative Herald of Georgia 1999: Art. 11).

On a conceptual level, Georgian GI understandings also corresponded to those within the EU, particularly regarding *terroir*, indicating a deep level of adoption. For instance, the 1998 Law on Vines and Wine created various viticulture zones according to their *terroir*:

The boundaries of each specific zone shall be established strictly and demarcated [...] taking into considerations the factors (*terroir*) which determine the special quality of the wines with Appellation of Origin (Legislative Herald of Georgia 1998: Art. 17; italics added).

Hence, interviewed government and embassy officials, wine experts, as well as written sources frequently likened the Georgian gastronomical understanding to that of Italy and France (Martens 2013: 10; Interviews 8; 15; 16; 18). This perceived connection also explains that the aforementioned TWINNING project to assist Sakpatenti to improve GI protection is led by French and Italian authorities (Adecia.org 2018; DG NEAR 2018: 4). In fact, a government official emphasised their preference of experts from countries such as France and Italy over those from Baltic countries which had

⁶¹ Why the WIPO selected EU-rules, rather than successful examples from non-member states, lies outside the scope of this thesis but could be an interesting area of future research.

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been involved in earlier projects, citing the latter's alleged lacking understanding of *terroir* (Interview 15).

This connection to a circle of EU members that 'understand' place-based products is particularly close with France. On a practical level, this includes the INAO's involvement in the formulation of the 1999 Law on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications (Interview 15). Moreover, the French embassy continues to be very active in the area, for instance organizing wine tastings together with the Swiss embassy and Georgian actors (Hvino 2018). However, connections were also tied into historical narratives. For instance, prominent wine companies such as Chateau Mukhrani on their websites recall exchanges between Georgian noblemen and French wine producers in the 19th century (Chateau Mukhrani 2019: n.p; see also Granik 2019: n.p.). Georgian wines were frequently compared with French wines, and the aforementioned acceptance of Georgia as "cradle of wine" at a convention in Bordeaux was deemed extremely important by government officials and wine experts (Agenda.Ge 2016; Interviews 15; 19; 20).

These connections to France and Italy feed into a process that on the one hand drew Georgia to the EU and on the other hand distanced it from Russia and Soviet histories. Importantly, Russia does not have a *sui generis* GI-regime. To illustrate, a member state embassy official argued that "Russia has totally lost the connection to *terroir*" (Interview 8). Similarly, one government official specifically emphasised that the connections of Georgian noblemen to French winemaking developed "before the invasion by the Russians" (Interview 15). Another illustrative quote by a government official described the change of wine production during the time of the Soviet Union as "basically serving Russia" (Interview 18). Thus, returning to previous production practices and the emphasis on connections to Western-Europe were utilized to overcome experiences in the Soviet Union. It is also noteworthy that government officials used Russia and Soviet Union almost synonymously, indicating an embeddedness into current political struggle. These dynamics will be discussed in more depth in Section 7.2.1.

Having demonstrated that the historical context was vital for the selection and adoption of the EU GI system in Georgia, the section now engages with a second facilitating factor: narratives around culture, tradition, and national identity. Zooming in on these narratives, selecting and adopting the EU-model on GIs was perceived as a 'natural

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choice' by the government because products and their quality have traditionally been associated with geographical locations (Martens 2013: 2; 5; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development 2016: n.p; FAO & EBRD 2017: n.p.; Gabunia n.d.b.: n.p.; Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia 2015: 16; Government of Georgia 2018: 20). Correspondingly, the Strategy for Agricultural Development of Georgia contends that the country's rich agricultural tradition is an integral part of its history and mentality (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2015: 12). On foods, one government official illustrated that

Geographical Indications are in the blood of Georgian people. If you go to the market, people want to know what regions the tomatoes are from because they know some good tomatoes come from a specific region and the same holds for melons and cucumbers. They all have their special region. What we need now is to make the GI system more successful to build on this knowledge in Georgia (Interview 15).

This argued understanding of *terroir* relates to drinks and foods, but also to Kveris, as the clay's geographical origin was argued to play an important role for the quality of the Kveri and as a result the wine produced in it (Feiring 2016: 26). One wine expert explained that the soil from which the clay is produced has to contain specific minerals, meaning that there also exist so-called micro-zones for Kveri clay (Interview 19). Another expert argued that the best clay for Kveri was sourced from the Imereti region (Interview 20).

Especially wine, the primary GI product, is central to religious, cultural, and national narratives. To illustrate, Saint Nino, one of the most important Saints in the Georgian Orthodox Church, is traditionally depicted with a scroll and a cross made from grapevines - also called the Georgian cross. Another example is the colossal 'Mother of Georgia' statue that overlooks the capital Tbilisi, holding a sword in one hand and a wine cup in the other (GeorgianJournal 2018). Wine is also crucial to the *supra*, a Georgian 'banquet' traditionally held for important occasions such as weddings and funerals in which the *tamada*, or toastmaster, occupies the most important role (Muehlfried 2007). Vines are not only grown in backyards in the countryside, but also frequently span residential roads even in Tbilisi. Georgia's relation to wine has been argued to be truly exceptional: "Even when we think a culture like France or Italy is so wine-centric, Georgians just take it to a whole different level - much deeper than what we're exposed to" (sommelier in Bortolot 2018). Indeed, the 1923 anthropological encyclopaedia '*Peoples of all Nations*' noted that "the whole country seems to run with wine" (Nevinson 1923: 2355).

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In Georgia, narratives of wine and terroir were often connected to themes of struggle which themselves were related to the country's history:

Perhaps it's a result of Georgia's history of constant invasions that the Georgians have developed a kind of posttraumatic stress disorder that motivates them to defend their vine in a deeper way (Feiring 2016: xiii).

This statement, albeit dramatized and by a non-Georgian author, was mirrored in interviews, particularly when connecting to the rationales of protecting the market position of GI-wines against the volatility of relying on Russian markets. For instance, when describing the rationales for adopting a sui generis GI system, one government official started by stating that peoples' associations of products to places could "persist even through Soviet times" and argued that GIs were a tool to protect Georgian sovereignty from Russia by strengthening border regions economically (Interview 15).⁶² This was reiterated by a representative from an EU embassy: "We should be optimistic about terroir, as even under the pressure of the Soviet Union it remained a part of Georgian culture" (Interview 8). Another government official illustratively argued that, despite everything, "Georgians never stopped making wine" (Interview 18). Another example for this connection of conflict or struggle to terroir are narratives about wines developing character through adverse climatic conditions. Wine producers who grow at high altitudes in the Caucasus are quoted as saying that grapes had "less character" if they did not struggle (Feiring 2016: 22). In the central-western region of Imereti, there is a similar narrative of wine having to "feel the rain" (Feiring 2016: 123; 22). One wine maker quoted in Feiring's book even explicitly connected wine to war:

Georgia has been assaulted for centuries. Marauders rushed in and pulled out the vines. Our people were killed. My land is filled with the blood of my ancestors. But this is the strength of Georgian wine, from our blood-soaked earth. This is our *terroir* (wine producer interviewed in Feiring 2016: 21; italics added).

These examples demonstrate that agricultural products, especially wine, are conceptualised as part of the country's gastronomical traditions, cultural heritage and even national identity which in turn, the government argued, must be protected and promoted abroad (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2015: 12; Government of Georgia 2014: 25; 35). The centrality of these narratives has implications for theory in that it highlights the inability of purely institutionalist approaches to capture these more ideational dynamics to explain rule selection and adoption, but it also expands

⁶² Note also the connections to the concept of frontier, as discussed in the subsequent chapter.

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the domestic-structure explanation of external governance that predominantly concentrates on pre-existing legal texts, rather than these broader processes.

Turning to the third measure of external governance effectiveness, *application*, evidence suggests that GIs were implemented into administrative and political practice in Georgia. GIs were declared a priority of the Georgian government, and the promotion of Georgian wines in international exhibitions has been funded with 8.4 million Georgian Lari over four years (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia: 2017: n.p.; Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018a: n.p.; Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018: 15). Related to this international promotion is the National Wine Agency's tasting committee,⁶³ which certifies GI wines designated for export (Legislative Herald of Georgia 1998: Art. 33²). A government official explained that the committee with rotating membership usually meets twice a month to test whether the specifications in the GI application (e.g. style) and taste standards are met (Interview 18). If the wine does not pass the tasting committee, it cannot be exported (Interview 18). Thus, a wine expert argued that the Committee can be seen as a response to the repeated accusations over poor quality Georgian wine, adding quality credibility particularly for European buyers (Interview 20). Turning to another dimension of rule application for GIs, protecting Georgian GIs abroad, various sources, including EU and government officials, highlighted complaints by the government over counterfeits in the EU (Interviews 1; 3; 15; Agenda.Ge 2017b; FAO 2018: 10;). In turn, Georgian embassies since 2018 have been obliged to monitor the respective country's market for counterfeits (Agenda.Ge 2019a: n.p.). This means that the external governance of GIs has not only resulted in domestic processes but implied feedback loops for the EU itself.

Moreover, application was evidenced by the increasing number of registered GIs. In September 2019, 48 products were protected as GIs in Georgia, including 20 wines,⁶⁴ 13 cheeses,⁶⁵ eight mineral waters,⁶⁶ as well as Chacha brandy, Churchkhela sweets,

⁶³ Interestingly, interviewees noted the involvement of the German Development Agency (GIZ) in the process, again highlighting the connection to EU rules (Interview 18).

⁶⁴ Ateni, Akhasheni, Tsinandali, Gurjaanim Kardenakhi, Kakheti, Kotekhi, Kavareli, Manavi, Mukuzani, Naperuli, Kindzmarauli, Svir, Teliani, Tibaani, Tvishi, Vazisubani, Khvanchkara, Khashmi Saperavi, Bolnisi.

⁶⁵ Svanuri Sulguni, Kobi, Imeruli Kveli, Meskhuri, Chechili, Dambalkhacho, Tushuri Guda, Guda, Megruli Sulguni, Sulguni, Kartuli Kveli, Tenili, Acharuli Chechili, Chogi.

⁶⁶ Borjomi, Sairme, abeglavi, Mitarbi, Utsera, Skuri, Zvare, Bolnisi.

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Akhalkalaki Potatoes, Kutaisi Greens, Tkibuli Tea and Machakhela Honey (Sakpatenti 2019a: n.p.). Figure 2 illustrates the timeline of products added to the state registry, which has been in operation since 2005, likely due to the country's accession to the Lisbon Agreement which requires such a registry. It highlights that especially in 2012, when the EU-Georgia bilateral GI agreement was signed, registrations skyrocketed, especially for non-wine products (15 of 15), which were mostly protected as Geographical Indications rather than the stricter Appellation of Origin delineation (14 of 15, with the exception being Borjomi water). Therefore, while a formal agreement and official negotiations between the EU and Georgia on GIs was not necessary for the initial selection, adoption, and application of GIs, it seems to have reinforced the application of the instrument.

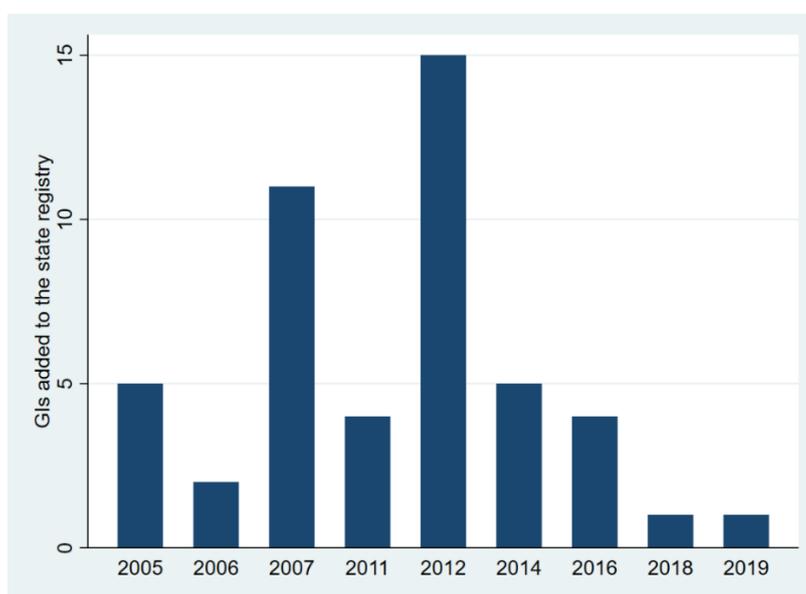


Figure 2: Georgian GIs added to state registry per year (own figure; Sakpatenti 2019a).

Since then, fewer GIs have been added to the register, which may indicate that all government priority products have been included and at the same time highlights the lack of private actors applying for GIs. Correspondingly, a government official highlighted that the enforcement even of the current list is difficult, resulting in a diminished incentive for the government to broaden the range of products (Interview 18).

The difference in central actors on the level of rule application is vital for understanding the external governance of GIs. To recapitulate, in the EU, producers, and especially small farmer groups are frequently framed as the motor of GIs, as one EU official highlighted: “the small producers are the ones that lend credibility to the

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scheme” (Interview 3). GIs were called a “wonderful tool” because “farmers need to work together” (Interview 3). However, in Georgia private actors have remained absent (Gabunia n.d.a: 12; Maximov 2016: n.p.). In fact, only four applications for GIs were driven by producer groups: Akhalkalaki Potatoes, Kutaisi Greens, Tkibuli Tea and Machakhela Honey, all added to the registry in 2016 (Sakpatenti 2019a: n.p.; FAO 2018: 10). Yet, these producer groups were themselves established by ENPARD, meaning they did not reflect a shift in private activity but rather result directly from EU-involvement in the area of cooperatives (FAO 2018: 10; Gabunia n.d.a: 12; Agenda.Ge 2015: n.p.). Importantly, this meant that for other GIs, practically no producer driven initiatives existed, as one EU member state embassy official stressed (Interview 8). Governmental actors evaluated future private initiatives as crucial for sustained rule application: “If you want to develop *terroir*, it needs to be done by the winemakers, not the state” (Interview 15; see also Interview 18).

To entice private sector application, the Georgian government engaged in various activities, which again evidenced the application into political practice. For instance, it organised the 2019 annual conference of the Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network (OriGIn)⁶⁷, an international advocacy group for GIs, to popularise GIs among Georgian entrepreneurs (Sakpatenti 2019b: n.p.). Indeed, one government official perceived the opening of a Georgian OriGIn branch itself as an important measure of application and a step towards the involvement of producers in the GI process (Interview 16). Already in 2016, the Government organised a workshop for small and medium-sized enterprises regarding intellectual property rights within the framework of the DCFTA (Agenda.Ge 2016: n.p.). Similarly, in 2017 an EBRD/FAO conference, financially supported by the EU, intended to familiarise over one hundred dairy actors with GIs (EastAgri 2017a: n.p.; EastAgri 2017b: n.p.). Nonetheless, as will be argued by Chapter 7, the inclusion of private actors in the process has been highly uneven.

In summary, the external governance of the EU's GI regime was effective in Georgia. Explanations for effectiveness, as for modes, lay in broad historical and contextual narratives. Rather than EU-rules corresponding to existing policies, as would be the legalistic approach of the domestic-structure explanation, the Georgian government

⁶⁷ OriGIn is a Geneva-based NGO that represents GI-producers and producer associations, lobbying for GI protection and promoting GI as a “sustainable development tool for producers and communities” (Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network 2019: n.p.).

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adopted GI because the products were deemed too important to be left unprotected. It also fostered the international promotion of the products because of their supposed potential that was closely related to narratives attached to Georgian foods and especially drinks.

6.4 LEADER: the EU as blueprint

Having outlined the external governance of GIs, this section analyses the external governance of the LEADER programme in Georgia. To reiterate, given the procedural design of LEADER within the EU, as well as the focus on the inclusion of a variety of actors in a bottom-up process, the network mode of external governance is most likely. However, aspects of conditionality can be expected given that within the EU, the implementation of LEADER is obligatory to receive EAFRD funding. As previously stated, the LEADER rural development programme has been implemented in Georgia through ENPARD, and pilot LAGs in Lagodekhi, Borjomi, and Kutaisi were included in ENPARD I. Rather than being steered directly by the EU, the programme has been implemented by international NGOs and the UNDP which were mainly tasked with the financial and operational oversight of the LAGs.

A key argument in this section is that LEADER was indeed externally governed through a network mode. However, the networking and learning processes were not two-way processes in which actors learned from each other, but Georgians were 'taught' the EU-model of community-led local development. As will be discussed later, this reflects the EU's divergence between their narratives on local ownership and policy practice that have been discussed regarding resilience (see Petrova & Delcour 2020). LEADER's external governance can also be described as effective, however revealing interesting processes in which local application overwrite governmental reservations towards the programme.

6.4.1 Mode of external governance: learning from European experiences

Various indications speak for a network mode of external governance when it comes to the LEADER programme. Importantly, the bottom-up approach, central to LEADER's design, was frequently reiterated in documents on the programme in Georgia. Explicitly, an ENPARD Georgia Newsletter argued that LEADER counters the practice of top-down development plans designed by the central government:

With decades of experience in Europe, the LAGs are expected to invert the perspective: the community becomes the development engine as they are tasked to identify the core

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needs and priorities of its own territory, to develop ideas to address and support them, and to implement them (ENPARD 2016c: 4).

Similarly, the “self-organization of local communities” was argued to be a key aspect of LEADER and was implemented through the individual drafting of Local Development Strategies by each LAG (ENPARD 2016c: 2f.).

Central to the process of LEADER's external governance were processes of learning and networking between EU and non-EU actors on various levels, from the central government to local actors. On the level of the central government, an ENPARD newsletter described communication between the Georgian government and the EU and referred to the transfer of European experiences through LEADER (ENPARD 2015b: 6). Additionally, LEADER awareness was dispersed through workshops and trainings for ministry officials, local governments, and civil society organizations. For example, this included high-level policy workshops in Tbilisi and Borjomi “which raised awareness of Georgian public officials in the EU model” rather than relying on a top-down dispersion through legal conditionalities (Chaudhry & Gviniashvili 2018: 22). More recently, a conference on the LEADER approach in Georgia included a session on “Sharing experience: good practices and examples from different countries”, with participants from ministries, rural networks, and LAGs from Estonia, Scotland and Germany (ENPARD 2019: 1f.).

The network mode, specifically through learning from European experiences, was utilised not only towards the central government, but included local stakeholders, such as municipal administrations and civil society actors. For instance, documents and interview participants from subcontracted organizations frequently mentioned the focus on capacity building for project applicants and members of the LAGs (e.g. Interviews 11; 12; 13; 14; Channon et al.: 49; Chaudhry & Gviniashvili 2018: 31;). Correspondingly, the UNDP extended training to 1,882 local government officials, LAG members, civil society organizations, “active citizens” and young people e.g. on participatory policy planning and community-led local development (Chaudhry & Gviniashvili 2018: 29; 31; 71). This mechanism was also evidenced in the contacts of Georgian LAGs with EU counterparts as well as with LEADER interest groups. Here, the dispersion of European experiences was facilitated through various study trips, for instance by the Borjomi LAG to its Scottish counterpart in 2016 (ENPARD 2016c: 6; Borjomi LAG 2016: 14). In fact, the visit, which included meetings with LAG

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members, and visits to funded projects, guided the formulation of the Borjomi Local Development Strategy (Borjomi LAG 2016: 14).

Yet rather than representing “horizontal coordination” (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 798) on equal footing, the network mode in the external governance of LEADER was marked by a student-teacher relationship between EU and Georgian actors both on central and local levels. One dominant narrative included continuous references to EU ‘best practices’ and ‘European experiences’ that would be internalised and applied by Georgian actors. To illustrate, in a project document for ENPARD II, the LEADER-related budget item⁶⁸ referred to the implementation of measures “following the principles, models and lessons learned from the EU Member States” (ENPARD 2016a: 11). Thus, on the local level, implementation was supported by EU-based organisations⁶⁹ with rural development experience that was shared with Georgian actors through workshops and meetings (ENPARD 2015: 7). The aforementioned UNDP training sessions similarly centred around the EU, and “resulted in increased interest to obtain more detailed information over the tools and approaches applied in EU countries” (Chaudhry & Gviniashvili 2018: 34).

On the level of LAGs, it was argued that Local Development Strategies should be designed according to local needs but inspired by EU experiences (ENPARD 2016a: 2). In practice, one representative from a subcontracted NGO explained that this meant that Georgian LAGs chose the most suitable LEADER model from a range of EU LAG implementation strategies, such as the ‘Scottish model’ in which LAG membership is limited but where all members have decision-making powers, or a second prevalent model in which the LAG has no membership restriction, but where there a LAG-board takes most decisions (Interview 9; ELARD 2018: n.p.). The selection of a LAG ‘type’ which has been implemented in EU member states illustrates that rather than designing own models, Georgian LAGs were intended to implement those developed in the EU.

Despite the apparent student-teacher relationship, there was little evidence of hierarchy as understood by Lavenex and Schimmelfennig, and as is the case in the EU where the programme must be applied to receive EAFRD funding. As with GIs, the Association

⁶⁸ “improved employment and living conditions in rural areas through the diversification of the rural economy” (ENPARD 2016a: 11).

⁶⁹ ETEA Foundation (Spain) in Lagodekhi, National Network of LAG (Czech Republic) in Kazbegi, Angus Council (Scotland) and Federal Institute for Mountainous and Less Favoured Areas (Austria) in Kutaisi.

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Agreement was concluded after LAGs had already formed. Moreover, the agreement did not explicitly reference LEADER but instead includes a vaguer commitment to progressively converge on rural development policies (Official Journal of the European Union 2014b: Art. 332). Similarly, while the Association Agenda referred to LEADER characteristics such as the involvement of local stakeholders and partnership between all actors in rural development, the programme is not explicitly cited (EEAS 2014: 28). The 2015 EU Annual Action Programme also did not make the implementation of LEADER mandatory. Rather, it points to the “implementation of the Rural Development Strategy for improved employment and living conditions in the rural areas through diversification” (European Commission 2015b: 12) as a condition for the payment of variable tranches.

Concordantly, actors involved in the implementation of LEADER in Georgia underlined LAGs' flexibility when it comes to the content of actions, and local strategies as well as funded-sub-projects differ regionally (Interviews 10; 13; Chaudry & Gviniashvili 2018: 18). Interviewees from organizations involved in LEADER also agreed in their perception of the EU and subcontracted organizations as observers and networking partners (Interviews 9; 10; 13; 14). One illustrated that “the EU puts a frame and the locals can decide” (Interview 13). EU officials also forcefully maintained that neither DGs nor the Delegation were involved in the implementation process or concerned with the specific designs of local programmes (Interviews 1; 2; 5). In fact, one EU official contended that it was difficult, especially in the Georgian context, to communicate to locals that LEADER was not a top-down process and “that the EU doesn't want anything in return” (Interview 5). The EU's passivity was applauded by the representative of one subcontracted organization in that the resulting flexibility facilitated the testing of different approaches, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all approach associated with top-down development measures (Interview 10). Therefore, even though the LEADER model was externally governed through disseminating EU ‘best practices’, it was not governed hierarchically.

To conclude this section's analysis, LEADER was externally governed through the network mode and therefore partly corresponded to the institutional expectation that internal and external governance modes correspond. However, different from the EU, a hierarchical element is absent in the case of Georgia. Moreover, even though the instrument was governed externally through processes such as learning and

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networking, it is crucial to note that this was not a partnership on equal footing, but that Georgian actors were supposed to learn from their EU counterparts. This includes actors at the level of the central government, but also local actors involved in the programme. Therefore, the analysis of LEADER's external governance mode reinforces the necessity to analyse different levels of governance, domestic contexts, and local dynamics.

6.4.2 External governance effectiveness: local application without central government support

Having determined that LEADER is externally governed via networks and learning, this section argues that external governance was also effective in that it was selected, adopted, and applied. However, when it comes to the adoption into policy practice, it became clear that the Georgian central government was reluctant to fully support the measure. Yet, as this section demonstrates, this reluctance was offset by processes on the local level, with local administrations and other local actors adopting and implementing the programme regardless.

LEADER was *selected* in Georgia through the implementation of ENPARD. At the same time, no competing rules were advocated for. The only actors that could be viewed as competitors given their project profile, the World Bank and USAID implemented regional and rural development programmes that differed significantly from the local ownership perspective of LEADER, and were predominantly related to infrastructure development (World Bank n.d.: n.p.; World Bank 2008: n.p.; World Bank 2019: n.p.; USAID 2019: n.p.).

Turning to the second measure of effectiveness, *adoption*, the Rural Development Strategy of Georgia frequently referenced LEADER principles. For instance, it stated that “[a]ccording to the EU approach, society should determine the local priorities and strategies towards which investments should be directed” and names LAGs as one mechanism towards this end (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 6). In fact, the strategy attached considerable priority to LEADER-issues contending that “social inclusion and the active participation of the local population in the identification of solutions to address their needs is also of utmost importance” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 5). Later, the strategy explicitly mentioned the three pilot LAGs and stated that “the project is based on the principles of the European LEADER approach, which entails the inclusion of local groups in the processes of dealing with local

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development issues and decision making” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 10; see also 55; 56). Another crucial characteristic of LEADER, inclusivity, particularly towards women and youth, was also explicitly mentioned: “the strategy’s priorities should include the creation of effective mechanisms that includes the local population and the facilitation of the participation of women and youth” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 9; see also European Commission 2017a: 1).

At the same time, the strategy undermined expectations on bottom-up rural development:

However, the rural population lacks the capacity to precisely recognise problems. They are not accustomed to, nor are they trained to mobilise around a problem. They are not familiar with how self-governing bodies work, or the methods used for escalating local issue[s] to the decision making bodies (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 35).

Subsequently, the strategy posited that intensive training exercises would be necessary to implement LEADER in Georgia (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 35f.). Similarly, the strategy referenced the “unwillingness of [the] local population to engage in local self-government and a lack of experience of municipal authorities in *modern approaches* of development” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 47; italics added) as main challenges of the strategy. Through this narrative, the government was prepared to shift blame for the failure of endogenous rural development to an allegedly unwilling and ‘un-modern’ rural population and set the frame for its subsequent neglect of LEADER. Furthermore, recapitulating the spatial concepts developed in Chapter 4, it clearly reflected narratives of rurality as backwards (Sauer 2012: 87; Crooke 1997: 368; DuPuis et al. 2011: 300). Crucially, by engaging this narrative, the government also undermined one central assumption of the LEADER programme in the EU, that locals are best placed to identify development needs and solutions for ‘their’ area (European Commission 2006: 5). As explained later, the construction of rurality as backwards spaces also tied into the alleged need to learn from the EU, tangled up in modernisation and professionalisation narratives.

This twisting of the LEADER model by the central government was particularly evident in the Rural Development Strategy Action Plans. Arguably, neither of the two published plans can be considered as supporting LEADER. The 2017 Action Plan included two measures for the relevant policy objective of local population inclusion. The first, facilitation of women’s activity and inclusion, related to women’s rights

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trainings conducted by institutions of the judicial system⁷⁰, rather than to rural development. For instance, one of the trainings centred around issues of Gender Equality and Violence Against Women, and while an important topic, it did not tie into the LEADER model (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018b: 59). Subsequently, a second measure aimed to foster the “awareness of the rural population on legal migration and the rights of migrants” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017b: 3). Hence, neither action related to LEADER’s central objective of bottom-up, inclusive rural development decision-making.

The same objective in the 2018–2020 Action Plan did approximate LEADER considering that the associated measure foresaw meetings with eight LAGs to facilitate the formulation of subsequent rural development strategies (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018a: 5).⁷¹ However, this measure did not have a budget attached to it (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018a: 5). While the lack of assigned resources may indicate that no extra funding was necessary, it is important to note that this was the only activity that related to LEADER. Indeed, rather than, as stated in the Action Plan, collecting information on LAGs’ best practices, the 2018 Progress Monitoring Report re-phrased the aim as “sharing the Rural Development Strategy and Action Plan with community groups” (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2019: 82f.). This reformulation implies the immediate shift from a bottom-up process in the 2018–2020 Action Plan to a top-down information initiative by the government in 2018. Thus, both Action Plans demonstrated the reluctance by the government to support the programme.

Reiterating the argument of lacking central governmental backing, the final evaluation of ENPARD I argued that

There is a lack of clarity, including the role and function of the LAGs in the context of rural development in Georgia and the financial sustainability schemes. The RDS [Rural Development Strategy] lacks a description of comprehensive implementation mechanisms with respect to the LAGs, their institutionalisation at the national level and their recognition as important players in rural development in Georgia (Channon et al. 2017: 59).

⁷⁰ Ministry of Justice of Georgia and the Training Center of Justice of Georgia.

⁷¹ Four meetings in four municipalities ensued (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2019: 3).

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Arguably, the aversion to LEADER can be explained by the government's noted reluctance to increase efforts on decentralization (Perchoc 2017: 2). Supporting the LEADER approach was likely perceived as countering the government's interests and thus discarded when it came to the translation of the strategy into policy measures. This argument is supported by one interviewee's views:

Everyone in the government is talking about decentralisation. But this means they have to lose power and the central government tries to control everything. If LEADER continues, this would mean much more decentralisation (Interview 9).

The viewpoint was also confirmed by another civil society representative, involved with the implementation of LEADER, who argued that the programme could only be sustainable if the government is willing to decentralise (Interview 11). Thus, it is likely is that the EU's funding support towards the draft of the Rural Development Strategy resulted in hollow government references to LEADER. As a result, LEADER can be characterised as only superficially adopted at the level of the Georgian central government. LEADER here clearly contrasts the case of GIs, in which the government was eager to adopt EU rules. Arguably, the difference between the two instruments reflected the prioritization of economic issues and a reductionist understanding of rural development to agriculture which will be elaborated in the conclusion to this chapter, as well as the unwillingness to share power with local governments let alone civil society in rural areas.

Despite this reluctance by the central government the programme was *applied* in practice, as eight LAGs had formed by 2020. After the initial three pilot-LAGs in Borjomi, Kazbegi and Lagodekhi were initiated during ENPARD I, the LAGs in Akhalkalaki, Dedoplistskaro and Tetrtskaro followed in 2016 before the two Adjara LAGs in Keda and Khulo were established in 2017. As can be seen in Figure 3, most of these LAGs are in rather geographically remote areas, meaning they are far from Tbilisi, and close to borders, reiterating the relevance of the concept of frontier as conceptualised in Chapter 4.

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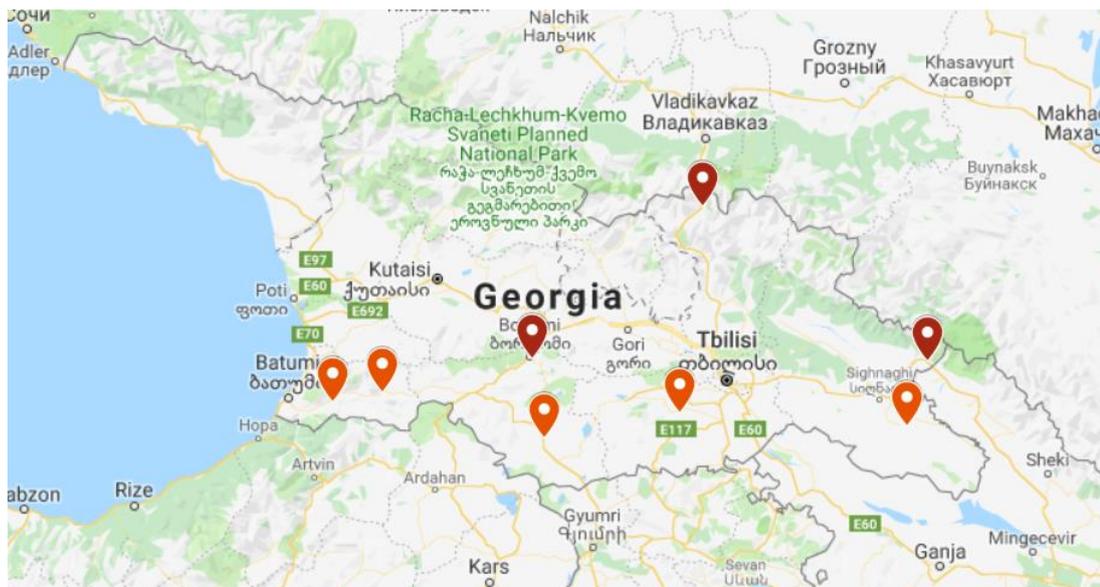


Figure 3: Local Action Groups in Georgia by October 2019. Dark red: pilot LAGs Borjomi, Lagodekhi and Kazbegi. Own Google Maps illustration.

At the same time, the programme can also be argued to have been *adopted* into policy on the local, rather than the central governmental level. This is because municipal governments were involved in LAGs and therefore part of the formulation of Local Development Strategies, the guiding LEADER policy documents on the local level. Here, the case of LEADER demonstrates the necessity to move beyond analyses of rule adoption only at the level of the central government. Rather, in a multilevel system, different actors may adopt EU rules to different degrees. Local Development Strategies included a variety of the programme's features. For instance, the Lagodekhi strategy details that the LAG should strengthen “European practices and decentralised approaches to rural development bottom-up approach [sic!]” (Lagodekhi LAG 2016: 37). The awareness of a broader concept of rural development was evident in the strategy, as it

promotes an integrated approach to socio-economic development that encourages not only the creation of employment and income-generation opportunities, but also factors such as community relations and development, human development, preservation of natural resources, cultural cooperation, civic integration (Lagodekhi LAG 2016: 30).

Similarly, the Dedoplistskaro LDS referred to LEADER as “an integrated development process designed to engage, enable, resource and empower local communities in undertaking their own local development” (Dedoplistskaro Local Action Group n.d.: 14). Hence, central objectives of LEADER presented in Chapter 5 were discernible in Georgian Local Development Strategies. Importantly, the respective strategies were drafted following various meetings with local people,

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including non-LAG members (Borjomi LAG 2016: 13; Dedoplistskaro LAG n.d.: 14). To illustrate, the Lagodekhi Local Development Strategy was designed after field visits to all 67 villages in the municipality which identified 52 problems⁷² (Lagodekhi LAG 2016: 5f). Additionally, 1,058 out of 3,800 inhabitants of Kazbegi participated in meetings for the development of the strategy (Channon et al. 2017: 58). This reiterates the application of LEADER's bottom-up approach.

The strategies also corresponded to those by EU LAGs in their structure, with a description of the LAG area, a SWOT analysis, as well as an action plan for local development (see European Commission & DG AGRI 2006: 16). Similarly, LAG management structures were described and the process of submitting applications for sub-projects corresponded to that in the EU (e.g. Lagodekhi LAG 2016: 41f.; Borjomi LAG 2016: 29-33; Dedoplistskaro LAG n.d.: 42-46). Furthermore, albeit in a more limited way compared to LEADER in member states,⁷³ co-funding of sub-projects was achieved, an additional sign for the programme's application. For instance, the local governments in Lagodekhi and Kazbegi contributed circa 20% of the budget for sub-projects (Channon et al. 2017: 50; 57). The Borjomi Water Factory funded 50% of a sports ground sub-project, while the municipality committed itself to its maintenance (Channon et al. 2017: 52). Correspondingly, municipal authorities were described in documents and by officials from subcontracted organizations as significantly more receptive to LEADER than the central government (Channon et al. 2017: 50; Interviews 9; 11; 13; 14). In this respect, one interview with an EU representative supposed that rather than perceiving the programme as a threat, local politicians and administrators viewed it as an opportunity to engage with constituents and deliver results that they, due to their limited funding, otherwise could not (Interview 5).

The application dimension is further supported considering the large number and variety of sub-projects funded by LAGs. By 2017, the Lagodekhi LAG had funded 31 projects in the areas of agriculture, tourism, youth, health, and women (Channon et al. 2017: 49). The LAG supported the construction of a greenhouses and irrigation systems but also funded the building of village community centres, a tourist information centre as well as funding sewing workshops, musical instruments, and trainings on reproductive health (Lagodekhi Local Action Group n.d.: n.p.). The

⁷² The problems were classified into five broader categories: environment, social/youth, agriculture, infrastructure, tourism (Lagodekhi Local Action Group 2016: 6).

⁷³ Where 50% co-funding is the rule.

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Kazbegi LAG funded 63 initiatives until 2017, including 40 business, 12 community and 11 municipal projects (People in Need 2018: 4). All LAGs also provided training activities to potential applicants in order to meet procedural criteria (Channon et al. 2017: 49; 51; People in Need 2018: 7). To illustrate, the Keda LAG received 310 project ideas, of which 125 applicants were selected for a training on writing the formal proposal (Chaudry & Gviniashvili 2018: 79).

Another LEADER feature that was applied in Georgia, networking and shared best practices, found its expression in the already mentioned study visits of Georgian LAGs to EU counterparts. Moreover, Georgian LAGs networked amongst each other, for instance as the Keda LAG visited its Lagodekhi counterpart in 2019 (Keda LAG 2019: n.p.; ENPARD 2016b: n.p.; Dedoplistskaro LAG n.d.: 19). This resounded in an UNDP assessment which described information exchanges between 'old' LAGs and the relative newcomers e.g. in Khulo and Keda (Chaudry & Gviniashvili 2018: 30). This was confirmed by one representative who was involved with the establishment of a newer LAG, and who described that they "started talking to different LAG coordinators of the first three LAGs to prepare" (Interview 13). Finally, the creation of an interest organisation for Georgian LAGs', the Georgian Association of Local Action Groups (GALAG) additionally contributed to the networking component of LEADER and thus rule application (ELARD 2018: 1; Chaudry & Gviniashvili 2018: 46).

In summary, the programme was effectively governed in Georgia. LEADER was selected, adopted, and applied in practice. Moreover, its adoption and application on the local level to some extent compensated for the central government's reluctance to support a decentralised bottom-up programme. Arguably, the potential for this application without adoption can be explained by how the programme was governed externally: local actors were socialised with EU-rules directly, rather than relying on a top-down approach that would necessitate the central government's support. Hence, the case reiterates the need to more closely inspect the local context of external governance, not only at the central government level but also at municipal or regional levels. Arguably, the possibility of these processes of local application despite deficient central adoption have thus far escaped most EU external action analyses. Interestingly, these processes may indeed indicate deeper Europeanisation than the often-superficial support for an EU-agenda by the central government. Rather, in this

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case, locals and original addressees of specific EU-policies were engaged with and, as discussed in Section 7.3.1, 'Europeanised' directly.

Nonetheless, the reluctance of the central government to fully adopt LEADER raises questions for future instalments. Already the ENPARD I evaluation highlighted the issue of sustainability of LAGs without government commitment, which was also unanimously raised by interviews with representatives from subcontracted organizations (Channon et al. 2017: 51f.; 56; 59; Interviews 9; 11; 12; 14). One organisation's representative argued that the programme could be expected to continue long-term only if a specific proportion of the budget is ascribed to LEADER, as is the case in the EU (Interview 9). Similarly, an UNDP evaluation noted that "without the support to LAGs, [the] bottom-up approach will be finished in Georgia: without support the momentum will be lost" (Chaudry & Gviniashvili 2018: 72). Importantly, various interview participants, EU officials and civil society representatives argued it highly unlikely that local governments could compensate for the lack of EU or central government funding, given their limited budgets and competences, which were described by one civil society representative as "catastrophic" (Interview 11; see also Interviews 5; 12; 14).

6.5 Conclusions

When putting these findings into comparison and in relation to the expectations elaborated in the beginning of this chapter, various conclusions can be drawn. Indeed, the results suggest three major theoretical reflections. First, modes do not necessarily align with sectoral policies as a whole. Second, hierarchy does not feature as prominently as expected and is not necessarily more effective than the market and network modes. Third, the consideration of involved actors should be broadened to focus less on the EU and more on actors in the non-member state, including the central government but also local and other international actors. Thus, the framework needs to be adapted to account for the various possible geographies of governance which were crucial for the effectiveness of the CAP's external governance in Georgia.

Turning to the first implication, the chapter observed that GIs were externally governed in a way that mapped onto neither mode of external governance proposed by Lavenex and Schimmelfennig. Even though the rationale for adopting EU rules was driven by entrepreneurial rationales, the Georgian government drove the adoption of GIs instead of private companies and producer organizations. Thus, the expectation

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that GIs follow the market mode, as is the case in the EU, was not met. For LEADER, the network mode that marks the instrument in the EU was also observed in Georgia. However, Georgian actors were not equal partners, but were taught EU best practices. At the same time, this divergence in modes contradicts the expectation that each policy sector is governed by one overarching mode of external governance.

Second, hierarchy, other than expected by the institutional explanation, did not feature prominently in the external governance of either instrument. This differs from their implementation in the EU, where GIs are marked by a high level of formalization and the adoption of LEADER is mandatory to receive EAFRD funding. Curiously, the EU arguably could have largely prescribed the adoption of EU-rules via a hierarchical mode without expecting significant backlash from the Georgian government that, as highlighted in Chapter 1, has been compliant in the approximation with the *acquis* in many sectors. Moreover, this passivity cannot be traced back to lacking EU-preferences or interest in these instruments. As has been demonstrated in Chapter 5, GIs and LEADER feature high on the CAP agenda. Nonetheless, the lack of hierarchy did not mean that LEADER and GI's external governance was ineffective. Both instruments were selected, adopted, and applied in Georgia. This finding therefore weakens both institutional and power-based expectations that identify the hierarchical mode as more effective than the market and network modes (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 803f.; Knill & Tosun 2009: 890).

In absence of hierarchy, the role of domestic actors was remarkable. While in the case of GIs the central government acted akin to a company to secure market opportunities for Georgian products, the central government was reluctant to support LEADER. Instead, LEADER's implementation was principally attributed to local actors, including LAG's successful cooperation with municipal governments and administrations that aimed to engage with constituents (see Chaudry & Gviniashvili 2018: 82). Hence, this importance of various domestic actors at different levels for the external governance of the two CAP instruments reiterates the general argument of the chapter: that modes and measures of effectiveness depend on the specific contexts in non-member states.

The difference of attitude by the central government to GIs and LEADER respectively arguably resulted from a differing conceptualisation of rural policies by the EU and the Georgian government, respectively. The government perceived rural policies

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predominantly as supporting agricultural production and exports, contrasting the multi-sectoral, multi-functional EU rural development concept. An UNDP evaluation echoed this argument: “the government has not taken real ownership of the rural development concept” (Chaudry & Gviniashvili 2018: 34), stating that ministry officials see rural development as unnecessary extra work, and questioning the government’s commitment to rural development altogether (Chaudry & Gviniashvili 2018: 8). This was further supported by the allocation of budget within the Rural Development Strategy, in which most measures were utilised for agricultural development, and only 3,325,000 GEL (circa 910,000 Euros) were attributed to tourism as the only purely non-agricultural measure (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017b: 1). While GIs were expected to result in significant economic benefits, LEADER, it seems, does not produce the economic outputs the government values and was thus not supported by it.

However, another question prevails: what can be learned from knowing that the external governance of an EU rule was effective? In essence, the selection, adoption, and application categories investigate whether the EU was successful in expanding their rules to another country. Which implications these rules have on the ground remains unclear. For instance, even though it can be argued that LEADER was applied in Georgia because LAGs have formed and are funding projects, what specific consequences these projects had for rural spaces is left untouched by the external governance framework. To confront this gap is the objective of the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER 7: GIS AND LEADER: SHAPING GEORGIAN RURAL SPACES

Having applied the theoretical framework of EU external governance to the cases, this chapter moves beyond the endpoint of most external action analyses by investigating the consequences of external governance on the ground. Thus, it investigates the third research question: How have GIs and LEADER shaped the understanding and politics of rural space in Georgia? It is these spaces and the people related to them that are the primary addressees of LEADER and GIs, meaning investigating consequences for rural spaces is also crucial for comprehensively understanding the politics of EU external relations. Crucially, this chapter addresses some of the gaps of the EU external governance literature discussed in Chapter 3, such as the conceptualisation of external governance as a linear policy export, and the reduction of domestic contexts largely to processes at the central government level. As argued previously, this led to an insufficient understanding of effectiveness, which did not comprehensively analyse the consequences of EU external governance but measured success according to whether EU rules had been selected, adopted, and applied.

This chapter utilises the concept of rural space to capture a wide array of potential consequences, intended or not. To recapitulate Chapter 4, rurality is often used synonymously with spaces of agricultural production, despite the multidimensionality of activities practiced in rural spaces, as well as the diversity of agricultural producers themselves (Marsden 1995; Bernstein 2010; Petrick & Weingarten 2005). Next to the conflation of agriculture and rurality, rural spaces are often understood as opposed to urbanity and related perceptions of modernity and globalisation: rural spaces are constructed as backwards, peripheral, remote, or at the frontier (see Cloke 1977; 1997; 2006; Sauer 2012; Woods 2007; Hall 2013; Falk & Pinhey 1978). Beyond rurality, how the instruments shape space is analysed along the dimensions of place, land, and territory. The former mainly describes relations towards space, including feelings of belonging, pride, as well as exclusion of both insiders and outsiders of a specific geographical area (see Gupta & Ferguson 1992; Gieryn 2000; Price 2013). The latter two dimensions capture power relations between and within spaces: land as economic relations of ownership or spaces of capital accumulation and territory as “state space” (Lefebvre 1991: 228), i.e. more overtly political forms of authority and decision-making powers (see Akram-Lodhi & Kay 2007; Brenner & Elden 2009).

In the previous literature on the instruments within or outside the EU, as well as in EU expectations themselves, various connections to these spatial concepts become evident. For instance, GIs are by design connected to geographical locations and narratives around rurality, as they were developed as a safeguard against modernisation and urbanisation (Bowen 2015: 10). Concordantly, LEADER bases itself in the assumption that people that are closely connected to a specific rural space feel responsible and are uniquely capable of devising developmental policy for them (European Commission 2006).

For Georgia, this chapter presents various interesting findings. First, although both instruments were effectively governed externally, neither LEADER nor GIs resulted in the consequences expected by the EU. They did not alter power structures related to space, whether in terms of economic relations, i.e. land, nor political power, i.e. territory. GIs were of benefit mostly for large wine companies, while for LEADER, rather than empowering marginalised groups, already comparatively powerful actors were empowered further. Nonetheless, the instruments fostered narratives that subverted negative conceptualisations of rurality, by re-constructing backwardness as tradition and marketing it globally, as well as by overcoming the conceptualised isolation by integrating rural spaces into EU-networks and narratives. By doing so, the instruments shaped place, as they narratively connected people from within spaces and especially outsiders to it. Subsequently, the chapter first discusses the consequences of GIs on rural spaces before turning to LEADER.

7.1 Geographical Indications

GIs were expected by the EU to have multitudinous consequences for rural areas both within and outside the EU. The Commissioner for Agriculture, Janusz Wojciechowski stated that

Producers benefits are clear. They can sell products at a higher value, to consumers looking for authentic regional products. [...] Geographical Indications protect local value at global level (European Commission 2020b: n.p.).

The sentiment that GIs are a vital rural development instrument was shared by most EU officials that were interviewed for this thesis. One official was particularly forceful, noting the creation of jobs, increased incomes, and the avoidance of rural population that follow GIs: “For us, it’s clearly a rural development instrument. Without a doubt” (Interview 1). Whilst not all EU officials agreed, with one perceiving GIs only as an intellectual property right, even this interviewee noted benefits for

producers' incomes through the protection of (already existing) price premiums but also increased tourism (Interview 3).

To briefly recapitulate the engagement with these aspects in Chapter 5, an International Trade Centre publication described GIs as a “comprehensive, equitable and market-oriented rural development package” that could be “the organizing principle or centrepiece of regional and local development initiatives” (Giovannucci et al. 2009: 5; 8). Expectations were particularly pronounced regarding the concept of land. Centrally, academic publications noted that GIs shielded small farmers from the constant need to expand their land and production sizes to be competitive (Raftery 2017: 362; Gade 2004: 856). Often, the promotion of small farms was framed within a narrative of shielding artisanal, traditional, local farming from a destructive global market (Bowen & Zapata 2009: 117; Goodman 2003: 1). This was illustrated the aforementioned sceptical EU official: “what the consumer is looking for is production with 20, not with 200 cows” (Interview 3). GIs were also seen by the academic literature to both rely on and reinforce strong connections to place, enhancing a sense of belonging or pride in the production region (e.g. DeSoucey 2010: 433; Gangjee 2017: 13).

Importantly, EU officials in interviews expected the same positive consequences to materialise in Georgia: increasing incomes especially for small farmers, employment creation, agro-tourism and local development (Interviews 1; 3). Of course, this neglects that these consequences, as discussed in Chapter 5, were not uniform even within the EU. As will be discussed below, many of the consequences observed in Georgia, indeed echoed some of the existing findings of the literature on the two instruments. Accordingly, this perception points to two issues. First, it highlights that either the academic literature on the consequences of GIs was unknown, or that it was ignored. Secondly, and more important for the understanding of EU external governance is that EU narratives around adapting actions to specific contexts were not internalised by EU officials. Similarly, lessons from the expansion of the CAP to newer member states in Central and Eastern Europe, with the challenges outlined in Chapter 5, seem to not have been drawn.

7.1.1 Reconstructing rural backwardness: the global marketing of traditional places

In Georgia, the consequences of GIs for the construction of rurality and connections to places were deeply intertwined. First, on a more material level, there was repeated

mention by interviews with government officials and documents that GIs could help “keep the local population in place” (Gabunia n.d.a; see also Murjiri 2017), i.e. the prevention of migration from rural areas to Tbilisi and abroad (Interviews 15; 17). One official from a member state embassy argued that “Geographical Indications can mean that living in rural areas can be a choice as villagers find they can engage in something profitable there” (Interview 8). Wine experts hoped that this would attract especially younger people to move back to or remain in rural areas to take up wine production (Interviews 19; 20). A government representative argued that rural areas

are seen as a place you go when you’ve got nothing left or when you’re old but now young producers and young people are considering to move to [...] rural areas because of GI and through their increased revenue (Interview 17).

Indeed, this was connected to national security concerns by a government source who argued that deserted villages would pose an easy target for Russian expansion into Georgian territory (Interview 15). Astonishingly, they therefore declared GIs as a tool to protect Georgian sovereignty (Interview 15). While this securitization of GIs, as well as the narrative that GIs reduce rural depopulation and the biopolitics surrounding the wish to retain populations in specific areas are important in their own right and should be studied further, there was little empirical evidence that GIs have indeed had this consequence. As will be explained later, only few, large producers indeed benefitted from the protection, and depopulation continues to be raised as an important issue facing rural areas in Georgia (Kohler et al. 2017).

However, GIs did shape rural spaces and places specifically through an altered narrative of *rurality*. Specifically, they subverted conceptualisations of rurality as remote, isolated, backwards spaces at the frontier, into positive spaces of quality, traditional production. As argued later, these spaces were then marketed globally, particularly to international tourists, introducing an interesting dynamic of place in which primarily outsiders became connected to Georgian rural spaces. On a first level, aspects of isolation and periphery were addressed by the integration of Georgian actors into EU networks which were developed through study trips, workshops, exhibitions, and the participation in interest organisations. For instance, various stakeholders, including producers, participated in study trips to France and Italy (Gabunia n.d.a.: n.p.; WIPO 2015: n.p.). Another example are international conferences that were organised by Georgian and European actors, for instance the 2016 “Georgia Against Counterfeiting in the Context of DCFTA” meeting, organised by Sakpatenti and the

GiZ, funded by the EU (Delegation of the European Union to Georgia 2016: n.p.; Agenda.Ge 2016a: n.p.; WIPO 2014: n.p.). A third instance in which these international networks were fostered was the opening of a Georgian OriGIn branch (OriGIn 2016: n.p.). As mentioned previously, OriGIn is an international advocacy network that promotes GIs. Therefore, GIs in Georgia opened rurality to international networks. Yet, again, a student-teacher relationship became apparent in these networks: Georgian producers were meant to become accustomed to EU practices, especially where GIs are particularly established and successful, i.e. France and Italy, rather than exchanging ideas on equal footing.

This opening of rural spaces and a changed of the perception of rurality was fostered by GIs in a second, even more interesting way. GIs in Georgia reconstructed backwardness as tradition and marketed this tradition internationally. As the previous chapter demonstrated, the Georgian government delineated rural areas as backwards. Correspondingly, sources lamented that the “greatest obstacle to the modernization of Georgian agriculture has been the lack of knowledge in matters of modern agriculture” (ENPARD 2015b: 3). Yet, when it comes to GIs, the avoidance of modern production methods is welcome: backwardness becomes tradition. In turn, in Georgia, GIs arguably contributed to a re-definition of rural spaces. One government official asserted that “The image of rural regions with GI production has definitely changed” (Interview 15) and this was confirmed by another official (Interview 17). As mentioned in Chapter 6, the promotion of Georgian GI products, especially wines, has been entangled in narratives around tradition, and cultural heritage. For instance the region of Kakheti in which 14 of 18 GI wines are registered has become central to previously mentioned constructions of Georgia as the cradle of vine and wine and “a region of ancient culture” (World Bank 2012: 2).

Another striking example is that of Akhalkalaki potatoes. One government official argued that Akhalkalaki, a municipality in the Samtskhe-Javakheti province, was previously perceived as largely underdeveloped (Interview 15). Located 50 kilometres from the Armenian and 30 kilometres from the Turkish border, Akhalkalaki is largely inhabited by people who identify as ethnic Armenians (93%) and was argued to have long been neglected by the central government (EEAS 2019). Indeed, similar to the literature’s conception of the frontier (Murray Li 2002; Hall 2013), the “province has been a source of concern for Tbilisi, with worries the area is home to secessionist

groups seeking to unite with neighbouring Armenia” (Peuch 2002: n.p.). For a long time, Akhalkalaki was also difficult to access physically, due to a lack of infrastructure.

A 2002 *Radio Free Europe* article noted:

there is the nightmarish ‘road’ - a serpentine 70-kilometer strip of earth furrowed by use and bad weather - linking Akhalkalaki and Akhaltsikhe, the administrative center of Samtskhe-Javakheti province. It is a trip that requires the utmost patience and skill of the drivers who undertake it (Peuch 2002: n.p.).

Since 2015, Akhalkalaki potatoes have been protected as a GI and are largely produced by a cooperative established with the support of ENPARD (ENPARD 2016d). Since this protection, one governmental official argued:

The perception of that territory changed completely. Formerly they had a bad reputation but now [...] they are known for their good potatoes and the region is seen more positive[ly] (Interview 15).

Additionally, agricultural Ministers since visited the town’s potato production sites and the production was even connected to the government’s priority of reducing dependence on potato imports (PotatoPro 2017; Potato Business 2017). Therefore, by reconstructing the town as a site of traditional, high-quality production, it not only alleviated perceptions of underdevelopment and backwardness, but also addressed the concept of frontier by increased political interest towards Akhalkalaki. Importantly, as will be elaborated in the engagement with the dimension of land, this did not mean that small producers in these villages reaped significant economic benefits.

Another surprising process in Georgia contradicted the findings that in the EU, while GIs have reconstructed negative connotations of rurality into a positive, this often resulted in a celebration of locality against the standardising forces of globalisation, especially as most GI products in the EU are sold locally (Woods 2007: 498). To illustrate, one EU official argued that “Although GI are protected on a global level, they remain a local product” (Interview 3). They even went so far to characterise GIs as “anti-globalisation” because while globalization processes “establish uniformity and suppress price, GI protect speciality” (Interview 3). In Georgia, as highlighted in the previous chapter, they were protected in precisely to harness, not shield from, globalization in that they were perceived as a way to promote Georgian products on European markets. Indeed, this was illustrated particularly well by an official of a member state’s embassy: “Geographical Indications make invisible products visible for capitalist markets” (Interview 8). Therefore, here the dimensions of rurality and place were closely connected to the dimension of land as means of capital

accumulation or economic relations more generally, which are discussed in detail in the subsequent section.

One way the global marketing of traditional rural spaces occurred is through the participation of GI-producers in international exhibitions, funded by the Georgian government. For instance, Georgian wine companies participated in 22 international exhibitions in eleven countries including the Netherlands, France, Poland and Germany but also China, Japan and the United States of America in 2017 (Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018b: 16f.). Indeed, as shown in Figure 4, wine exports rose by over 600% between 2009 and 2018. Returning to the government’s rationale of diversifying export markets, Figure 5 shows that exports rose faster to EU countries such as Poland, France, Germany, Estonia, and Lithuania than to Russia, even though it continues to be the primary market for Georgian wines.⁷⁴ In 2019, Georgian wine was exported to 44 countries globally (National Wine Agency 2019: 7).

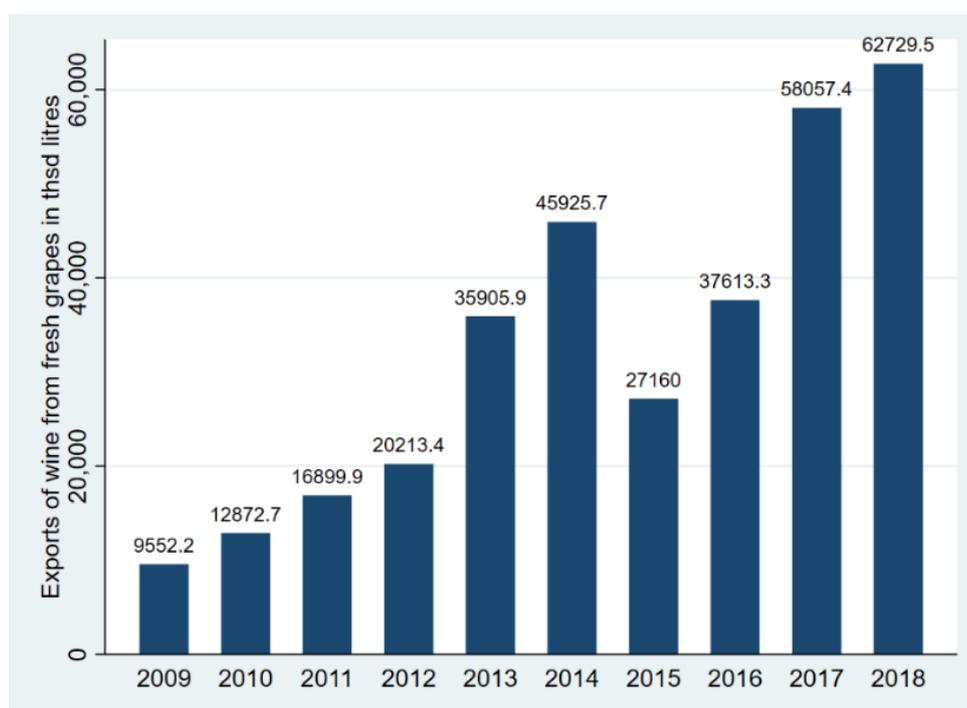


Figure 4: Exports of wine from fresh grapes in thousand litres, GeoStat 2014; 2015; 2019; own graphic.

⁷⁴ 25,582,447 bottles compared to 3,752,488 in Ukraine which is the next biggest export market in terms of bottles. Unfortunately, there are no official statistics that disaggregate exports per country in USD, which would give an indication particularly for GI products which attract higher prices (different markets likely attract different prices for different qualities of wine).

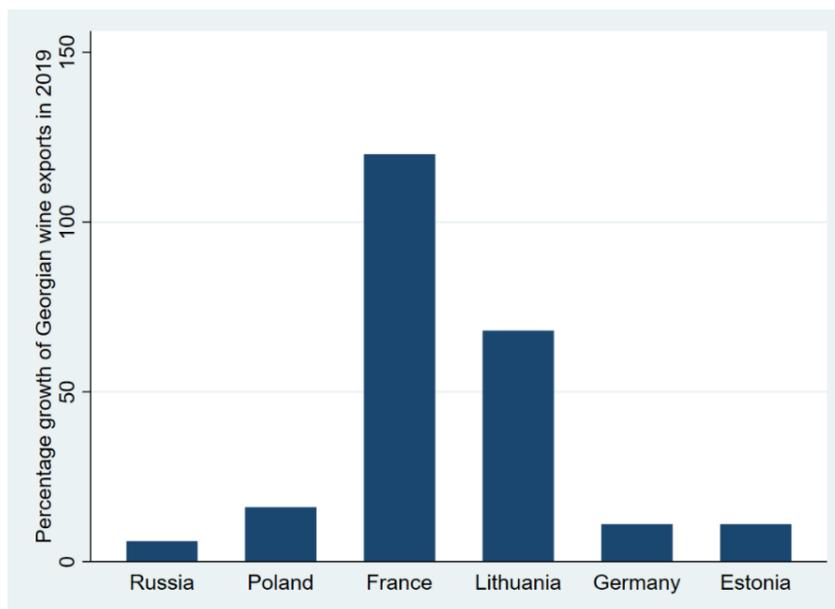


Figure 5: Growth of Georgian wine exports in 2019, Russia vs. select EU countries; National Wine Agency 2019; own graphic⁷⁵

Turning to the concept of *place*, or perceived relations towards space, GIs again produced interesting consequences. Although the instrument was expected to alleviate out-migration from rural areas, the consequences that were observed resulted from the marketing of tradition to ‘outsiders’ of GI spaces. Hence, connections to spaces were particularly fostered through the development of international gastro- and rural tourism, that were also noted for EU GIs such as foie gras (DeSoucey 2010). These forms of tourism were strongly connected to the conceptualisation of GIs as cultural heritage, as a report on the potential for a Tenili cheese GI illustrates:

Once developed, the cheese-makers community incorporated in regional tourism services will receive not only additional income possibilities, but additional promotion and marketing channels for Tenili cheese while conserving the cultural heritage and regional identity (FAO & EBRD 2017: 13).

Interviews with government officials and wine experts indeed noted a relationship of the popularization of GI products, particularly wine, and increasing tourism especially from Europe (Interviews 15; 19). This is actively fostered by the government. For instance, the Ministry of Agriculture’s “Wine Route of Georgia” programme lists all companies in “traditional wine making regions” and supports “opportunities to develop tourist attractions around these sites” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 23; see also Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2017b: 29f.). Similarly, a wine road brochure was developed for the area of Shida

⁷⁵ Unfortunately, the National Wine Agency only started publishing these data in 2018, meaning longer term trends cannot be analysed.

Kartli, and maps delineating GI-areas distributed (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018b: 28; Sakpatenti n.d.).

The marketing of rural places was particularly directed at foreign tourists. For instance, after limited foreign language skills were highlighted as an obstacle for opening Georgian rural regions to international tourists (World Bank 2012: 2), wine guides and other tourism facilities in wine regions received English language training (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018b: 28). This marketing towards English-speaking tourists was also visible in maps and signs aimed at wine tourism. The aforementioned maps were distributed in English and Georgian, rather than in Russian, even though Russians tourists were the second largest group of tourists in 2018 (1,404,757 from Russia vs. 384,897 from the European Union; National Tourism Administration 2018). Countless English-speaking wine tours to vineyards, wine cellars, and old wine chateaus previously owned by Georgian nobility are on offer in Georgia (see e.g. Dzagnidze 2018) and the National Tourism Administration's Wine Route Guidebook listed 139 wine cellars across the country that can be visited by English-speaking tourists (National Tourism Administration 2019). The Georgian Wine Association's Wine Tourism Guide, which includes QR-codes to 560 wineries, wine bars, restaurants and hotels was exclusively published in English, and has been sold outside of Georgia only in Germany and the United Kingdom (Agenda.Ge 2017a). Illustratively, the National Tourism Administration's 'Food & Wine' brochure, of which no Georgian version was available, already in its introduction related culinary traditions to *terroir*:

Nothing tells you more about the spirit and culture of a country than its native food and wine [...] A quick look at [Georgia's] geographical position and its landscape shows you why it is the perfect place to grow grapes. [...] Each historical province of Georgia has its own distinct culinary tradition [...] Again, the secret is in our history, location and soil type (National Tourism Administration 2017: 3).

As a result of this popularisation, articles about Georgia in the travel and food sections of English-language newspapers and broadcasters, as well as in wine magazines surged over the past few years. For instance, *Deutsche Welle* published an article titled "Why the world is talking about Georgian wine" (Hucal 2019). In 2018, *The Guardian* published numerous articles on Georgia, arguing that Georgian wines "have become a must-have for the world's best restaurants and wine shops (Williams 2018: n.p.). Another article reintroduced *terroir*: "whether it is the influence of the clay, the grapes or the unfamiliar *terroir* - I'm hooked - and pleased to note that both labels are available

in the UK” (Fox 2018: n.p.). The UK’s oldest wine magazine and one of the most important publications of the wine industry worldwide, *Decanter*, became similarly enamoured with Georgian wine and Georgia as a wine tourism destination:

Over the last half-decade, it’s been hard to find a wine-lover who didn’t dream of heading to Tbilisi. [...] Wine lovers reaching Georgia discovered a country where the tendrils of the vine weave church, state and national culture together in a tapestry without parallel elsewhere (Jefford 2018: n.p.).

To foster the popularity of Georgia’s *terroir* in international media, Georgia Tourism sponsored content such as a *National Geographic* article on wine tourism, which invoked Georgia’s “unique climate and topography” (National Geographic 2018: n.p.). Therefore, the subversion of rurality to tradition through GIs contributed to a construction of Georgian rural spaces as places of high-quality, unique wine production specifically for English-speaking tourists. Thus, GIs transnationalised, rather than localised, rural spaces.

Lastly, even though the redefinition of rural spaces through GIs was predominantly targeted at global consumers, they were also argued to have shaped locals’ perspectives towards place. Various sources, from interviews with EU officials, Georgian government officials and wine experts to a FAO report on the topic, noted increased feelings of pride towards an area of production (Interviews 1; 15; 17; 19; Gabunia n.d.a; FAO 2018a: 9). For instance, a government official argued that: “Farmers are excited about their products. There is a new sense that they want to be respected as the producer of a unique product” (Interview 15). A wine expert also contended that “producers are proud when their wines become famous because of GIs” (Interview 19; own translation). One EU official maintained that “They feel like they belong to a particular territory where the geographical indication is produced and [they] believe in what they do” (Interview 1). Indeed, this was at times connected to Europeanisation, in that pride was generated by “joining the ranks of the likes of Champagne”, as one EU official argued (Interview 3). However, these statements need to be qualified in that they were made primarily in interviews with both Georgian and EU officials, rather than producers themselves. Here, future research, for instance via surveys or ethnographic methods, is necessary to capture whether GIs indeed resulted in feelings of pride for individual producers, especially considering the dominance of large wine companies in the process.

7.1.2 Benefitting global companies not idyllic, local artisans

Turning to the dimension of *land*, the disparities of consequences for different actors within rural spaces became evident. As set out in Chapter 4, land directs us to property relations and systems of capital accumulation. This section finds that GIs did not result in significant economic benefits for rural spaces, and that plot sizes were unaffected. Instead, it observes that GIs privileged larger companies over the majority of rural producers who farm smallholdings or garden-sized plots.

Turning to the first argument, reports, the EU, and the Georgian government envisaged GIs serving as an impetus for the development of the agricultural sector and rural regions (European Union for Georgia n.d.; Murjiri 2017). As illustrated in Chapter 5, GIs were also expected to result in price premiums. However, Figure 6 demonstrates that the aforementioned increase in export volumes (Figure 4) did not result in a considerably higher price per litre of Georgian wines, which remained fairly stable at around 3 USD. Although there are no numbers disaggregating this for GI and non-GI products, this is one indication that significant price premiums on Georgian wines did not materialise.

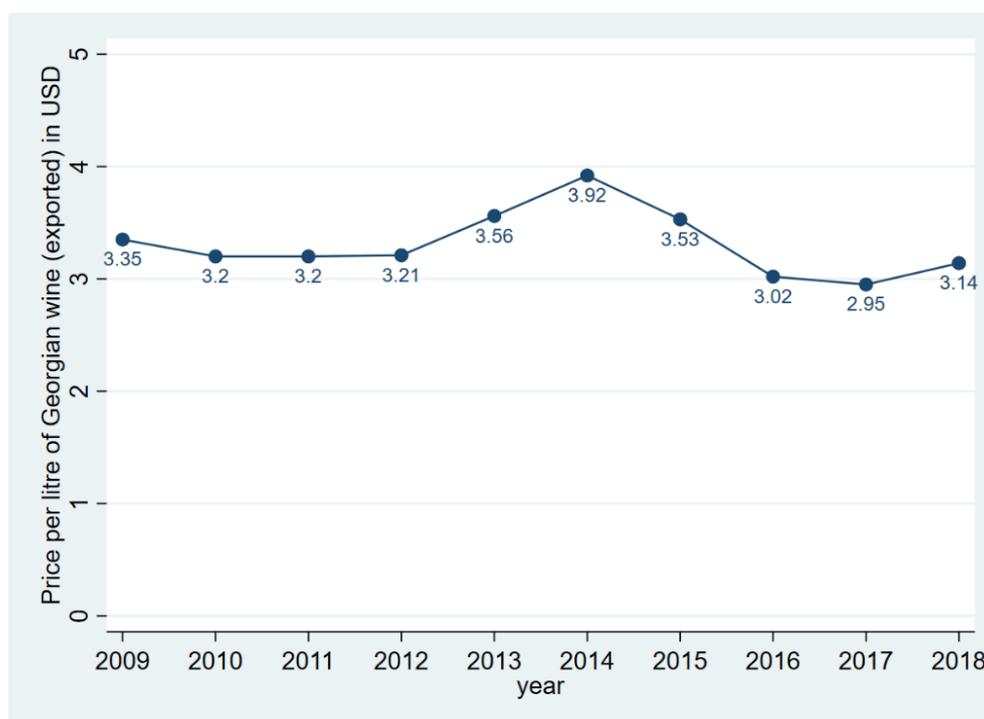


Figure 6: Price per litre of exported Georgian wines in USD, GeoStat 2014; 2015; 2019; own graphic.

Despite the lack of disaggregated statistics, a 2017 FAO workshop report noted that GIs in Georgia “do not generate significant economic benefits in terms of price premium, value chain efficiency, and access to markets” (FAO 2017: n.p.). Similarly,

a later report maintained that “there is insufficient understanding of the added value brought by GI signs as a guarantee of certain quality” (FAO 2018a: 26), while another highlighted the weak marketing and brand recognition of Georgian GI products (Martens 2013: 9).

Government officials and wine experts argued that this lack of recognizability was in part due to the lax definitions of GIs. For instance, a government official and a wine expert noted that for Kindzmarauli wine, the only product specification relates to the micro-zone, rather than production practices (Interviews 18; 19). Even though Kindzmarauli has traditionally been aged for four years, the interviewees argued that because this practice was not specified in the GI application, producers did not adhere to it (Interviews 18; 19). They argued that as a result there was no unique Kindzmarauli style that could be promoted (Interviews 18; 19). The same observation was raised by the same government official for the Mukuzani and Kvanchkhara wines (Interview 18; see also Martens 2013: 10). They also contended that Georgian GIs were “not ready” and that there needed to be further work on the recognition of Georgia as a place of high-quality food and wine production before popularizing specific regions: “The average wine drinker knows important wine areas in France and Italy but here we talk about knowing the country” (Interview 18). To some extent, this contradicts the findings presented in the previous section. While the focus of the government on marketing GI-wines globally contributed to a reconstruction of respective areas as traditional rather than backwards, specifically to international tourists, the association of wines and foods to place is located at the country level, rather than the regional level as is the case for Champagne and Bordeaux. Indeed, this may be a function of the producer dynamics when it comes to GIs, given that, as is argued below, it is mostly large Georgian wine companies that often operate across the country that utilise GI-protections and export.

In this context, it needs to be noted that a second dimension of land remained untouched: the fragmentation of plots with average plot sizes below two hectares continues to be emphasised as a barrier to agricultural and economic development by reports (ENPARD 2015c: 5; FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia 2012: 9; 11; Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 17; 47). Thus, most small farmers are still engaged in subsistence farming, meaning they are not included in commercial activities and cannot benefit from GIs (EEAS & DG DEVCO-EuropeAid 2014: 2;

FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia 2012: 9; Chitaia 2014: 1; World Bank 2005: 2). It is vital to clarify that these are not the types of farmers understood to be supported by GIs in the EU either, where subsistence farming has become rare and where some small farmers even export. Often, this is possible due to their inclusion in cooperatives, which is one crucial difference between the Georgian and the EU agricultural context, as explained below. This difference again demonstrates that the settings for agricultural production are vastly different in Georgia and the EU⁷⁶, even though generally the same GI-rules apply to both.

Turning to the main argument of this section, crucial power dynamics of land for GIs can be observed most clearly when analysing the beneficiaries of protection. Within the EU, as delineated in Chapter 5, a main goal of GIs is the support of small-scale farmers, even though some case studies also observed the dominance of larger players (Bowen 2015; Moir 2017; Rangnekar 2004). In Georgia, only a few large companies protected their products through GIs and were in a position to benefit from price premiums⁷⁷ through exports. In turn, existing power structures of production and capital accumulation, i.e. land were reinforced. First, it should be remembered that Georgian products were largely protected by GIs in order to be sold on international markets. Former Sakpatenti president Gabunia argued that the creation of GIs “helps increase attractiveness and competitiveness of Georgian products on the domestic market and abroad” (Gabunia n.d.a.: n.p.). Correspondingly, the Director General of Sante, Georgia’s largest dairy processing company contended that “Our company was the first to request authorization to use the GI Sulguni, because it’s an important cheese that appeals to both domestic and international consumers” (EastAgri 2017b).

One dominant narrative was that GI benefits would subsequently ‘trickle down’ to the broader rural population:

The Georgian government is introducing internationally recognized trade protection instruments that will support development of local businesses and, accordingly, increase employment opportunities (Government of Georgia 2014: 15).

Similarly, one EU member state embassy employee claimed that “geographical indications give rural populations a place in globalization” (Interview 8). However, it was observed that GI protection was only utilised by larger, exporting companies rather than small producers which make up much of the rural population. The notion

⁷⁶ Especially its founding members who devised the original CAP.

⁷⁷ If they materialised.

that predominantly large wine companies⁷⁸ were in a position to potentially benefit from GIs through price premiums achieved in international, especially EU-markets was agreed upon by diverse interviewees (Interviews 8; 18; 19; 20; see also Maximov 2016). One government official admitted that “The market is dominated by the bigger, commercial players trying to sell to a large audience” (Interview 18; see also FAO 2018a: 8). Correspondingly, a wine expert highlighted that in Kakheti, where most GIs are located, micro-zones were predominantly owned by large companies (Interview 19).

To illustrate, one of the largest Georgian wine producers, *Schuchmann Wines* was founded in 2008 by Burkhard Schuchmann, a German who discovered Georgian wines while travelling to the country, having been made aware of it during a transport industry conference and therefore with little experience in traditional Georgian viticulture (Schuchmann Wines 2015). *Schuchmann Wines* is located in Tsinandali, the micro-zone from which the third ever registered appellation, Tsinandali wine, originates (Schuchmann Wines Georgia 2015). Similarly, Kindzmarauli, which was protected as a GI in 2006, was listed as a “flagship wine” next to the non-GI Saperavi and Rkatsiteli varieties (Schuchmann Wines Georgia 2015). The company’s wines can be bought in various EU-countries, including Germany, the UK, and France (Schuchmann Wines Georgia n.d.; GeoVino n.d.). Moreover, reiterating the theme of wine tourism, *Schuchmann Wines* offered Spa-retreats, pricy hotel rooms, and guided tours across the country which could be booked from the exclusively English language website. This, as argued in the previous chapter, underlines the importance of narrative of places in the marketing of GI-products, and especially of wines which are themselves intertwined with Georgian cultural and national frames. To illustrate, one Schuchmann slogan on the website read “They say perfection is a child of time. We gave ours 8,000 years experience to grow” (Schuchmann Wines 2020: n.p.).

Another large wine company, *Teliani Valley*, has various GI wines in their portfolio, including the “world famous” Tsinandali (Teliani Valley n.d.b.: n.p.), Mukuzani, Saperavi Khashmi, and Kindzmarauli (Teliani Valley n.b.c). While the website descriptions mentioned the location of origin for all of these wines, there were few specific references to regional terroir. Rather, the company emphasised its

⁷⁸ E.g. Schuchmann Wines, Teliani Valley, Khareba, Chateau Mukhrani, Vinoterra, Shumi Estate, Georgian Wine and Spirits Company (Jefford 2018).

employment of French winemaker Antoin Mossano in the 1880s, as well as the popularity of Teliani, a small area in Kakheti, itself (Teliani Valley: n.d.d). This supports the argument that while the protection as a GIs itself was rarely used as a marketing tool on its own, the underlying narratives of *terroir* and Georgia's connection to other GI-countries were heavily promoted. Teliani Valley wines can be bought in eleven EU Member States, including France, Germany, the UK, and Poland (Teliani Valley n.d.d).

In contrast to these large producers, one wine export noted that GIs “would be impossible in areas such as Racha, or the poorer, Western regions” where land parcels are small (Interview 20). Importantly, the lack of engagement by small farmers did not result from a lack of appreciation for *terroir*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the notion that foods and their quality are tied to a place is widely accepted in Georgia. In fact, a government official argued that small producers were even more focused on *terroir* because “their reason to make wine is passion” (Interview 18). Rather, they cited regulatory pressures and controls as the main reason for not applying for GI protection (Interview 18). Instead of GIs, smaller producers turned towards natural wines⁷⁹ which were argued by wine experts to leave more room for creativity than GI-wines which, as elaborated on below, require consistent compliance with product specifications (Granik 2019; Interview 20). Natural wines are another current trend in wine magazines and conventions, and it seems that this has become the niche Georgian smaller (commercial) producers are tapping into. An article in the magazine *Wine Enthusiast* even labelled Georgia “the Spiritual Home of Natural Wine” (Desimone 2020), and in 2019, the Natural Wine Fest in Tbilisi presented more than 70 natural winemakers (Natural Wine Association 2019).

Rather than representing a lack of appreciation for specific wine qualities, there appeared to be two main reasons for the continued exclusion of small farmers from GIs: the lack of resources to satisfy EU standards and produce large volumes and a connected absence of producer cooperation. First, a large number of documents mentioned the need for increased approximation with EU veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary standards in order to be able to export to the EU as a challenge⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Wines without additives such as sulphites or sugar.

⁸⁰ Even though it lies outside the scope of this thesis, there is a vast literature on EU food safety standards as an (intentional) non-trade barrier for non-EU producers, especially from developing countries (e.g. Frohberg et al. 2006; Otsuki et al. 2001; Hammoudi et al. 2009).

(Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2017b: 21; Government of Georgia 2018: 20; Government of Georgia 2016: 23; FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia 2012: 27; ENPARD 2015b: 1; Martens 2013: 9). In 2015, the Annual Action Programme for Georgia argued that “the areas of food safety as well as sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures have been long neglected due to laissez faire policies by previous governments” (European Commission 2015b: 4). This was reiterated by EU documents that noted the need to ensure a more comprehensive policy, monitoring and information campaigns on food safety, sanitary and phytosanitary measures (EEAS 2014: 14; European Commission 2015b: 13; European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy 2017: 16). Similarly, the 2017–2020 Single Support Framework aimed to “help update sanitary, technical and quality levels and adapting standards and regulations to allow producers to really boost exports” (EEAS 2018: 4). The difficulty to comply with EU food safety regulations was emphasised for dairy GIs, highlighted by governmental officials and a representative from a non-member state embassy (Interview 15; 16; 22; FAO 2018b). Accordingly, a FAO and EBRD report listed the lack of compliance with food safety standards as one of the main difficulties for GI protection of Tenili cheese for all three analysed Tenili producers (FAO & EBRD 2017).

A second inhibiting factor were GI regulations themselves. Crucially, once the GI is registered, only products that comply with the specifications of the application can be sold under the protected name. Consequently, these specifications necessitate a high level of consistency for products that can rarely be ensured by small Georgian producers, as interviewees, from the EU, a EU member state embassy, and the Georgian government officials, agreed (Interviews 1; 3; 8; 18). For instance, interviews with embassy officials and reports noted that the variation of cow feeds resulted in inconsistent dairy products, as well as low milk yields, that therefore inhibited GI development (Interviews 8; 22; see also FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia 2012: 14f.). This was illustrated passionately by an official from a non-member state’s embassy, who argued that there exists a lack of know-how on modern animal husbandry practices in Georgia, especially when it comes to nutritious feed (Interview 22). Similarly, while large wine companies produced consistent wines in stainless steel tanks, most smaller producers ferment grapes in Kveri, not only restricting volume but also consistency (Granik 2019).

Again, this highlights that EU-Georgia relations expected that Georgian actors fully conformed to EU rules, rather than being able to adapt them. This includes food safety standards but also GI-regulations themselves, which could arguably be designed to facilitate a more flexible application. A member state embassy official even appealed that “patrimony needs to be more important than rules” (Interview 8). In response, one EU official criticised the practice by producers within and outside the EU to overly specify GI-applications by naming characteristics which producers may not be able to uphold continuously (Interview 3). For instance, including “grass-fed only” as a product characteristic becomes problematic in times of draught, during which the GI standards cannot be met, and the product not sold under its GI name (Interview 3). However, this stands in opposition to the aforementioned lax applications noted for instance for Kindzmarauli (Interviews 18; 19) and therefore the over-specification of GIs did not represent a systematic problem in the external governance of GIs.

What was agreed upon by a wide range of interviewees and reports was that costs arising from the need for modern machinery, laboratory testing, and processing facilities were major inhibiting factors for smaller producers to apply for GI protection (World Bank 2005: 1; Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2015: 16; FAO & EBRD 2017: 9; FAO 2018a: 23; Interviews 8; 17; 18; 19). To illustrate, one wine expert illustrated that: “It costs a lot of money, you have to take up a loan, [most] people cannot invest so much money” (Interview 19; own translation). At the same time, a FAO report claimed that “especially small scale farmers have little or no understanding of the system” (FAO 2018a: 26), further inhibiting engagement. Correspondingly, wine experts, government officials, and reports argued that smaller producers generate insufficient volumes to generate incomes which would be sufficient to outweigh these costs associated with protecting GIs and exporting products (Interviews 15; 18; 19; FAO & EBRD 2017: 9-12). Instead, smaller wine producers were argued by wine experts to either only sell locally, nationally, or directly to individual international restaurants or hotels (Interviews 18; 19). Relatedly, a government official argued that the aforementioned participation in international wine fairs is primarily targeted at larger producers (Interview 18). Hence, because smaller producers do not export large volumes of their wine, they could not expect significant economic benefits from GIs, and thus refrained from the costly process.

Even where smaller producers are protected via GIs, due to hurdles to market access, they do not necessarily experience significant economic benefits. Returning to Akhalkalaki potatoes, members of the cooperative which in 2016 produced 50 tonnes of potatoes, criticised the “difficulty to obtain a place on the markets” as a key problem, having to operate through resellers (ENPARD 2016c: n.p.). One potato farmer argued that:

The farmers as well as consumers are the victims of the situation. If [the] state supports us with the direct access to the markets, we can offer a price of 50-60 Tetri per 1kg of potato on the market, which will bring financial benefits to the citizens as well as farmers (ENPARD 2016c: n.p.).

Nonetheless, agricultural cooperatives such as that of Akhalkalaki were hailed as a solution to problems of insufficient resources to fulfil EU standards, as well as to produce volumes large enough for export (European Commission 2015b: 7; Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 48; Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018a: 14; FAO & EBRD 2017: 11f.; Millns 2013: 6). Consequently, international donor programmes promoted the establishment of cooperatives, and government policies mentioned the need to pool resources among producers (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2017b: 18f.; Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2015: 21; Channon et al. 2017: 25; FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia 2012: 23). In fact, these programmes often supported dairy and wine cooperatives, the two commodity groups with the most GI protections. For instance, the government provided cooperatives with processing equipment for grapes in Telavi and Kvareli, both situated in GI micro-zones for wine (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2017b: 19; Sakpatenti n.d.). Similar programmes have existed for milk/dairy cooperatives, often with additional funding for laboratory facilities to ensure compliance with EU food safety standards (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2017b: 19).

Yet, the first ENPARD evaluation notes that “Out of the 1,500 cooperatives at present, it is possible according to current estimates that some 800 may fail” (Channon et al. 2017: 40). Importantly, a wide range of interviews with EU officials, wine experts, civil society representatives, and the Georgian government, as well as documents emphasised the difficulty to establish cooperatives in Georgia due to negative associations with Soviet collective farms, *kolkhozes* (Interviews 1; 9; 10; 14; 15; 16; 17; 20; Chitaia 2014: 3; FAO & EBRD 2017: 11f.). One representative from a

subcontracted organisation contended that “people are resistant to cooperatives because of the bad history” (Interview 14), and a government official argued that cooperatives “are a problem especially for old people because of the Soviet past” (Interview 17), with another noting “mentality” as the biggest hurdle for cooperatives (Interview 18). As a result, a wine expert lamented that “producers don’t really talk to each other” (Interview 20), another stated that “there aren’t many cooperatives, producers are on their own” (Interview 19; own translation), and a government official criticised that “wine producers do not support each other in the promotion of their wines” (Interview 15). One government official was at least marginally hopeful that “a time will come where producers see the sense of pooling resources” (Interview 18).

Corresponding to these interviews, an EU report noted that cooperatives

encountered suspicion and scepticism from many in rural areas, remembering the Soviet experience with *kolkhozes* (collective farms) and that was one of the reasons why the local population was not motivated to join together with others to form cooperatives. (Channon et al. 2017: 51; italics added).

The argument also resonates in an ENPARD publication which highlighted the differences between the Western-European and Georgian contexts:

In Europe, farmers’ cooperatives enable small farmers to reach economies of scale and target the markets. But in most former Soviet Union republics, when you say ‘cooperative’, people hear ‘*kolkhoz*’ – the notoriously unpopular form of collective farming in the former Soviet Union. Georgia has been no exception: before 2013, cooperatives were virtually non-existent (ENPARD 2015a: 6; italics added).

This argument not only illustrates a further barrier to broader benefits of GIs, it also recapitulates one of the previous chapter’s main arguments, that the historical trajectory of Georgia in the Soviet Union had significant influence on how effective EU rules were governed externally.

7.1.3 The role of the government as driving actor for GI protections

In turn, it needs to be remembered that the driving actor behind the protection of Georgian GIs was the government, not (small) producers, as was the case in Western Europe. This speaks to the dimension of *territory*, or, as Lefebvre framed it, “state space” (Lefebvre 1991: 228). The rationale to adopt the EU’s GI system was to protect Georgian wines from international counterfeits and to boost its export potential. While rural development concerns were mentioned, they were assumed to follow from the implementation of rules, rather than being actively pursued by the government, the EU, or other international donors. Indeed, one EU embassy official claimed that the central position of large producers resulted from their close ties to the government

(Interview 8). When identifying lists of products to be protected, larger commercial players provided expertise (Interview 8). Cooperating with few, large players was viewed as more convenient by the government than gathering a large, scattered group of fragmented small producers (Interview 8). In turn, smaller farmers did not appear as the main constituents of these policies and because they have not been organised into powerful interest groups, could not lobby the government. Hence, there is an interesting interplay of land and territory, whereby a close connection to the government, i.e. power relations on the dimension of territory, reinforced the economic power relations of land.

On another aspect of territory, despite the involvement of and benefits for large wine companies, the government has continued to dominate the protection process and interacted directly with marketing actors abroad. This includes the sponsored articles mentioned before but most interestingly personal contacts of Georgian ambassadors with the wine sector. For instance, Master of Wine⁸¹ Sarah Abbott, who has promoted Georgian wine in the UK, reported frequent meetings with the Georgian ambassador to the UK⁸² (Abbott 2020). However, power relations with political actors also played out on the ground. As noted previously, within the EU producers at times aimed to exclude their competitors from the right to use a GI through the strategic bordering of GI areas. One EU official confirmed: “you do have people on the edge who want to be included and on the other hand some people do not want to extend the borders” (Interview 3). In Georgia, where GI zones are often smaller than municipal boundaries, this process took on an even more overtly political dimension as one wine expert noted the influence of politicians to include ‘their’ home villages in certain GI areas, for instance for the Kvanchkhara GI (Interview 20).

To summarise briefly the findings on GIs, while the instrument reconstructed rurality from spaces of backwardness to those of traditional, quality production, it created places that were particularly attractive for outsiders, predominantly international tourists. Yet, the substantive effects on land, i.e. price premiums for smaller producers were not realised. Instead, existing power relations were reinforced.

⁸¹ A professional qualification issued by the Institute of Masters of Wine, regarded as a leading qualification for sommeliers and other wine experts.

⁸² Abbott also reported that meetings with ambassadors are not common in the sector.

7.2 LEADER

Reflecting on the previous chapter, LEADER can be understood as successfully externally governed, considering that LAGs were formed and that they implemented projects on the local level. Thus, this section investigates how LEADER, and especially LAGs and their implemented projects shaped the perceptions and power dynamics of rural spaces. Similar to GIs, interviewed EU officials assumed that LEADER would have the same results in the EU and in Georgia (Interviews 2; 3). As for GIs, this expectation is problematic as it neglects the negative consequences observed by the case study literature within the EU, as well as the difficulty noted also by an EU official in the implementation of SAPARD, which was the programme that introduced LEADER to the newer member states of Central and Eastern Europe (Interview 7). In turn, this means that LEADER was not adapted to include previous findings or recognise context-specific characteristics.

To recapitulate Chapter 5, LEADER is expected to shape rural space in various ways. The programme is anticipated to enforce connections that locals have to ‘their’ place (European Commission 2006: 5; Ray 1998a: 83; Kopoteva & Nikula 2014: 95; Shucksmith 2010: 210). By equipping rural spaces with local decision-making capacities, it also addresses notions of territory, shifting authority from the central to the local level. In Georgia, LEADER was, similar to GIs, expected by the EU to alleviate rural depopulation by making rural spaces more attractive (EEAS & DG DEVCO – EuropeAid 2014: 14; ENPARD 2016a: 3f). For instance, the depopulation narrative was made explicit by one LEADER participant’s reasoning for participating in the programme: “too many young people are leaving the region and I want to encourage more young people to stay” (ENPARD 2019g: n.p.). In EU documents, these concerns were explicitly related to the fear of empty villages as security threat that also surfaced in the discussion of GIs:

The risks of not supporting regional development in Georgia would be an increase of territorial disparities and further deterioration of the living conditions in remote areas, which eventually would negatively influence social stability and security in the country (European Commission 2013b: 30).

Turning to power relations within spaces or authority over space, the programme was arguably confronted with its strongest expectations. Next to the aforementioned decentralization expectation, LEADER was anticipated to empower local communities in a decidedly bottom-up way (European Commission 2017a: 3). This empowerment was particularly targeted at groups that were perceived as previously marginalised,

including women and young people (European Commission 2017a). Correspondingly, in a report on the prospects of LEADER in Georgia, it was expected that LEADER would involve groups without political experience or network (Sykała et al. 2015: 17).

The findings presented in this section challenge some of these expectations, highlight that many observations were recorded in other cases, but also demonstrate consequences that have hardly been discussed. For rurality and place, a Europeanisation narrative was particularly pervasive, and was characterised as an important ‘mentality change’. Importantly, it is argued that in Georgia this mentality change, and the embracing of Europeanisation is embedded in a contestation of Soviet history. Turning to power dynamics within spaces, specifically on the dimension of territory, it became evident that EU expectations on more inclusive decision making did not materialise. Rather, the chapter notes a further empowerment of actors that already had considerable financial and social resources.

7.2.1 The Europeanisation of peripheral rurality: overcoming Soviet place

Similar to GIs, rurality and place were closely connected for LEADER: the reconstruction of rurality shaped the attitudes of insiders and particularly outsiders towards rural spaces. As mentioned above, to alleviate the outmigration especially of young people, LEADER both in Georgia and the EU, is expected to combat rural unemployment that in turn would alleviate depopulation (European Commission 2006: 5; 22; Sykała et al. 2015). In Georgia, LAG activities indeed often prioritised and monitored job creation (e.g. Dedoplistskaro LAG n.d.). The 2017 evaluation of the three pilot LAGs does noted the creation of jobs, for instance 89 new jobs in Lagodekhi (Channon et al. 2017: 49). Yet, rural outmigration continues to be a problem and no significant decrease was noted in the first ENPARD evaluation that continues to call for programmes that “prevent empty villages” (Channon et al. 2017: 88; see also ENPARD 2016: 1). Hence, it cannot be argued that LEADER was effective in creating feelings of belonging to a specific place that could overwrite economic rationales of inhabitants. Nonetheless, projects related to ‘community’ issues, rather than business development, were financed. This included the support of a local band who were deemed as an important tool for “cultural revival of the overall municipality” (Channon et al. 2017: 49) as well as the construction of local sports grounds, kindergartens, and disability care facilities (Interview 9; ENPARD 2019a). In turn, these projects may have made rural spaces more attractive for locals, which could be

explored in future ethnographic research. However, as argued below, these projects were outnumbered in numbers and budgets by business-focused activities.

Nonetheless, LEADER shaped rural spaces, including by reconstructing *rurality*. To recapitulate, the government in its 2017 Rural Development Strategy fostered a narrative of rural areas as backwards and uneducated: “the rural population lacks the capacity to precisely recognise problems. They are not accustomed to, nor are they trained to mobilise around a problem” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 36) and noted “a lack of experience of municipal authorities in *modern* approaches of development” (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 47; italics added). This reiterates typical constructions of rural spaces as backwards outlined previously (Falk & Pinhey 1978: 548; Sauer 2012: 87). Countering this narrative, the LEADER programme reshaped rurality through connections with EU networks as well as narratives of ‘modern’ EU development practices, with both contributing to the Europeanisation of rural spaces.

The first crucial aspect in the connection of the ‘Georgian periphery’ to the EU was the creation of networks, specifically via people-to-people contacts. This included various measures such as several study visits of Georgian LAGs to EU counterparts and vice versa. For instance, in 2017 the Lagodekhi LAG travelled to Spain “to establish new contacts, share information and best practice and strengthen ties with similar groups within the EU” (Channon et al. 2017: 50). The Borjomi LAG visited LAGs in Scotland, Spain, and the Czech Republic (Channon et al. 2017: 54). Turning to the younger LAGs, the Dedoplistskaro LAG hosted an Estonian LAG delegation, discussing cooperation in rural tourism, biodiversity conservation and cultural exchange (ENPARD 2019f). These links can then become institutionalised through Memorandums of Understanding for future joint projects (Channon et al. 2017: 50). Adding to the networks of Georgian rural actors with the EU counterparts, members of the Kazbegi LAG visited the European Rural Parliament, a conference “to express the voice of rural people in Europe” (European Rural Parliament 2020). Moreover, there were attempts to connect different EaP countries via LEADER such as a study visits of a Moldovan delegation to the Lagodekhi LAG (ENPARD 2018a).

Indeed, one interviewee from a subcontracted NGO connected these processes to larger narratives of EU integration. In their view, LAG networks foster Member States’ views of Georgia as a future partner on rural issues, which consequently would

improve chances for a Georgian EU-membership (Interview 9). Talking on the topic of LEADER at the 2019 conference on Rural Development in Tbilisi, Irakli Karashvili, director of Mercy Corps Georgia also stated that the EU's support in this area was an "important factor in progressing our country towards European integration" (ENPARD 2019c: n.p.). Even though future accession of Georgia to the EU is currently unrealistic considering the stalling of the enlargement process, these attitudes reflect the importance attributed to LEADER in wider EU-Georgia relations. By connecting LAGs to an overarching national policy aim, rural spaces are moved from the frontier to the very centre of politics.

However, these networks were not balanced forums of exchange, but rather fed into a student-teacher relationship in which Georgian actors learned from 'European experience' or 'EU best practices'. During study visits and conferences, EU LAGs or other EU rural development actors predominantly shared their experiences with Georgian LAGs, rather than vice versa (ENPARD 2016: 6; Interview 13). One example is the 2019 Rural Development Conference in Tbilisi. While Georgian LAGs spoke about the challenges they face, speakers from Estonia, Scotland, and Germany shared their "good practices" (ENPARD 2019j: 1f.). Similarly, no Georgian speakers participated in a session that presented the "opinions of different players" on LEADER's bottom-up approach (ENPARD 2019j: 2). This student-teacher relationship was also regularly referred to by other actors. To illustrate, the former EU Delegation's rural development attaché claimed that the "experience in EU member states can serve as an example and can inspire Georgia" (ENPARD 2016a: 2). Similarly, a UNDP source argued that "examples of the European countries prove that effective rural development provides countless opportunities for addressing the immediate needs of people all over the country" (UNDP 2017: n.p.; see also ENPARD 2016a: 4).

Remarkably, Georgian actors also viewed themselves as a committed student of the EU. For instance, an ENPARD Georgia workshop report argued that LAG self-monitoring "is important to [...] improve the efficiency of [the] LAG" (ENPARD 2019c: n.p.), reflecting the EU position on their strict evaluation requirements. Curiously, this clearly contradicts the findings of LEADER evaluations that were commissioned by the EU itself and which criticised the requirements for continuous self-evaluation and monitoring as obstructive (Channon et al. 2017: 43; Chaudhry

2018: 25). A risk here is that Georgian actors prioritised approximating the EU over finding novel, more efficient and context-specific solutions.

Next to EU-networks, a second way in which LEADER overcame rurality's associations with backwardness was through a supposed mentality change towards active citizenship and local responsibility, as both a LEADER evaluation and representatives from implementing organisations argued (Channon et al. 2017: 56; Interviews 9; 13; 14). This is a novel and interesting finding not only because it has not been discussed in depth by the existing literature, mentioned by Nikula and Kopoteva (2014) for the Russian Ladoga initiative, but because it echoes the specific domestic context of Georgia and potentially other post-Soviet countries. What was particularly striking was that a large number of interviews, with EU officials and representatives from organisations involved in LEADER, noted as the main initial hurdle of LEADER the 'Homo Sovieticus',⁸³ a framing used to describe apathy, passivity, and people "waiting for the government to do something" (Interviews 5; see also 11; 12; 14). Often, these narratives were expressed on a more general level, noting a supposed general passivity of locals and that volunteering was "almost non-existent in rural communities" (People in Need 2018: 5; Borjomi Local Action Group 2016: 12; Dedoplistskaro Local Action Group n.d.: 18; Interview 12).

However, this passivity was also explicitly related to the Soviet Union. To illustrate, one EU official argued that "there was a sense of passivity all around, waiting for someone - god, Stalin - to do something" (Interview 5). Another interviewee, involved with implementing LEADER, contended: "The Soviet Union really destroyed the mentality of people in rural areas [...] nobody asked the local population for their opinion" (Interview 9). Consequently, interviews with EU officials, implementing NGOs as well as reports argued that the Soviet experience has resulted in a lack of trust between locals and towards local administrations, as well as a perceived isolation from decision making in the political centre (Interviews 5; 9; The European Union for Georgia 2017: 9). Thus, a monitoring report of LEADER observed difficulties in mobilising participation for LEADER, as it was "hard to change the mentality and scepticism of local citizens (People in Need 2018: 19).

⁸³ see e.g. Greene 2018: 184 for the concept of the so-called Homo Sovieticus.

Indeed, mentality change was consistently cited as one of the most important achievements of LEADER in Georgia, by interviews with implementers, EU officials, as well as in reports on the programme (Interview 9; 11; 13; 14; 23; People in Need 2018: 5). One representative involved with the implementation of LEADER stated: “The project is very alive. When I walk outside, people always ask about the project” (Interview 13). Often, mentality change was connected to the idea that people could have a ‘real impact’ in ‘their’ areas, by interviews with EU officials and implementers, as well as reports (ENPARD 2016a: 9; Interviews 5; 9; 13; ENPARD 2019g; 2019f). Hence, here the narratives of rurality as backwards and peripheral overlapped with the dimension of *place*. One EU official marvelled that what was striking was the “recognition by people that they can do something important to their lives” and a “feeling of belonging to an important process”, which made people proud to be part of local development (Interview 5). Accordingly, a People in Need report noted:

Overall, the apparent attitude change among the LAG members and in the wider community [...] provides opportunity of not being [a] passive observer of what [the] government does, but taking lead in action and contributing [to] the development of the home region (People in Need 2018: 11).

Arguably, references to mentality change were at times romanticised. For instance, the report of a training by a Lithuanian LEADER expert for the Akhmeta LAG admired that:

Seeing the successes of similar projects in communities and villages from as far afield as Ireland to Lithuania opened the eyes to the possibilities of what could be achieved through community-led cooperation, a little imagination, hard work, and some financial assistance. The enthusiasm and boost in self-belief that could be observed was very encouraging (ENPARD 2019g: n.p.).

A volunteer in Kazbegi even introduced themes of patriotism:

I want to be able to do something useful for my country and my region. I recently graduated and LAG gave me just the right kind of opportunity. I’m in the center of important changes that are taking place in Kazbegi, and I take my humble part in setting development for my home region. This is [an] enormous responsibility and experience (People in Need 2018: 8).

This perceived responsibility to induce positive change in one’s place was also described by LAG members. For instance, a Lagodekhi member contended:

We have to forget the times when we were waiting for someone else to come and deal with our problems. We shall be capable of improving our environment. We learn from the European experience (ENPARD 2016a: n.p.; see also ENPARD 2019g).

Again, the theme of learning from European experiences was connected to a mentality change through an active community that takes responsibility for ‘their’ place. While the extent of internalization is debatable given the short-term implementation and

scope of actions, these narratives of activism and responsibility towards places contributed to a reconstruction of place-people relations. At the same time, there was a perceived risk that the apathy and ‘waiting for someone’-attitude of the ‘Homo Sovieticus’ would re-emerge, only substituting the government with the EU. An evaluation of LEADER in Kazbegi cautioned that “what we have to make people understand is that the EU is not the god which will always be there to help with everyday problems” (People in Need 2018: 16). Similarly, a joint EU and UNDP evaluation warned that “LAGs should not assume continued EU funding beyond ENPARD” (Chaudhry et al. 2018: 8). This is reflected in interviews with subcontracted organisations, which identified the risk of LEADER being perceived as a grant and cease all engagement once EU funding would stop (Interviews 9; 11).

Importantly, the Europeanisation of Georgian rural spaces via LEADER was intended by the EU as it called for “projects that produce tangible results for citizens and provide high visibility for the EU” (EEAS 2018: 3). Given the large number of local projects supported, one representative from a subcontracted organization highlighted the high visibility of LEADER’s impacts compared to technical assistance (Interviews 9). Correspondingly, one EU official argued that ENPARD and LEADER specifically were the most visible EU action in Georgian rural areas which meant that people mostly associated the EU with these actions (Interview 5). Another official even described the ability of LEADER to engage with the local level as “added value of EU programming at its best” (Interview 7). EU visibility was further fostered through guidelines on the display of the EU logo,⁸⁴ as well as the dissemination of LEADER success stories in Georgia, as EU officials confirmed (Interviews 2; 3; Channon et al. 2017: 51; 54).

Interestingly, LEADER through its high visibility on the ground and bottom-up implementation seems to have avoided allegations of acting as a foreign agent that is encountered especially by many international NGOs across the EaP (Toal et al. 2020). The composition of LAGs ensured that decisions over project funds were decided together with local administrations and businesses, rather than by NGOs, or even the EU themselves. Interestingly, an EU official explicitly related LEADER to the promotion of the EU in peripheral spaces “where people remember the Soviet Union fondly” and have more positive attitudes towards Russia (Interview 5). They painted

⁸⁴ E.g. on publications, supplies, project sites, LAG offices.

the rationale as “by the way, the EU [that] Russia threatens you so much with is here, gives you things and doesn’t want anything in return” (Interview 5). Thus, what could be assumed to be a relatively marginal rural development programme is, by EU actors, directly connected to geopolitical dynamics, highlighting the importance that not only Georgian but EU actors attached to LEADER and its resulting Europeanisation of rural spaces. Therefore, LEADER reconstructed rurality and place: rather than being associated with a supposed backwards, passive Soviet space, Europeanised rural spaces are marked by modern practices and active citizens that feel responsible for them.

Next to the Europeanisation of rural space, the sense of periphery typically attached to rural spaces was addressed through the networks that Georgian LAGs formed with each other (ENPARD 2018b; ENPARD 2018c; ENPARD 2019: h; ENPARD 2019: 3; Channon et al. 2017: 58). Networking here was again a mechanism to disperse ‘best practices’ especially from older to newer LAGs, as one LEADER implementer highlighted (Interview 13). To illustrate, the Khulo Local Action Group visited Borjomi, one of the three pilot LAGs, in November 2018 in which both sides presented implemented activities, plans, and Local Development Strategies (Khulo LAG 2018). Additionally, the Borjomi LAG provided input for future steps of their Khulo counterpart, for instance on the grants for sub-projects (Khulo LAG 2018). Solidifying these networks, the national Georgian Association of Local Action Groups (GALAG), was founded in 2017 and since then participated in international LAG conferences and lobbying trainings (GALAG 2018a; 2018b). Thus, these network building activities were deemed to diminish the alleged isolation of rural areas: the connections amongst LAGs alleviated each area’s individual ‘remoteness’.

7.2.2 Empowering elites rather than reshaping territory

As outlined, LEADER arguably promised some of the most radical changes for rural spaces when it comes to the political power relationships within it and authority towards it, i.e. the notion of *territory*. To recapitulate a quote by former Agricultural Commissioner Hogan from Chapter 5:

At its heart, the LEADER method is not just about delivering EU funding; it aims to mobilise women, young people, private and public stakeholders, the social partners and the non-governmental sector [...] to participate actively in the development of their local rural areas (European Commission 2017a: 2).

Similarly, one interviewed EU official argued that “LEADER is not about grants, it is about participatory decision-making: involvement, engagement, decision-making” (Interview 5). Another EU official noted that LAGs could be viewed as an “exercise in democracy” (Interview 7), and one local implementer argued that “The point of LEADER is to include everyone because they are part of the community” (Interview 13). Hence, LEADER is intended to fundamentally shape power-relations both within spaces as well as between spaces via the decentralization of rural development.

Turning to changed authority or power relations within spaces, some sources indeed reported more inclusive decision-making. This was particularly reflected in the number of people consulted for the drafting of Local Development Strategies, the central documents developed by LAGs. To illustrate, in Borjomi, 100 people were involved in drafting the LDS, with 1,300 consulted. Similarly, in Lagodekhi, 67 villages were visited before drafting the strategy (Lagodekhi Local Action Group 2016: 6). In Kazbegi, 1,058 out of 3,800 inhabitants participated in meetings on the LDS (Channon et al. 2017: 57). In turn, it was noted by the first ENPARD evaluation that “the LAG became an effective platform for the local population to have a chance to communicate and exchange experience and advocate for their own development” and that the initiative has “been very important for the overall empowerment of the local population” (Channon et al. 2017: 56). While the broad inclusion of local voices into the drafting of the LDS is noteworthy, there were few indications that central decision-making, including over project grants, became more inclusive. Rather, these positions continued to be controlled by actors who had considerable resources, both financial and social. Indeed, interviews with organizations involved in the implementation noted that these groups were more likely to be involved in LAGs than marginalised groups: “In LAGs they usually vote for important, senior people” (Interview 10; see also Interview 14), and “personalities play a huge role” (Interview 11).

As noted previously, a large section of rural inhabitants in Georgia are unemployed and/or engaged in subsistence farming. Yet, LAG membership did not necessarily represent these groups. For instance, one LAG member quoted in a workshop report in Akhmeta, who wanted “to be part of positive change” and “help the community” was a graphic design graduate, with other members cited being a former Swedish kindergarten teacher, a city hall administrator, and a tourism student (ENPARD

2019g). In February 2020, the members of the Khulo LAG management, next to the categories of local government officials and businesspeople, included teachers, dance choreographers and employees of the international NGO Caritas (Khulo Local Action Group n.d.). Even more strikingly, all members of the Keda LAG were university graduates, and mostly worked in banks, at larger agricultural companies or NGOs, as teachers, or as legal experts (Local Action Group of Keda n.d.). While one interviewed EU official expected that the subcontractors would limit local elites' influence, these organizations themselves argued that they could not regulate the composition and decision-making processes of LAGs due to the bottom-up nature of LEADER (Interviews 5; 9; 14; 23). Hence, there existed different understandings of who was responsible for inclusive LAG designs that could foster the empowerment of marginalised groups. As a result, the further empowerment of actors with significant financial and social resources, local middle classes, and socially mobile people in rural spaces was not actively counteracted. This indicates that the 'empowerment' was merely assumed to materialise due to the programme's design, rather than being actively targeted and followed up upon.

Various factors explain the empowerment of already comparatively powerful groups. First, actors with extensive networks were at an advantage to become elected into central LAG positions. To illustrate, one interviewee from a subcontracted organization contended that applications from ethnic minorities were less likely to be accepted precisely due to the importance of personal relations in LAGs (Interview 14). Yet, these networks in turn were argued to risk undermining the fairness of funding-decisions especially in small communities where "committee members invariably will have to turn down applications of people they know very well" (People in Need 2018: 11). It was reported that funding discussions were "heated" because "the stakes are high" and decisions needed to be defended to applicants, many of whom LAG members knew personally (People in Need 2018: 13). To illustrate, for one LAG that had not completed its first grant component at the time of the interview, an interviewee involved with the implementation of LEADER stated that "Now they can prove that they can assess projects objectively and show whether they want to help the municipality or simply favour their neighbours" (Interview 13).

Another explanation follows from the planning and monitoring requirements that need to be fulfilled in order to receive EU funding. In turn, representatives from

organisations involved with the implementation of LEADER agreed that especially well-educated, English-speaking locals are at an advantage to occupy central positions in the Local Action Group (Interviews 10; 11; 12; 13; 14). Strikingly, none of the EU officials interviewed on LEADER in Georgia could identify which types of actors were involved in LAGs on a more detailed level than the three categories (businesses, local administrations, civil society/general public; Interviews 2; 3; 4; 5). Instead, most EU-officials interviewed highlighted that while inclusivity was an important goal, what was even more necessary was that EU taxpayers' money was well spent, documented, and monitored in order to avoid future budgetary issues and especially conflicts with the European Parliament (Interviews 1; 2; 3; 4; 5). Hence, consequences on the ground were perceived less important than compliance with EU financing rules.

Often, the continued dominance of already powerful actors in LEADER was masked behind the aforementioned narratives on local activism. Here, characterizations such as “active members of the community”, “the interested population”, and “main stakeholders” (Channon et al. 2017: 48; 51) actively played into the framing of persistent passivity that needed to be overcome. Illustratively, one ENPARD newsletter argued that in the process of LAG creation “each consortium was able to identify and empower the existing ‘natural leaders’” (ENPARD 2016c: 4). In practice, these terms were synonymous with actors that had attained higher levels of formal education, were business owners or occupied official positions of power, such as mayors. At the same time, these formulations hid the practical exclusion of precisely those actors that were expected to become involved in decision making, particularly women and young people, but also people who live in more remote locations within LEADER areas.

First, even though LEADER was explicitly targeted at overcoming the supposed remoteness of rurality, interviews with implementing organizations noted that people from remote villages frequently lack the resources or access to infrastructure, both physical and digital, to participate in LAG meetings⁸⁵ and thus decision making (Interviews 9; 13; see also ENPARD 2016a: 7). One report from Kazbegi noted that while people from remote villages had expressed interest in being involved, most members came from the municipal capital Stepantsminda (People in Need 2018:6). Hence, while LEADER aimed to alleviate the felt remoteness attached to rurality,

⁸⁵ which are often held in the municipal capital.

geographically remote areas within LEADER regions remained excluded from decision-making processes. Rather than seeking the inclusion of these villagers in decision-making, one project evaluation assessed the empowerment of remote villages as successful because projects were targeted at remote villagers (People in Need 2018: 10). This was expressed as: “People are especially happy seeing that not only [the] municipal center but also other village[s are] given a chance for development through LAG projects” (People in Need 2018: 10). This narrative therefore replicated the frames of rural periphery that were used by the central government at the local level. Thus, while LEADER areas themselves may be perceived as less remote, what is perceived as ‘the centre’ and ‘the periphery’ is constructed locally and relational. While rural areas were constructed as a frontier, far from the political centre, smaller villages were conceived as remote to people in regional towns.

Secondly, as highlighted in Hogan’s quote about the empowering quality of LEADER, one major expectation of LEADER was the engagement of women and youth, which was also reflected in governmental strategies (Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia 2017a: 9; Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia 2018a: 4). However, how this engagement was understood was left ambiguous. For instance, the 2017 ENPARD evaluation noted that in Lagodekhi “the role of women and youth was promoted in the local development” (Channon et al. 2017: 48) but did not specify what this promotion entailed. Another evaluation noted that gender and youth issues were appropriately addressed, without specifying how (Chaudhry 2018: 7). Furthermore, evaluations noted the absence of indicators to measure the inclusion of disadvantaged groups, women, and youth (Channon et al. 2017; Chaudhry et al. 2018). This is particularly puzzling considering one EU official’s argument that “the priority number one is to include disadvantaged groups” (Interview 5).

Indeed, often, rather than involving women in decision making, projects were merely targeted at them, which corresponds to Bock’s findings regarding rural development programmes within the EU which, rather than truly transforming the power structures of rural gender relations, add “something for women” (Bock 2015: 731). For instance, in Kazbegi, it was merely noted that the project raised awareness on different opportunities for men and women (Channon et al. 2017: 57). Another evaluation noted that “the project has made efforts to ensure equal participation of women as partners and beneficiaries across its activities” (Chaudhry et al. 2018: 37). Correspondingly,

the Dedoplistskaro LAG included the number of female and young beneficiaries as a monitoring indicator in its strategy (Dedoplistskaro Local Action Group n.d.: 27; 31). Frequently, job creation was understood as empowerment per se as “these new jobs have implications on traditional gender relations of Kazbegi as well, as more than 60% of these newly generated jobs are held by women, contributing to their empowerment” (People in Need 2018: 18).

Some LAGs seemed to pre-emptively justify the lack of women in decision making. For instance, the Lagodekhi Local Development Strategy claimed that “women are less interested and involved in the affairs of their communities, and they perceive their role (ability to make changes/solve community problems) is less important than men’s” (Lagodekhi Local Action Group 2016: 12). Similarly, the Dedoplistskaro strategy noted that “the participation of women in the economic and social life is low” (Dedoplistskaro Local Action Group n.d.: 17). Lastly, one organisation representative argued that while fewer women were active in LAGs, these women were particularly active, in turn “making their representation still balanced” (Interview 13). While the aforementioned sub-projects, and especially income generated from employment could result in the empowerment of women, the decision-making structures within rural spaces were not altered. Yet, not including women in LAG’s decision-making risks a superficial engagement that prevents creating lasting change in the political power dynamics of territory.

Regarding youth, the results were similar. Even though one interview with an implementing organisation as well as one evaluation noted the mobilization of younger people due to LEADER (Interview 9; People in Need 2018: 6), the another evaluation recommended increasing the promotion of young people in decision-making (Channon et al. 2017: 85). In some cases, the necessity to include young people in decision making was institutionalised, for instance in Kazbegi where the LAG’s executive committee decided to include at least five young people⁸⁶ into their decision-making structures (People in Need 2018: 11). However, corresponding to the findings for women or people living in geographically remote areas, their inclusion into LEADER was frequently understood as projects being targeted at young people rather than including them in central LAG positions. For instance, the Ajara LAGs conducted trainings for young people on gender equality, innovative entrepreneurship, CV

⁸⁶ This source does not specify the age limits of ‘young people’.

design, public relations, and on “Georgia’s European way, achievements and challenges” (Chaudhry et al. 2018: 32), with the latter also fostering the aforementioned Europeanisation of rural spaces. Therefore, an interview with a representative from a subcontracted organisation doubted that young people had meaningful access to decision-making structures (Interview 10). Rather, they contended that LAGs and NGOs view youth engagement as a category to be ticked off in grant competitions (Interview 10).

Therefore, one of the central goals of LEADER, empowering those without previous access to decision-making, was not a result of the instrument’s application in Georgia. Rather than reshaping territory through inclusion in LAG boards and the design of measures, often projects were merely targeted at women, young people, and inhabitants of remote villages. This finding also undermines the ‘community’ that is often assumed by EU programming but also in the literatures on local ownership or endogenous development. Evidently, important power asymmetries mark rural spaces which in turn influences who is involved in processes of EU external governance. Importantly, these findings reflected various case studies that were presented in Chapter 5 (e.g. Csurgó & Kovách 2016; Kopoteva & Nikula 2014; Dax et al. 2016; Fernández 2017). Hence, it is puzzling that the programme was not adopted to ensure the fulfilment of one of its central expectations.

The second aspect of territory relates to the argument that LEADER shifts power from local governments to ‘the broader public’ and from the central government to local administrations. First, rather than shifting power away from local administrations to a broader category of actors, the attitude of people in those administrations was consistently identified as vital for the success or failure of LAG actions by organisations involved with the implementation of the programme (Interviews 10; 11; 12; 13). Within local administrations, these interviewees argued it was particularly mayors who acted either as potential spoilers or facilitators (Interviews 9; 11; 12; 13). One representative illustrated that only if the mayor “sees the need of community work and believes in participation” the programme could work (Interview 11). As discussed in Chapter 6, local politicians often supported the programme and became active within LAGs because they perceived them as opportunities to interact with constituents. Moreover, one EU official and an organisation’s representative contended that mayors may want to benefit from the raised profile of a municipality

that participated in an EU-funded programme, or that they could benefit from projects that could not have been implemented otherwise due to municipalities' severely limited budgets (Interviews 5; 9). Thus, rather than shaping power dynamics within rural spaces, LEADER further empowered local governments, and especially mayors as the central actors within them.

Turning from territory within rural spaces to relations of authority between rural areas and the central government, LEADER could be understood as an attempt towards further decentralization. For instance, interviews with EU officials and subcontracted actors argued that LEADER could challenge the top-down status quo by increasing the power of municipalities (Interviews 7; 11). Decentralization has long been a priority of the EU in Georgia. The Single Support Framework for 2014–2017 for instance noted “little genuine self governance at local/municipal level” (EEAS & DG DEVCO - EuropeAid 2014: 2). For the EU, LEADER was utilised to disseminate broader messages not only about the EU per se, but also the decentralisation of policymaking and its specific decentralised approach of rural development embedded in the CAP. For instance, one EU official confirmed that ENPARD should be viewed in the bigger picture of public administration reform (Interview 5). Accordingly, a series of EU and UNDP-led workshops in five LEADER municipalities aimed to teach participants

to carry out public campaigns in their municipalities and promote the concept of rural development across the country. With a focus on mobilising and empowering local communities to play an active role in rural development, the campaigns are expected to help establish constructive working relations between the citizens and local authorities, assist in shaping rural development policies at the local level and increase the Government's accountability for achieving tangible results for the benefit of people and communities (ENPARD 2019d: n.p.).

Next to the re-introduction of the student-teacher relationship in which Georgian actors are taught rural development, this indicates that LEADER had broader aspirations in terms of shaping power distributions not only within rural spaces, but across the country. Indeed, it could be identified as an attempt to promote the EU's decentralization agenda underhandedly.

Nonetheless, the instrument did not result in substantive changes on this dimension. Rather, one organisation representative maintained that the government continued to understand LEADER as a donor-owned financial instrument for LAGs at best, or even as a competitor to local governments (Interview 9). Importantly, most mayors in Georgia are at least associated with the governing Georgian Dream party, often following expensive election campaigns for mayors in areas that could be lost to the

opposition, as well as allegations of election violations, such as pressuring teachers to promote the ruling party (Council of Europe 2018: 6f.). Thus, as explained in the previous chapter, the government has refused to meaningfully support the programme in Georgia, putting its continuation into question. As a result, this questions the capacity of a programme such as LEADER, or in fact any single EU action, to override the political system and context in question.

7.2.3 LEADER as a business support programme

Rather than re-shaping power and territory within rural spaces, and creating comprehensive rural development actions, LEADER in Georgia was predominantly applied as a business support programme, reflecting an element of economic power and the dimension of *land*. That businesses, rather than broader community efforts as expected by the EU, were the main target of LEADER funding becomes evident when scrutinizing the sub-projects funded by LAGs. For instance, in Borjomi, 40 out of 63 initiatives related to the business sector (Channon et al. 2017: 55). Here, the list of actors consulted for the LDS is similarly illustrative: the managers of the Bakuriani and Borjomi Tourist Agencies, farmers, hotel and guesthouse owners, with further information added by representatives of international and national NGOs (Borjomi Local Action Group 2016: 13f.). In Lagodekhi, where 57.6% of the LAG membership were from the private, rather than civil society or public sector,⁸⁷ 13 out of 31 funded projects were related to agriculture, four to tourism, and one to “social entrepreneurship” (Channon et al. 2017: 48f.). Another illustrative example is the scarcity of environmental projects. For instance, in Borjomi all applications related to reforestation were withdrawn after the economic incentive of selling seedlings was removed (Channon et al. 2017: 52). In turn, the ENPARD evaluation found that LEADER

lacks the necessary mechanisms to ensure that the environmental initiatives will not be used for income generation (e.g. trees planted following de-forestation will not subsequently be felled for income) (Channon et al. 2017: 54).

This picture was confirmed for the newer LAGs. For instance, the Akhalkalaki LAG predominantly funded agricultural and food projects, including a shop for dairy products, the import of Holstein cattle, agricultural irrigation, a project to “increase the production of Traditional and European Cheese” as well as tourism development projects and the construction of a guesthouse (LAG Akhalkalaki 2018). In Khulo, of

⁸⁷ 56% in Borjomi (Channon et al. 2017: 52).

the 15 of the 45 projects successful in the first round of the grant competition in 2019 related to agriculture/food businesses,⁸⁸ and nine tourism projects were funded, including a project on glamping, hotels, a café and a tourist complex (ENPARD 2019a). Other projects included fitness clubs, equipment for the dental centre, a carpet cleaning service, and a factory for disposable medical material (ENPARD 2019a). From this list, it was remarkable how many projects funded agriculture-related activities. While agriculture is an important sector in rural spaces both in Georgia and the EU, Chapter 4 presented the disadvantages of conflating both. Importantly, LEADER, as the flagship programme of the CAP's broader engagement with rural spaces, was designed to offer specifically non-agricultural and cross-sectoral activities.

Next to agriculture, another large group of funded projects addressed the tourism sector, reiterating the marketing of rural places to international tourists that was also observed for GIs. In Borjomi, LEADER funded a tourism information centre, and in Kazbegi a pre-cooked food project supplied primarily guesthouses and hotels (Channon et al. 2017: 50; 52; 58). Furthermore, a beneficiary of the Khulo programme asserted that the programme helped them to create social media, Booking.com and Airbnb pages for their guest house (ENPARD 2019i). Once more, this connection of international tourists to Georgian rural places was constructed as an important tool to combat rural depopulation. Speaking about a project on eco-tourism, a LAG member maintained that it was necessary “to help flourish the local economy and keep more people to stay in Borjomi. More people visiting and keeping the economy alive means more people staying” (ENPARD 2016: 6). However, as explained below, business owners were in a privileged position to benefit from LEADER, reiterating that power relations were not reshaped but reinforced by the programme.

Another indication that LEADER in Georgia has largely been implemented as a business support programme are activities by the aforementioned networks between Georgian LAGs. For instance, in December 2019, winemakers and members of the Tsakaltubo LAG visited vineyards in Keda to exchange ‘best practices’ and agree on future cooperation (ENPARD 2019h: n.p.). Similarly, the visit of the Khulo LAG to the Kazbegi and Mestia LAGs was aimed at experience exchanges in hospitality management including “advertising techniques in modern tourism business”

⁸⁸ e.g. the repair of agricultural equipment, modernization of greenhouses and funding a cheese production factory.

(ENPARD 2019e). Importantly, this understanding of LEADER as primarily a provider of funds for businesses is made explicit and noted by LAGs. One report on Kazbegi noted that the “LAG has helped to demystify the notion of business and entrepreneurship” (People in Need 2018: 16). It further observed that participants viewed the LAG as opportunity for managerial skills acquisition and reported that “social capital and the right network among local population, coupled with proposal-writing skills, are key to success” (People in Need 2018: 9; 7; 19).

In turn, well-networked business owners are well positioned to benefit. Accordingly, the ENPARD evaluation noted that “some people [...] wished to become LAG members since they believed it would be advantageous in the competition for grants” (Channon et al. 2017: 57). To address this conception, some LAGs limited membership because “some people would like to join the LAG only when there is the sub-grant competition to influence the decision making process” (Channon et al. 2017: 54). Yet, limitations were rare as most LAGs assumed that funds provided to businesses would trickle down to the broader population, as one representative from a subcontracted organization reported (Interview 14).

To reiterate, the focus on business support and lack of inclusivity resulted from LEADER’s bottom-up design itself. As outlined, neither the EU nor subcontractors wanted to interfere in the constitution of LAGs or in funding decisions. This meant that while the results deviated from EU-expectations, the LEADER programme was implemented as intended. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the consequence of LEADER primarily benefitting businesses was not criticised by all EU officials. Indeed, one interviewed EU official even claimed that LEADER should be mainly targeted at jobs and income generating activities, perceiving it as a purely economic rather than social instrument (Interview 2). According to them, the programme would be inclusive because its activities cover all types of populations⁸⁹ (Interview 2). Nonetheless, another EU official who had been involved with the design of the programme argued that the inclusion of women and young people in decision-making “is key” and that the use of LEADER as a business support programme would not adequately reflect LEADER’s initial purpose (Interview 7). The latter view is

⁸⁹ i.e. economic benefits would trickle down to the broader population of an area.

confirmed by the EU documents presented in Chapter 5, which described LEADER as a comprehensive, empowering rural development programme.

Even though the reasons for LEADER's perception as a business development fund rather than a programme aimed at inclusivity in and ownership of local decision-making need further scrutiny, three causes are likely. First, it needs to be reiterated that EU officials were concerned less by the types of actors empowered by LEADER than meeting financial management and monitoring obligations. Arguably, local elites and especially businesses retain pre-existing capacities in terms of budgeting and accounting which put them in a privileged position to comply with these rules compared to non-business and particularly marginalised actors. Second, they were better positioned to meet LEADER's conditions for co-financing, even though how much co-funding is required depended on the application in question.⁹⁰ Lastly, one interviewed actor involved in the implementation of LEADER in Moldova was convinced that a major contributing factor to the understanding of LEADER as a business support programme in Georgia was the large size of EU-funds available, which arguably could not reasonably fund primarily 'softer' community projects (Interview 23). To illustrate, the Dedoplistskaro LDS expected average funding for a sub-project to be 20,000 Euros (Dedoplistskaro Local Action Group n.d.: 42). The latter argument is particularly interesting as it is counter-intuitive, reasoning that less funding may be more effective in reconstructing the power dynamics in rural spaces.

7.3 Conclusions

Various conclusions can be drawn for how the instruments shaped rural spaces in Georgia. For GIs, it was observed that the instrument reshaped how rurality itself was conceptualised and perceived. The alleged backwardness and frontier-ness of rural areas was reconstructed as tradition and unique locality. In turn, this re-conceptualisation was used to market rural spaces internationally. The main shift on the dimension of place then were the connections that have been developed by outsiders, particularly tourists or wine consumers, towards a space perceived as producing traditional products with unique *terroir*. However, the chapter also highlighted that the significant economic benefits on the dimension of land - as were highlighted for various EU GIs, including Cassis, Comté, or Tome de Bauges - did not

⁹⁰ This depends on the LAG and the category of applicant (e.g. NGO vs. commercial entities), but 50% is the maximum noted (Channon et al. 2017; Dedoplistskaro Local Action Group n.d.: 42).

materialise. Consequences were also uneven in terms of the actors involved, as only larger wine companies produce and export GI-specified wines. Rather than supporting small producers, GIs reinforced power structures on the dimension of land. For territory, the significant motivation by the Georgian government to adopt GI rules was vital. Considering the aforementioned vacuum of smaller commercial producers or cooperatives, the government turned to larger producers, therefore reinforcing their centrality.

Corresponding to many of the findings recorded for GIs, LEADER interacted with notions of rurality as backwards and peripheral primarily by connecting LAGs with EU networks and through narratives of 'learning from the EU'. This Europeanisation was contrasted with the alleged rural passivity under Soviet rule and constructed a narrative in which modern European activism overcomes backwards Soviet lethargy. Nonetheless, this narrative resulted in a student-teacher dynamic between Georgian actors and those from the EU, in which Georgian actors adopted rather than adapted EU-rules. However, LEADER did not, as expected, reconfigure territory. Instead of empowering previously marginalised groups, the instrument reinforced actors with the necessary resources to implement an EU project. The programme also did not result in a shift of territorial relations through decentralization. Rather than being a tool of inclusive empowerment, LEADER largely took the form of a business support programme which further reinforced existing economic structures, i.e. land. This was explained by the importance of local networks, as well as the capacities needed to fulfil EU monitoring and financing requirements. Here, actors that already had considerable resources were comparatively well positioned.

Perhaps unsurprisingly then, the chapter demonstrated that EU expectations on empowerment and economic benefits were not met. Both instruments reinforced existing power relations in terms of land and territory. At the same time, LEADER and GIs resulted in the reconstruction of rurality through which they shaped place and connected outsiders towards them. Of course, these results have various implications for the theoretical framework and the external governance literature more broadly, which are discussed in the Conclusion of this thesis.

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The EU's external actions, and particularly its Neighbourhood Policy have long been contested. Importantly, so has the question of how to conceptualise their effectiveness: whose goals would be met, and which goals should be prioritised? Similarly, the CAP is not only a central policy due to the budget and importance attached to it, but it is one of the most debated, and indeed criticised EU policies. Nevertheless, few authors have connected the two literatures. This is despite clear statements connecting the CAP to EU external actions such as by former Agricultural Commissioner Hogan, who stated that "agriculture and rural development is the chief focus of EU development assistance" (Hogan 2017: n.p.), or by the 2016 Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy that promoted the idea of fostering resilience in the EU neighbourhood by supporting "governments to devise sustainable responses to food production [...] through development, diplomacy, and scientific cooperation" (EEAS 2016: 34). Within the literature that analyses the EU's role in the world, the CAP is frequently either completely neglected or only recognised as a stumbling block in trade negotiations. While there are some authors who engage with the external impact of the CAP (e.g. Matthews 2008; Boysen et al. 2016), the export of the CAP itself, how effective this export is, and, importantly, how to understand effectiveness in this context has hardly been investigated. Closing this gap was the main goal of this thesis.

The thesis selected the EU external governance framework to address this central puzzle. Primarily, the framework provided value by uniting various approaches, making it particularly apt at exploring an understudied sector. The framework's systematic approach also meant that it was exceptionally useful in structuring the analysis of effectiveness, which, other than general understandings of the concept as the achievement of goals, specifies whose (EU) and which (export of the *acquis*) goals, but also introduces three distinct measures. Nonetheless, it was found that this conceptualisation of effectiveness should be expanded by a view towards the consequences of EU rules and instruments 'on the ground' to comprehensively capture the process. This thesis suggests an interdisciplinary approach to capture consequences, through spatial concepts.

Hence, it was argued that for the CAP, consequences should be observed for rural spaces, which include but stretch beyond agriculture. Therefore, Chapter 4 developed

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heuristics broad enough to uncover a large variety of potential consequences of EU external governance, rather than focusing only on those observed by the literature or intended by the EU. The study of rural spaces included the question of how rurality itself is understood, perceived, and experienced. Additionally, consequences for spaces were argued to happen along two major dimensions. First, the concept of place captured the way insiders and outsiders relate to a space, for instance through feelings of belonging or exclusion. Second, the concepts of territory and land both related to power relations within and between places. While land included socio-economic processes of ownership or capital accumulation related to space, territory pointed towards more overtly political processes, for instance between local administrations and the central government, or decision-makers within a rural space. Indeed, these heuristics can be utilised in future assessments of EU external actions and governance consequences, both intended and unintended, and therefore they constitute a major contribution.

Subsequently, the thesis zoomed in on two the external governance of two CAP instruments. GIs and LEADER are both perceived as important instruments within the EU and promoted as models to solve rural development problems outside beyond its borders. As mentioned previously, LEADER was even hailed by former Agricultural Commissioner Hogan as being accepted worldwide as “best practice” (European Commission 2017a: 3), while GIs have attracted great importance in EU trade negotiations. At the same time, the instruments differ in the way they are governed internally, opening a puzzle as to whether sectoral approaches to EU external actions apply, or whether institutionalist assumptions that the internal and external mode of governance correspond need to be revisited. Therefore, the research questions were:

- (1) How has the CAP been externally governed?
- (2) Have the rural development instruments of GIs and LEADER been effectively externally governed in Georgia?
- (3) How have GIs and LEADER shaped the understanding and politics of rural space in Georgia?

8.1 Findings and original contributions

The thesis made various original contributions and its findings have both empirical and theoretical implications for the study of EU external actions and a thus far neglected policy sector, the CAP. For the literature of EU external actions, it

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contributes to the understanding of effectiveness through the inclusion of consequences via interdisciplinary spatial concepts informed by Rural Studies, Political Geography, and Sociology. Specifically, it extends theoretical perspectives by introducing complexity to what has often been analysed as straightforward policy export from the EU to a non-member state and the assumption of what Burlyuk has framed as “positive impact or no impact” (Burlyuk 2017: 1009). As mentioned, the concept of rural space can be utilised in future research to expand analyses beyond the typical sites of EU external action analyses from government buildings in capital cities to a more comprehensive view of non-member states’ contexts, and by providing guidance to what happens ‘on the ground’. Connectedly, it achieved this additional detail by contributing to the ways external governance is studied, extending the typical focus on negotiations, legal texts, and policy documents by adopting a broader timeframe, mapping the development of non-member state’s policies before negotiations started, and by shedding light on the wider narratives surrounding these processes.

To the literature on external governance more specifically, the thesis contributes a more empirically detailed additional understanding of how the EU exports its rules, as well as the aforementioned contributions to the conceptualisation of external governance effectiveness. Specifically, it nuanced sectoral explanations of how EU rules travel, by observing differences within policy sectors on the level of instruments. Moreover, rather than supporting institutionalist explanations, the thesis emphasised the importance of contexts on various levels in a non-member state for modes, effectiveness, and the consequences of external governance.

Third, the thesis contributes to the literature on the CAP and the two policy instruments studied here. Connecting the concept of rural spaces and external relations to the CAP itself, the thesis provided insights into their impact on the CAP’s reform trajectory. In turn, it contributed to the literature on LEADER and GIs, studying them in previously neglected contexts that are non-EU and post-Soviet. To this end, Chapter 5 first traced the CAP’s historical trajectory. As had been identified by the previous academic literature, the CAP was developed predominantly to ensure food security after the Second World War. The literature then identified a paradigm shift in the 1980s and 1990s towards an engagement with rural spaces beyond agriculture. This shift was triggered both by a diversified policy arena but also international trade negotiations at

the GATT/WTO. The chapter argued that confronted with the failure of implementing CAP rules on the international level, the EU shifted its attention towards promoting them through bilateral arrangements. Indeed, it found that it is precisely the narratives around multifunctional agriculture and rural development that have been at the heart of the CAP's external governance. Therefore, the concentration on purely agricultural and/or trade aspects of the CAP by the literature overlooked important dynamics.

Chapter 5 also synthesised the literature on LEADER and GIs and identified ways in which they have been implemented in non-EU countries, including in candidate countries, the neighbourhood, and beyond. It then applied the concept of rural spaces to the existing literature analysing the consequences of both instruments and demonstrated that both instruments aimed to localise places. For LEADER, this meant a decentralization process intended to reduce the influence from the central government, while GIs were seen as a defence from globalization. Another finding was that the consequences varied significantly across cases, with desired and undesired consequences at times observed within one country. This finding is crucial insofar as it demonstrates the importance of domestic, regional, and local contexts. It also challenges the EU's assumption of similar consequences of its actions across countries and regions, that has been criticised by the academic literature especially on the ENP and that resounded in the instruments' external governance in Georgia. Overall, Chapter 5 provided vital background insights for the first research question, i.e. how the CAP is governed externally, both as a whole and through the two instruments.

8.1.1 How are LEADER and GIs governed externally? The importance of domestic narratives and insignificance of EU conditionality

In the first empirical chapter, the thesis recorded results for the modes and effectiveness of external governance that provide avenues for theory development. Therefore, it contributed to the field not only one of the first empirical investigations of the CAP's external governance, but also broadened the way external governance could be approached. To answer the first research question, the CAP has been externally governed in various, context-specific ways, utilising various modes which expand those presented by the original framework. For the second research question, the thesis found that LEADER and GIs were selected, adopted, and applied in Georgia.

To summarise the findings for GIs, the EU's sui generis GI-model was selected and adopted by the Georgian government predominantly out of market rationales. Certain

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wines were understood as crucial to national traditions and identity. Therefore, the government aimed to protect these products from being counterfeited and in turn becoming generic. The protection of GIs also contributed to the policy goal of export market diversification and thereby avoiding future vulnerabilities from closures of the Russian market. Indeed, in Georgia, governmental agencies continue to be the primary actors in the application for and protection of GIs. This also means that the process is substantively different from the EU where GIs are primarily driven by producer groups such as cooperatives (Kireeva 2011: 74). Despite following a different process than GIs internally, the instrument was selected, adopted, and applied. The 1999 Law on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications law was modelled after the EU's *sui generis* system, and since then, almost 50 GIs have been protected.

In comparison, the analysis of LEADER's external governance was relatively straightforward in that it largely followed its EU-internal network mode, albeit lacking the hierarchical element present in the EU. The instrument's focus on bottom-up approaches was transferred to Georgia, specifically to the local level, where Local Development Strategies were guided only by procedural rules, while the content of actions themselves were not prescribed. Moreover, Georgian actors at all levels were integrated into networks with EU-actors. However, these networks were unidirectional, creating student-teacher relations rather than exchanging experiences on equal footing. On the question of external governance effectiveness, LEADER was selected, adopted, and applied in Georgia. While a rather superficial rule adoption occurred on the level of the central government through the inclusion of the programme in the Rural Development Strategy, what was more striking was the adoption and application on the local level. LAGs were established and developed Local Development Strategies as central LEADER policy documents on the local level. Consequently, sub-projects were funded and implemented.

From the findings on modes, various overarching conclusions were drawn that contribute to three overlapping literatures: the broader external actions literature, institutionalist approaches to external actions, and external governance framework specifically. First, it adds a more fine-grained perspective to the literature of external actions that typically studies policy sectors such as the CAP, or even the EaP, as a whole. On the first research question, findings did not correspond to the sectoral expectation that one policy sector would be guided by one external mode of

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governance (cf.: Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 796). Arguably, this finding is rather unsurprising considering the reform trajectory the CAP has taken and the breadth of issues the policy addresses, as explained in Chapter 5. Nonetheless, EU external action literatures typically focus on the level of ‘macro-policies’ rather than specific instruments. Adopting such an approach here would have neglected the vastly different ways in which specific instruments find their ways to Georgia, both via economic rationales as well as through socialisation. Additionally, focusing only on the relevant macro-policy documents such as the Rural Development Strategy or the Strategy for Agricultural Development would have overestimated the role of the EU in the process. Therefore, the thesis suggests that analyses of EU external governance should be studied more frequently at the level of instruments.

A second contribution to the overarching study of EU external actions is relates to how these processes are studied. Importantly, the findings on modes reinforce the need for a less legalistic approach to analysing EU external actions and to consider processes beyond formal negotiations. Much of the EU external action literature has centred around formal negotiations, e.g. for Association Agreements, in which the EU is unsurprisingly very active. Yet, this need not be the case for EU-rules that were adopted by non-member states prior to negotiations and that included modes of diffusion as theorised by Börzel and Risse (2012). Especially for GIs, the adoption of EU rules pre-dated formal relationships and negotiations, implying also that analyses should expand in time to include earlier, less-formal moments of external action. This also relates to the broadening of the understanding of domestic structures, as outlined below.

For institutionalist approaches within and beyond the external governance framework, a crucial finding is that other than expected, hierarchy did not feature significantly into the external governance of either instrument. This contradicts institutionalist expectations that the mode of external governance follows the internal one given that the governance of LEADER and GIs, as argued in Chapter 5, present clear hierarchical elements within the EU. Surprisingly, the EU was more passive than expected. While the EU was almost completely absent in the early stages of rule selection and adoption for GIs, LEADER was applied by subcontracted organizations and locals with limited EU interference. Importantly, these instances should not be excluded from analyses of external governance because they followed less purposive EU actions. After all, that

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GIs were not actively pressured for by the EU was an empirical finding that was contradictory to the expectations that arose from previous exports of the *sui generis* system through bilateral trade agreements.

Two overarching findings on the first research question contribute to the literature of external governance more narrowly. First the findings emphasise the importance of the domestic context for external governance modes and suggest broadening how domestic contexts are understood. From this finding follows that necessary detail should be added to the conceptualisation and analysis of external governance modes. As highlighted above, the external governance mode for GIs was determined by the Georgian context in the 1990s, its Soviet history, as well as national narratives around traditional products. Hereby, the findings on GIs also broadened the market mode of external governance which typically stipulates that private actors lobby non-member states' governments into the adoption of EU rules (cf. Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 799). Especially in analyses of the EaP and post-Soviet contexts where small- and medium commercial producers were largely erased, instances of state-entrepreneurism can be expected. On agriculture specifically, where smaller and/or medium-sized commercial producers did not exist at the time of independence, and where cooperatives evoke negative memories of *kolkhozes*, the motivation to protect GIs, the actors and beneficiaries are likely to differ from case studies e.g. for French products which did not experience a similar rupture. That is not to say that processes and consequences will be similar across the EaP. For instance, rural spaces in Ukraine are and have long been marked by large-scale cereal production, resulting in different rural contexts and agricultural traditions compared to Georgia (Deininger et al. 2013; World Data Center 2020).

The broader analysis of the domestic context also added detail on how the network mode can operate in practice. For LEADER, the network mode implied student-teacher relationships, in which Georgian actors were taught the 'right' rural development practices. This relationship nuances the conceptualisations of networks in EU external governance. For instance, while the framework specifies the relationships as "formally equal" (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 798), it is important to remember de-facto inequalities of actors.

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From the aforementioned broader, less legalistic understanding also follows a call for the extension of how domestic structures are understood. Rather than being restricted to a goodness-of-fit analysis with existing policies and regulations, historical contexts and broader narratives need to be included (cf. Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2004; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2004: 664f.). To illustrate, for the case of GIs, the centrality of place-based products, especially wines, for national narratives as well as the historical context, rather than pre-existing laws, explained the government's entrepreneurialism. For the case of LEADER, the perception of EU rules as the 'gold standard' of rural development especially on the local level facilitated the student-teacher relationship form of the network mode.

In a second contribution to external governance, the thesis identified the significant role third actors played in the advocacy for EU rules or implementation of EU programmes, e.g. acting as transmitters or subcontractors (see Lavenex 2014: 555), especially when the EU was less active. In the case of GIs, although the government's willingness was central, international organisations such as the WIPO presented the EU-model in meetings leading up to the formulation of the 1999 law, and other organisations frequently refer to EU examples. For LEADER, international NGOs were subcontracted with the implementation on the ground, with both EU and local actors describing the Union's role as marginal apart from providing the overarching framework and funding. In the external governance literature, non-governmental or other international institutions are rarely analysed as transmitters but are often perceived as competitors in rule selection instead (see Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009: 800), meaning expands these roles. Arguably, the reliance on third actors is even more important in countries to which the EU has fewer direct relations.

Concerning findings on external governance effectiveness, the central finding was that other than expected by power-based or institutionalist explanations, the hierarchical mode was not more effective than other modes of external governance. Both GIs and LEADER were selected as blueprint, adopted into policy, and applied in political and administrative practice. Georgia has been following the EU *sui generis* model on GIs since 1999. Since then, around 50 products, primarily wines but also food products such as cheeses and potatoes, have been protected. Largely, the effectiveness was explained by the government's perception of GIs as a vital protection for products that are deeply embedded in national and cultural narratives, as well as a perceived

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closeness to countries such as France and Italy in which place-based products are similarly central to such narratives.

Correspondingly, LEADER was selected and adopted directly via ENPARD and through its (superficial) inclusion in the Georgian Rural Development Strategy. It was also adopted on the local level through the formulation of Local Development Strategies. The instrument was applied in municipalities across the countries, which devised strategies and implemented sub-projects. Overall, the case reiterated the importance of a detailed analyses on various levels. On adoption, the central governments' Rural Development Strategy emphasised LEADER, but this was not backed up by Action Plans or a commitment to future funding. Nevertheless, this reluctance by the central government was overridden via local adoption and application. This finding indicates the potential for cases in which EU policies may not be fully supported by non-member states' governments but applied by local actors. It therefore provides alternative avenues of EU external governance that may circumvent governments on some select issues, even though a general positive attitude towards the EU by the central government is likely a vital scope condition.

Connecting both cases, contrary to theoretical expectations, external governance through other modes can be just as effective as hierarchy. This finding is encouraging for the broader context of EU external action. Considering the decreasing use of direct conditionality due to the stalling of EU enlargement processes, the thesis demonstrates that hierarchy is not always necessary to ensure that EU rules find their way into non-member states. In turn, the EU may adopt various 'softer' modes and still see them selected, adopted, and applied in non-member states.

Overall, the findings of Chapter 6 suggest the broadening of external actions and specifically external governance perspectives. This includes a more fine-grained recognition of domestic contexts in non-member states. Through broadening its modes, external governance can thereby more successfully capture how the EU externalises its rules in a context where it either cannot or will not use formal conditionality. In a situation where enlargement is not on the horizon, this broadening will become ever more relevant.

8.1.2 Shaping rural spaces: redefining rurality, reinforcing elites

One of the central contributions of this thesis was the expansion of understandings of effectiveness by engaging with consequences ‘on the ground’ through the interdisciplinary concept of rural spaces. In Chapter 7, the answer to the third research question revealed that both instruments were surprisingly similar in how they shaped rural spaces, despite differing on the mode of external governance. This implies that how instruments are externally governed does not necessarily determine their consequences. In turn, this has implications for theorizations of EU external governance and external relations more broadly.

Turning to how *rurality* was shaped, both instruments addressed a narrative of rural spaces’ backwardness and remoteness, which are typical constructions of rurality as identified in Chapter 4. GIs resulted in the reconstruction of rural backwardness as tradition, which in turn was mainly marketed abroad, as argued below. In LEADER, rural backwardness was addressed by adopting supposedly modern EU rural development approaches. Interestingly, in Georgia the construction of rural backwardness was closely connected to narratives around the country’s Soviet history. By implementing EU-rules, rural spaces were directed towards (Western-)Europe and were supposed to overcome Soviet experiences. In the case of LEADER, it was claimed that by adopting ‘modern’ European rural development approaches a mentality change occurred that promoted taking an active role in the development of rural areas. This, in turn, was argued to have stood in contradiction to, and transformed, an alleged rural citizens’ passivity during Soviet times. At the same time, GIs subverted rurality-as-backwardness through a re-orientation towards pre-Soviet times, towards producing specialty wines as well as emphasising connections particularly to 19th and early 20th century France. This central role of historical narratives in the construction of rurality highlights the importance of analysing contexts broadly and including sources beyond agricultural and rural policies.

Within these processes, the EU was frequently identified by a multitude of actors to have put forward the ‘right’, or ‘modern’ instrument. However, the resulting Europeanisation of rural spaces, especially for LEADER, created student-teacher relationships between Georgian and EU actors. Actors in both instruments participated in EU-sponsored events or study visits to EU LAGs and GI-producers. Moreover, both were increasingly embedded in interest group networks such as ELARD for LEADER

or OriGIn for GIs. Yet, rather than exchanging experiences on equal footing, the focus was on ‘learning from EU experiences’ or on how to adopt ‘EU best practices’. Often, EU actors educated Georgian counterparts on the supposedly ‘correct’ application of the instrument. At the same time, in part explained by the rationale of adopting so-called modern approaches, Georgian actors uncritically accepted EU instruments as the ‘gold standard’ of rural development. In turn, this student-teacher relationship fostered the uncritical adoption rather than context-guided adaptation of the two instruments which would be important to address some of their consequences, e.g. the lack of empowerment of marginalised actors, discussed below.

These student-teacher relationships have rarely been studied explicitly in the field of EU external relations. For instance, Jakiūnaitė argues that the ENP is generally based on a student-teacher relationship in which “the EU’s neighbour becomes the one who needs teaching, who does not know what to want and, consequently, how to reach it” (Jakiūnaitė 2009: 121) and also notes that Baltic states have quickly moved out of their student status in enlargement to become teachers for ENP countries (Jakiūnaitė 2009: 125). Yet, in the case of the CAP in Georgia, local actors had agency and eagerly adopted EU rules, both to gain funding for rural areas and to overcome the perceived passivity of Soviet spaces. Even though, considering the central government’s reluctance towards LEADER, local actors arguably need not implement LEADER, they chose to become the EU’s student. At the same time, the findings mirror authors questioning the existence of the supposed ‘local turn’ in EU external actions (Petrova & Delcour 2020). Here, however, the close mirroring of EU rules and models resulted not only from the EU’s inflexibility but also from local perceptions of EU-rules as modern.

Turning to how the instruments shaped *places*, both instruments again resulted in similar processes. While locals’ increased pride was mentioned for both GIs and LEADER, the instruments predominantly shaped the connections and perceptions outsiders, and particularly international tourists, have to and of rural spaces. This can be illustrated especially well for the case of GIs, whose application made Georgian place-based products, and particularly wines, visible for international markets and consumers. GI wines, and the places in which they are produced, were marketed to English-speaking tourists and consumers through government activities such as wine maps and tourism brochures, as well as by magazine and newspaper articles that

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emphasised Georgia's specific *terroir* and extensive, unique wine culture. In the case of LEADER, this orientation towards outsiders of specific spaces was evident in the large number of hospitality-related projects funded by the respective LAGs. Therefore, the two instruments subverted rurality and connected outsiders to newly marketed places.

Moreover, both instruments solidified the power of existing elites. On the dimension of *land*, GI protections have been almost exclusively used by large wine firms which can meet EU standards and production volumes that are necessary to export and thus potentially benefit from price premiums of GIs, even though these have not materialised thus far. Smaller farmers on the other hand were largely excluded from these processes due to EU food safety standards, small production volumes, and both the reluctance and incapacity to meet production specifications for GIs. Similarly, LEADER was implemented in Georgia mainly as a business-support programme, meaning that local business owners, rather than more general community projects, primarily benefitted from the funding for sub-projects.

On the dimension of *territory*, the LEADER programme highlighted that while lip service was paid to the empowerment of women, youth, and other marginalised groups, it was actors with already comparatively large social and financial resources that held central decision-making positions. Additionally, rather than shifting decision-making towards inclusive participatory democracy, mayors retained a central role. Similarly, on the dimension of territory between local areas and the central government, little has changed. In the case of GIs, the central government continues to be the most active applicant. The dimensions of land and territory thus reiterate the necessity to analyse various levels within the domestic context, but also to not assume homogenous local communities devoid of internal power asymmetries.

Overall, the second empirical chapter demonstrated that the way the EU externally governed did not shape the consequences EU instruments had at the level of implementation. While LEADER and GIs differed in their modes of external governance, they shaped rural spaces in strikingly similar ways. Rather, dynamics, narratives, and contexts in non-member states, on the central as well as local levels were vital in explaining these consequences. In turn, future analyses should pay close attention to various levels and broadly conceptualised contexts and include consequences into analyses of EU external action performance. At the same time, this

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importance of contexts has policy implications, further challenging the one-size-fits-all approaches the EU continues to apply across its neighbourhoods, as elaborated on below.

Hereby, the findings also reinforce the necessity to broaden analyses of effectiveness and the measure of success along EU-expectations. This speaks to Burlyuk's criticism of the literature's assumption that EU actions would lead to "positive impact or no impact" (Burlyuk 2017: 1009). First, even though both instruments were selected, adopted, and applied in Georgia, neither met many of the EU's expectations: they did not significantly aid the development of rural economies and there was no measurable effect on rural depopulation. Rather than supporting small farmers, large producers were well positioned to benefit from GI protections. For LEADER, which was based on an idea of transforming territory by empowering the local level and marginalised groups within it, the centrality of existing elites is an even clearer example. Yet, had the thesis only measured whether EU goals were met, as done by conventional understandings of effectiveness, or focused solely on unintended consequences, various consequences would have been overlooked. This includes the re-construction of rurality but also the emergence of student-teacher relationships which were fostered both by EU and Georgian actors. Therefore, rural space as a guiding concept was vital to capture the diversity of consequences.

To summarise, various implications for the study of EU actions, governance, and their effectiveness were noted. First was the broadening beyond legalistic approaches, meaning the focus should turn towards detailed empirical analyses of external governance beyond formal negotiations. Moreover, selection, adoption, and application processes should be studied for actors beyond the central government, which could in turn reveal situations in which the EU circumvents central governments' obstruction on certain policy issues. Overall, broader, multilevel contexts need to be investigated for explaining how EU-rules find their way to non-member states. One starting point for this could be the connection to concepts of multilevel governance that has been prominent in analyses of policies within the EU, (see e.g. George 2006; Maggetti & Trein 2018; Börzel & Heard-Lauréote 2009; Bache et al. 2016). There also needs to be a wider consideration of consequences beyond EU expectations, as was already suggested by the unintended consequences literature (Burlyuk & Noutcheva 2019), as well as consequences for final policy recipients. In

turn, if no or only negative consequences can be observed, this would necessitate a comprehensive re-evaluation of EU actions in these policy-areas.

8.2 Policy implications and recommendations

This thesis' findings are not only relevant for expanding the literature on EU external actions, they also suggest some implications for EU policy. As has been pointed out, the EU's expectations regarding the consequences of GIs and LEADER were largely unmet. This was particularly evident on the dimensions of land and territory for GIs and LEADER, respectively. The expectation that GIs would benefit small farmers and that LEADER would empower marginalised groups were almost entirely subverted through the capture of those instruments by comparatively elite actors. At the same time, these consequences largely could have been anticipated by the EU in light of similar findings presented in Chapter 5.

Case studies on LEADER observed both empowering processes, but also the importance of local notables and the 'project class' as well as the continued exclusion of less powerful groups from decision making (e.g. Csurgó & Kovách 2016; Papadopoulou et al. 2011; Pollermann et al. 2017; Shucksmith 2013). For the case of GIs, Chapter 5 similarly illustrated benefits for both small and large producers, dependent on the GI in question (e.g. Bowen & Zapata 2009; Moir 2017; Mancini 2013). In turn, the consequences that were observed by this thesis on the dimensions of land and territory, while unintended by the EU, could at least have been anticipated (see Burlyuk & Noutcheva 2019). Nonetheless, the programmes were not adapted to the specific domestic context. One likely explanation which however requires empirical investigation is that EU officials rarely engage with the academic literature or that there are shortcomings in the communication between line DGs and the field. Here, the literature on the impact of research on policy could be a good starting point both for academics and policymakers to improve future collaboration between the groups and facilitate evidence-based policies (see e.g. Bogenschneider & Corbett 2011; Newman et al. 2016; Kogan 1999; Oh 1997; Lempert 1988).

Even more strikingly, many EU officials interviewed for this thesis expected the same consequences of the instruments to materialise in both the EU and Georgia. First, these attitudes reiterate the necessity to focus not only on positive cases and success stories. However, even more importantly, this expectation contradicts prominent narratives that have emerged in EU external action around the avoidance of 'one size fits all'

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approaches since at least the 2015 ENP reform. Despite repeated commitments, the two instruments are applied in contexts that are vastly different to those of EU member states for which they were initially designed. What is more, the EU, rather than working to empower non-member state actors to critically approach these instruments and adapt them as necessary, engages in the ‘teaching’ of EU best practices which are in turn uncritically adopted.

This corresponds to findings of the EU external resilience literature which also found the resistance to follow up on local ownership narratives especially in policies related to trade and economic development, “because the EU expects its *acquis* as a blueprint for modernization” (Petrova & Delcour 2020: 345). Rather than truly de-centring its actions “to focus on the problem at source and deal with it inside-out and bottom-up at ‘the local’” (Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020: 162f.), EU actors were primarily concerned with following internal monitoring and financing rules. Another literature that identified similar dynamics is that on EU external civil society promotion. Here, resources are primarily aimed at professionalised civil society organizations in country’s capitals, which meant the exclusion of grassroots actors without the necessary administrative skills and resources to implement EU projects (see e.g. Petrova & Tarrow 2007; Buzogány 2018; Börzel 2010; Zihnioğlu 2019; Youngs 2019). It also resonates with Kourtelis’ findings on ENPARD in the southern neighbourhood, where the EU’s technocratic approach allowed “new patterns of exclusion to emerge from the attempted decentralization of the decision-making process” (Kourtelis 2018: 38).

Thus, EU external actions need to become more flexible and receptive to local contexts. As demonstrated in this thesis, the ways EU instruments are externally governed are less relevant for whether they are implemented and what consequences they have than contexts and narratives at various levels in non-member states. Thus, calls for context-based instruments need to be followed up both by adjusting expectations on the extent of implementation, its consequences, and by truly prioritizing local ownership in policy practice. Of course:

enabling local communities and real people to actualise their own potential in ways they specify, and for external governance to support them in this process, remains one of the biggest challenges for the policy world today (Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020: 159).

This leads to two policy recommendations. First, understandings of ‘local communities’ as homogenous entities need to be overcome, local power dynamics

recognised, and assumptions of inclusivity avoided. Second, the co-optation of EU external actions by (local) elites needs to be prevented for other groups to become empowered. On a practical level, programmes should incorporate specific funding instruments to alleviate the competitive advantage of already powerful actors. This could involve transport for remote villagers or budgets for translators to ensure that non-English speakers can easily participate in workshops and application rounds.

More generally, external action needs to become more flexible, with a willingness to take risks by empowering local non-elite groups in non-member states. Certainly, considering EU-budget negotiations, a flexible approach in which non-member state actors decide over the distribution of EU-funding is likely to be controversial. This is especially true when empowering non-elite actors who may not have extensive monitoring or financial management skills. Yet, taking these risks is the only way to execute local ownership, which in turn may also prevent allegations for instance of the EU or NGOs as foreign agents, and public distrust towards them (see Toal et al. 2020; Stewart 2009). Additionally, what is necessary to enable the context-based adaptation of EU-rules is a shift in the EU's utilization of 'success stories' and 'best practices', especially when these originate from countries that bear little resemblance to the specific context in a non-member state.

Thus, both policy practice and academic literature need to be based on a broader understanding of and appreciation for diverse local contexts, and increased flexibility towards them. Research needs to analyse the ways and consequences of EU external actions beyond EU expectations more comprehensively. At the same time, actions and expectations towards them, need to be adjusted following the broad understanding of local contexts, and the flexibility towards these should be increased.

8.3 Future research

As with the contributions, future research agendas can be distinguished into future research on the CAP and new research directions on EU external actions more broadly. Initially, there is further need to analyse rural development external governance across the European Neighbourhood. While, as outlined previously, Kourtelis (2017; 2018) has analysed the external governance of some parts of the CAP and rural development to the Arab Mediterranean Partners, and Egypt and Tunisia specifically, there remains a lack of literature particularly for those countries of the EaP which are characterised by agriculture and rurality, such as Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova. Again, it is

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important to not assume the same external governance processes and consequences to materialise across post-Soviet countries. While GIs are generally rare in other post-Soviet countries, the case studies from LEADER in Hungary, Russia, Estonia, and Poland, presented in in Chapter 5, differed in their findings (Csurgó & Kovách 2016; Michalceqicz-Kaniowska et al. 2017; Aunapuu-Lents 2013; Nikula & Kopoteva 2014). Furthermore, LEADER's implementation in Moldova varies from its Georgian counterpart. Here, future research could compare the processes leading up to both implementations as well as their consequences.

Additionally, other areas of the CAP could be studied in more detail. This includes research on the EU's external governance through the 'European' model of cooperatives. As noted in Chapter 6, this has proved extremely difficult in post-Soviet contexts such as Georgia, where the perceptions of cooperatives continue to be coloured by historical experiences with *kolkhozes*. Yet, the EU rather than amending its approach, again assumes a teaching stance and aims to 'educate' non-member states on the benefits of cooperatives, while also funding them extensively. In turn, these 'student-teacher' dynamics also require further scrutiny, especially considering the agency of non-member state actors for scenarios without EU hierarchy, and for those in which the 'students' seem to actively choose to be taught.

Beyond the CAP, the findings on modes also give rise to new research agendas on EU external action more broadly, in which the EU is increasingly utilizing mechanisms other than conditionality, in light of a medium-term stalling of the enlargement agenda. Here, Noutcheva (2016) may be a good starting point, due to the focus on "the more subtle effects of external policies on societal actors" (Noutcheva 2016: 692), and the engagement with the cross-effects of structure and agency, analysing the effects of the EU's structural power and EU actorness "on both the societal sphere and societal actions" (Noutcheva 2016: 694). Accordingly, the subtler effects e.g. on rural societies could be analysed using the proposed mechanisms empowerment of social actors, legitimization of societal actions, legitimization of domestic policies and practices, and diffusion of ideas (Noutcheva 2016: 694). This would be particularly valuable to trace the narratives of empowerment that the EU has been promoting especially on LEADER.

More broadly, there needs to be a much deeper change in the EU external literature to focus more explicitly on local consequences of EU external actions. Crucially, this

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thesis demonstrates the necessity of a multilevel analysis that includes governmental actors, international organizations, but most importantly local administrations and citizens. Both the unintended consequences literature (e.g. Burlyuk 2017) and the literature on EU external resilience (e.g. Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020) are good starting points in this area, as they reject linear understandings of EU policy export to non-member state governments. Indeed, if future research for other policy areas adopts the broad view toward recording consequences ‘on the ground’ but only observes negative consequences or no impact whatsoever, the external governance of said policy should be questioned more fundamentally. Another potential connection would be to literatures on multilevel governance, as highlighted above.

A local turn in EU external action scholarship also requires a more distinctly interdisciplinary perspective. Rather than restricting itself to EU Studies, International Relations, or Political Science, insights from Human Geography, Sociology, and Rural Studies were particularly helpful for this thesis. Additional appreciation of sociological and anthropological literatures can aid the study of (local) consequences. In addition, ethnographic research methods, including participant observation but also non-elite interviews can help broaden the current literature to shed light on local contexts and consequences. These approaches would also be able to establish more clearly the causality behind the changes in rural areas, and to what extent they are caused by the EU versus general structural changes (see e.g. Börzel & Risse 2012). While this thesis illustrated the connections to the EU and its narratives through documents and elite interview sources, this does not fully extinguish the possibility of some changes occurring in parallel with structural dynamics. This challenge could be further alleviated through the more explicit integration of ethnographic and sociological methods into EU Studies.

Another avenue for research development is to open spaces for a more radical change in how we understand the EU in the world. Much of the EU external relations, and the ENP literature in particular, is influenced, “even determined by western, that is, EU-European scholars, who keep resorting mainly to the same academic platforms for the scholarly dissemination of their findings” (Schumacher 2018: 7). This thesis is no exception to this practice. Its starting points were the CAP and the EU external governance framework. It took the EU as the basis and applied a framework that centres around it, meaning the thesis itself is therefore both EU- and Eurocentric.

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Clearly, it is difficult to imagine a theory or framework which focusses on the external dimension of EU policies that cannot be criticised for being Eurocentric. After all, it is difficult to develop the discipline of EU Studies without placing the EU and Eurocentric writings at the core. Yet, there is potential especially for postcolonial theories, including from non-Western writers to be utilised much more prominently to investigate the narratives and practices governing EU-non-member state relations. Importantly, while there exist theorisations of the EU as an empire, these are often not specifically founded in postcolonial theories and analyse the EU-as-a-whole in terms of role concepts or policy frameworks such as the ENP, rather than focusing on specific policy instruments as suggested here (cf. Zielonka 2008; Hettne & Söderbaum 2005; Pänke 2015; Fisher Onar & Nicolaidis 2013).

To summarise, this thesis argues that much more attention should be given to non-member states, their contexts, narratives, as well as experiences in the practice and study of EU external governance. Therefore, future research should push further towards overcoming assumptions of EU external action as inherently good and focus on existing consequences, both to improve the analysis of the Union and to temper unrealistic expectations in public and policy debates.

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ANNEX: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

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