# Undisputable or Unreliable? The Effects of the Accession Process of the European Union on Democracy, During and After Accession
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# Undisputable or Unreliable? The Effects of the Accession Process of the European Union on Democracy, During and After Accession

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Table of Contents

# 1. Introduction

Current cases of democratic backsliding in Poland and Hungary have shown how the accession procedures of the European Union (EU) alone, do not consolidate democracy in its entirety (Sedelmeier, 2013). Still there exists much literature on the existence of a positive relation between the accession process and democratic reform in candidate Member States (MS) (Sadurski, 2004; Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004; Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012). Some would argue how membership in theory can be used as the ultimate 'carrot on a stick' to effectuate democratic reform in a candidate Member State (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004). What is the role of EU accession in achieving democratic consolidation in current and candidate Member States and what are its limits?

## 1.1 European democratic decline and EU accession

The accession procedures and other such measures are designed to, among other things stabilize democracies and effectuate democratic entrenchment. The Copenhagen criteria demand "stable institutions guaranteeing democracy" (European Commission, 2012a). Simultaneously the European Union is struggling to actively promote and enforce its values and principles, such as the 'Rule of Law' and 'civil liberties' under all of its Member States (Walsh, 2019). Furthermore European citizens (Devrim & Schulz, 2021) and leaders (Dempsey, 2019) are becoming increasingly conflicted on European expansion, whilst deeper internal problems are not resolved (Ciobanu, 2007). For instance the Polish and Hungarian political systems are experiencing significant degrees of democratic backsliding (Rupnik, 2016; Bogaards, 2018), whilst other newer Member States such as Romania are struggling to stabilize and consolidate their democracies (Janku, 2017). This all takes place despite the accession procedures or criteria which exist to prevent this.

## 1.2 Relevance and research question

Due to these developments surrounding democratic backsliding in EU Member States and the accession process which partially exists to prevent this. This thesis will be dedicated to studying the nature of the accession procedures and its effects on democratic consolidation. This study could assist the academic debate, by offering a new perspective on democratic development and its decline in the 21st century. Especially since the rise of 'illiberal' or even 'authoritarian' democracies in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) (Krastev, 2018). Furthermore this growing trend of democratic decay is currently having lasting effects on the lives of European citizens, by decreasing their liberties and rights (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2021). Examining the effects of EU accession on democratic

entrenchment could help (EU) society better understand and oppose democratic backsliding.

This will be done by answering the following research question:

*How does the accession process of the European Union influence democratic consolidation in a Member State during and after accession?*

## 1.3 Structure

This thesis will start by addressing the academic debate surrounding the topic and contextualising the main arguments. Subsequently the theoretical aspects of this thesis will be addressed, by defining the concepts and theoretical arguments used. Thereafter the research design, hypotheses, cases, methodology, data and timeline used in this paper will be put forward. Lastly the results of the research will be discussed and analysed, followed by the conclusion.

# 2. Literature

Existing literature on the relation between democratic consolidation and the accession procedures shows how under specific circumstances, a positive relationship can be observed. It for instance points out how different 'internal' as well as 'external' factors can be used to explain the strengthening and weakening of democracy in candidate Member States (Sadurski, 2004). Meanwhile factors such as: elite support for liberal democratic reform, the influence of other actors such as the Council of Europe, the lack of a single blueprint for democracy and the willingness of states to import reform, all remain important as well (Sadurski, 2004).

## 2.1 Resonance theory

Although many factors can influence the degree of democratic consolidation in a candidate Member State, the literature concludes the following on the relation between the accession process and democratic development. The conditionality stemming from the accession procedures can positively influence democratic strength of a candidate under specific circumstances. This conditionality proves to work best when the proposed EU accession related reform, resonates with domestic preferences and political aims (Sadurski, 2004). Thus different 'international' and 'domestic' elements must correspond with one another.

This 'reciprocal' relation is described as a positive relation where EU incentives for accession related reform are followed by domestic incentives such as upcoming elections and social pressures, resulting in domestic institutional change (Spendzharova & Vachudova,

2012). The role of these 'internal' factors can best be observed by examining domestic factors such as corruption, voter priorities, popular sentiment and the sentiment under political leadership (Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012; Böhmelta & Freyburg, 2018).

## 2.2 Integration theory

The role of these 'external' factors can further be explained by the 'unique' approach of the European Union towards democratic consolidation via its integration efforts (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004). The democratization of CEE Countries can be explained using three characteristics of European integration. These being the following: 1) membership as the ultimate 'carrot on a stick', where the EU uses its 'donor' or top-down role to donate experience, skills and merchandise toward 'recipient' states; 2) The broad EU approach which affects a broad spectrum of areas of governance and institutions. Here not only economic integration but also judicial, human rights and rule of law reform, make democratic backsliding more difficult; and lastly 3) The length of the accession process taking upwards of a decade to complete, ensures democratic institutions and stability can grow whilst increasing consolidation (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004).

## 2.3 Critical theories

This positive relation between the accession procedures of the EU and democratic consolidation is also disputed by many authors (Ciobanu, 2007; Sedelmeier, 2013). The main flaw of EU accession can be assigned to its inability to entrench democracy after membership status is granted to a candidate Member State. The effectiveness and viability of instruments the EU utilizes, for instance social pressure, infringement procedures and issue linkage, can vary considerably across issues and countries (Sedelmeier, 2013).

In the cases of Hungary and Poland the EU has as of yet been unable to reverse incidents of democratic backsliding. Even though in the case of Romania the EU has been incrementally more successful in curtailing some democratic backsliding, this Member State still relies heavily on European support (Sedelmeier, 2013). This also takes place whilst internal problems such as deeply rooted corruption (Alfano, Capasso & Goel, 2020) remain unresolved in part due to the emphasis on speedy integration and democratic reform (Ciobanu, 2007).

## 2.4 Pre- and post-accession based approaches

The literature can also be divided into two approaches, pre-accession and post-accession based studies. A pre-accession approach (Dimitrova, 2002) focuses on the different procedures up to the moment a candidate state becomes a member state and the different factors which influence democratic entrenchment during that time (Sadurski, 2004). Factors such as conditionality (Schimmelfennig, 2007), the nature of the integration process (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004) as well as interplay between the domestic and international level, can come to mind (Sadurski, 2004; Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012). This thesis will examine how and if the accession process of the European Union, affects democratic consolidation during candidacy.

A post-accession approach (Levitz & Pop-Eleches, 2009) examines the situation after membership status is granted and how democracies develop or decline thereafter (Sedelmeier, 2013; Vachudova, 2008). In such cases the literature focusses more on the absence of conditionality, the viability of EU enforcement instruments and the new realities of membership (Epstein, & Sedelmeier, 2008; Schimmelfennig, 2008). This thesis will also examine whether the accession process of the EU, entrenches democracies after the accession process is completed.

## 3. Theoretical framework

The literature has pointed out how under specific circumstances the accession process can increase democratic consolidation in certain areas such as civil society involvement in the political system (Wunsch, 2016) or judicial reform (Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012). This positive relation works best when the 'internal' and 'external' levels resonate with one another (Sadurski, 2004). When this 'resonance' is absent due to differences between the two levels, this thesis expects there to be less democratic consolidation or even a possible decline. For instance in the case of Turkey further integration and democratic consolidation can be inhibited when a sizeable population and political leadership turn on democratic values and rights (Kollias, 2021), creating 'dissonance' between the European level and the candidate level.

This 'reciprocal' relation (Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012) can also be aided by the EU's unique approach to democratization via integration (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004). For instance the integration period must be relatively long to reach maximum effectiveness, taking more than a decade. Furthermore integration must take place on a broad spectrum of institutions and organisations, ensuring a deeply rooted democratic system. Lastly the EU must use

membership and all the leverage that comes with it, to 'donate' its experience and 'merchandise' (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004). In the event one or multiple facets of this integration approach are absent, this thesis expects democratic consolidation to be less effective. For example in the case of Romania, a 'rushed' implementation of EU incentivised reform, lead to a situation where underlying problems were not resolved. Meanwhile deeply rooted democratic entrenchment had not taken hold yet (Ciobanu, 2007). This affected the 'survivability' and stability of the democratic system (Sedelmeier, 2013).

## 3.1 Theoretical approach

This thesis will utilize 'Rational Choice Institutionalism' (RCI) as an approach to studying the topic of EU accession and its effects on democracy. Rational choice institutionalism (Ostrom, 1990, pp. 1 - 28) is a theoretical approach which focusses on institutions (North, 1990) and how different actors use these institutions to maximize their 'utility'(Weingast, 2002). At the same time these institutions influence the basis of rational behaviour for an actor or group of actors (Dowding, 1994, p. 108; Shepsle, 2008). In this case the role of institutions can be interpreted in two ways, either as a 'exogenously given' factor which dictates behaviour or in a more subtle manner. In the later the 'rules' of the 'game' can be provided by the 'players' themselves. Actors can choose to abide by the already laid out institutional arrangements or they can choose these as a starting point to govern their interactions and adapt them to specific circumstance or preferences (Schepsle, 2008, pp. 24 - 27).

The accession criteria of the European Union (European Commission, 2021b) are an example of 'formally structured' and exogenously imposed institutions (Shepsle, 2008, pp. 27 - 32). For instance the different negotiation stages are part of a pre-planned institutional arrangement and demand specific behaviour. Especially on the topics of integration and reform by a candidate state. These structured institutions are characterized by an emphasis on formalization (North, 1990, pp. 46 - 53), norms, coordinated activity, cooperative arrangements and collective action (Shepsle, 2008, pp. 27 - 30).

Still when observing Member State behaviour, it becomes clear how the accession process is not boundlessly 'structured' and how individual actors or states can try and twist the 'rules' of the 'game' to their preferences (Ostrom, 1990, pp. 1 - 28). When Croatia went through the accession process they were kept on hold multiple times, due to unsettled disputes between them and Slovenia. These disputes ranged from fiscal to border disputes (Staff, 2013) and demonstrates how a rational actor can use the 'unstructured' parts of institutions (Shepsle, 2008,

pp. 30 - 32) to maximize their 'utility' (Weingast, 2002). In the end Croatia had to make concession in order to move to the next stages of the accession process (Vogel, 2014).

At the same time there are limits to the degree to which the 'rules' or institutions can be bent by a single actor or remain 'unstructured'. Institutions depend on an 'equilibrium' where both sides agree to take part, otherwise these institutions can be described as 'fragile', issues of 'collective action' (Ostrom, 1990, pp. 1 - 28) as well as mutual respect remain important on this front (Shepsle, 2008, pp. 26 - 32). In some cases a third party might be needed to enforce institutions (North, 1990, pp. 54 - 60).

The 'limitations' of rational choice institutionalism are in large part due to its assumptions and abstractions of the world (Ostrom, 1991, pp. 238 – 242; Shepsle, 2008, pp. 32 - 35). For instance this approach assumes actors always make rational decisions. Yet currently rational choice theory offers little explanations for the rise of populism (Gozgor, 2021), illiberalism (Krastev, 2019) or states withdrawal from the EU (Kalaitzake, 2020). These issues can be seen as a consequence of human behaviour which can contain irrational behaviour such as individualism, emotions, aspirations and rules of thumb (North, 1990, pp. 17 -26; Ostrom, 1990, pp. 1 - 28). The considerations made by actors on transaction-costs (North, 1990, pp. 27 - 35) are also tainted by their interpretations of agreements and circumstances (Shepsle, 2008, pp. 33 - 34). Nevertheless RCI remains a responsive approach which can cover important topics, such as European integration and (Schneider & Ershova, 2018) and other cases of international cooperation (Snidal, 2012, pp. 85 - 111).

## 3.2 Conceptual framework

This section will explain the theoretical concepts used. The focus lies on examining the two main variables of this thesis, the accession process of the European Union and democratic consolidation.

### 3.2.1 The accession process of the European Union

This thesis will combine both a pre-accession and a post-accession-based approach, by examining the democratic consolidation of Central Eastern European Member States during and after the accession procedures. According to the European Union this process starts when a country submits an application to the European Council for candidacy (European Commission, 2012b; 2021b). The accession process formally ends when all Member States and the candidate country sign and ratify an Accession Treaty, which enables the country in question to become an EU Member State (European Commission, 2012a).

These accession procedures are based on the accession criteria and are contained in the Treaty on European Union (TUE). Specifically the conditions and principles to which a country must conform if it wishes to become a MS are set out in Article 49 in Article 6(1). Before becoming a Member State certain criteria must be met and these are laid out in the Copenhagen criteria (EUR-Lex, n.d.). These criteria are: 1) the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, human rights, the rule of law and protection of minorities; 2) a functioning market economy which has the ability to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the European Union; 3) the ability to take on membership obligations, including the capacity to effectively implement the rules, standards and policies stemming from EU law, and an adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union (European Commission, 2012a).

Although the accession procedures and criteria spread over a wide field of topics or 'clusters', one of these is more important than the others in the case of democratic consolidation. The 'fundamentals' is the most intricate cluster on which the negotiations open first and close last (European Commission, 2021b). Within this cluster issues of the judiciary, fundamental rights, justice, freedom and security are ironed out, as well as economic criteria, the functioning of democratic institutions and public administrative reform. This part is relevant for this thesis since it details the liberal and democratic institutional conditions needed to obtain membership.

### 3.2.2 Democratic consolidation

A clear definition of democratic consolidation is needed when it comes to investigating the relation between democratic consolidation and the accession process. This will be done by combining the literature discussed earlier, its central theories and the relevant accession criteria of the European Union. As already stated the Copenhagen criteria introduce several criteria which must be met before a candidate state is allowed to join the Union. This thesis will focus on the first criteria discussed and the corresponding democratic institutions: 'the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, human rights, the rule of law and protection of minorities' (European Commission, 2012a). Although there exists no single blueprint for what a true democracy should entail, these norms do set a clear example of which institutions are essential in a European democracy.

The literature on this topic in large part focusses on the same institutions as the accession criteria. Topics such as judicial independence (Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012), democratic rights (Sedelmeier, 2014)), corruption (Alfano, Capasso & Goel, 2020), civil liberties, minority rights and the Rule of Law (Wunsch, 2016) have all been examined during earlier research.

These institutions will be combined into four distinct and clear categories, to make sure all the aforementioned democratic institutions are incorporated in this thesis. The first focusses on the judiciary and measures judicial independence and the Rule of Law. The second measures democratic rights by examining how free and fair elections are. The third covers civil liberties (and rights). Lastly the fourth category will examine corruption. Together the mean scores of these four categories will make up a single variable named 'Democracy'.

# 4. Research design

This section will explain the data used for research, as well as the methods by which this data will be analysed to answer the research question.

## 4.1 Expectations

According to the literature different stages of the accession process can have differing effects on democratic consolidation. During the accession process (EU accession related) institutional pressures and incentives for democratic reform are higher than after membership is acquired. When these institutions are active this thesis expects there to be democratic growth in a candidate Member State. Moreover when these structures are completed this thesis predicts democratic backsliding to occur in a Member State.

For this reason this thesis predicts the following:

*H1: During the accession process of the European Union, states will experience democratic growth or at least democratic stabilization in states with highly consolidated democracies.*

*H2: After the accession process of the European Union, new Member States will experience a democratic decline.*

## 4.2 Case selection

In order to assert claims on the effects of the EU accession procedures on democratic consolidation in a country before, during and after accession, this thesis must examine multiple states which have undergone the procedures and acquired membership status. For this reason the following successive waves of EU enlargement will be examined: 2004 (Czechia, Cyprus, Hungary, Poland), 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) and 2013 (Croatia) (Munter, 2021). Incidentally these are also the 'modern' waves of EU accession in Central Eastern Europe (CEE), to which most of the literature and theory discussed is dedicated (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004; Sadurski, 2004; Ciobanu, 2007; Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012).

Due to incomplete data on one or multiple variables on the years before or during the accession process, the following countries will not be included in this thesis: Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Slovenia, Slovak Republic and Malta (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 1975 - 2020).

## 4.3 Methods of data collection and operationalisation

This section will explain the data used for each variable, as well as the methods by which this data will be operationalised.

### 4.3.1 Democratic consolidation

Since the scope of this thesis is considerably broad, there will not be enough space to define the degree of democratic consolidation for each country by hand. For this reason the 'The Global State of Democracy Indices' dataset from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) (1975-2020) will be used.

To operationalise the concepts used, this thesis will take the following variables from this dataset which align most with the four categories discussed earlier. The judicial category uses 'Judicial independence' (C_SD32) which covers both indicators 'independent judiciary' and 'Rule of Law' (Law and Order) (Tufis & Hudson, 2021, pp. 114). The second category utilizes 'Representative Government' (C_A1) which covers democratic rights such as 'free political parties' and 'clean elections' (Tufis & Hudson, 2021, pp. 13). The third category covers 'civil liberties' under the variable 'Civil liberties (C_SD22)' (Tufis & Hudson, 2021, pp. 45). The fourth category covers corruption using the variable 'Absence of corruption' (C_SD41) (Tufis & Hudson, 2021, pp. 172).

The mean data of these four categories will make up a new variable named 'democracy'. This variable contains democratic scores of countries per year before, during and after accession. Furthermore this new variable is set to scale and consists out of data from 0 to 1 with differences given shape using 15 decimals, the higher the score the better a state scores on this topic. Within the results and analysis each value will be rounded down to a maximum of 3 decimals. More information on each variable or category used can be found within 'appendix B'.

### 4.3.2 The accession process of the European Union

As discussed earlier three time periods will be examined and compared. Before, during and after EU accession. This variable will be used for two comparisons, as to test the hypotheses. First the pre-candidacy situation will be compared with the situation during the accession process. Thereafter the democratic development during the accession process and the

post-membership period, will be compared. These two comparisons will be applied to the 2004, 2007 and 2013 waves of EU enlargement and the corresponding cases. The first period before candidacy, will be given a value of '2'. The second period from the moment a state applies for membership till it acquires membership will be given a value of '3' (CVCE.EU, 2016b). Lastly the third period after accession will be given a value of '4' (European Commission, 2019). A value of '1' will be assigned during the period where states were 'non-democratic' and these data entries will be filtered out. In this thesis the pre-candidacy period lasts till a state formally applies for membership and not until candidacy is granted.

**Table 1: Candidacy application and EU accession dates**

| Applicant | Cyprus | Hungary | Poland | Czech Republic | Romania | Bulgaria | Croatia |
|-----------|--------|---------|--------|----------------|---------|----------|---------|
| **Submitted** | 1990 | 1994 | 1994 | 1996 | 1995 | 1995 | 2003 |
| **Accession** | 2004 | 2004 | 2004 | 2004 | 2007 | 2007 | 2013 |

Source: EU Commission (2019a) & CVCE.EU (2016b)

4.4 Methods of data analysis

The effects of EU accession on democratic consolidation will be studied by combining statistical comparisons and a more in depth qualitative analysis of individual cases. The former quantitative section starts by comparing the average democracy scores during two periods, assessing the difference and describing a possible trend. This means two general comparisons will be performed. The first focusses on comparing the pre-candidacy situation and the period during accession. The second be dedicated to comparing democratic scores during accession with those after accession. This will be done to examine whether a general trend can be observed amongst the cases within this thesis. Thereafter the model will be dissected by inspecting the mean and yearly democratic scores per accession stage per country, inspecting for possible outliers or illustrative cases. This design can best be described as a small-N comparative case study, since only seven cases and their democratic scores will compared before, during and after their accession to the European Union.

The latter qualitative part starts by examining the possible trends discussed earlier. Then this thesis takes a single case or country per trend, which will be used to perform a more in depth analysis of the democratic decline or growth observed. The focus will lie on examining to what extend the main theories of this thesis can explain the trends the data depicts.

## 4.5 Timeline

The length of each period examined, directly influences the timeline observed during research. The first period 'Before candidacy' should represent the democratic scores of states before they become candidate states. The problem being that most states did not qualify as a democracy before 1989 or the fall of the Soviet Union (Brown, 2009, pp. 503 - 548). This means that using democratic scores before 1989 for most states, would result in a distorting image of the pre-candidacy period. Furthermore this would negatively influence the subsequent comparisons of mean democratic values. For this reason each state will have its own time-line, keeping in mind democratic transition periods (European Parliament, 2015). These are as follows: Croatia (1992-2020), Romania (1990-2020), Bulgaria (1990-2020), Poland (1989-2020), Hungary (1989-2020), Czech Republic (1989-2020) and Cyprus (1985-2020) (Sierp, 2015). Due to limitations surrounding the availability of data the time-lines used will end in 2020 (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 1975-2020).

# 5. Results

**Table 2: Mean democracy score per accession stage per country**

| | | Accession stage | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Before candidacy | During accession | After accession | Total |
| **Mean democracy score per state** | Croatia | 0,514 | 0,657 | 0,681 | 0,617 |
| | Romania | 0,524 | 0,558 | 0,642 | 0,575 |
| | Bulgaria | 0,632 | 0,662 | 0,635 | 0,643 |
| | Poland | 0,764 | 0,806 | 0,773 | 0,781 |
| | Hungary | 0,726 | 0,782 | 0,675 | 0,728 |
| | Czechia | 0,690 | 0,756 | 0,744 | 0,73 |
| | Cyprus | 0,664 | 0,693 | 0,740 | 0,682 |
| | Total | 0,645 | 0,702 | 0,699 | 0,684 |

*Note: Rounded to 3 decimals*

**Graph 1: Mean democracy score per accession stage per country**
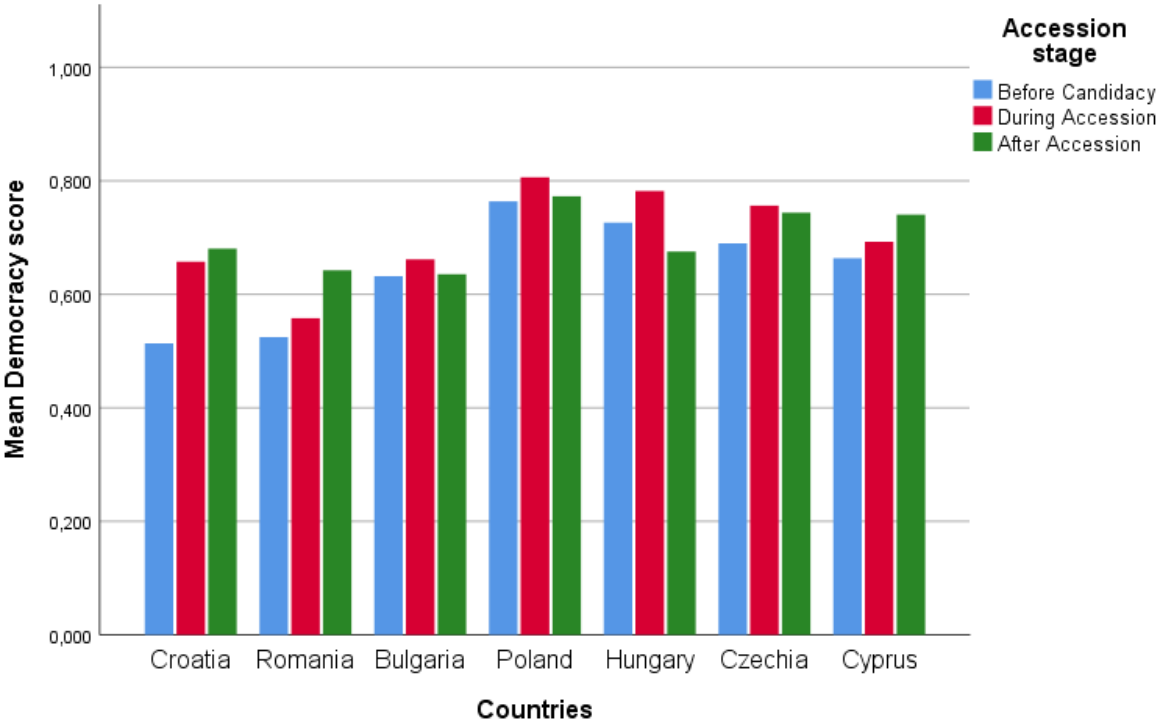
**Graph 2: Democracy score per year per country**
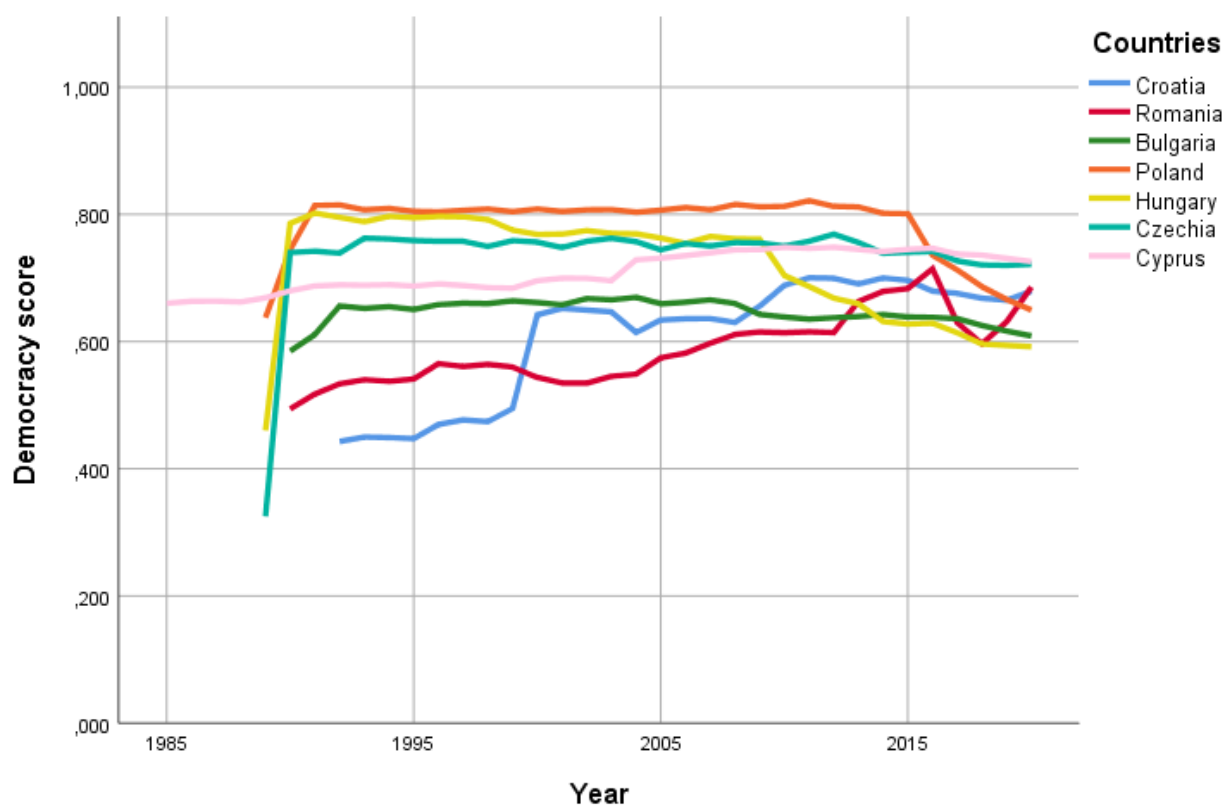


**Table 3: Mean democracy score per accession stage per country (comparison 1)**

|  |  | Accession stage | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | Before candidacy | During accession | Difference |
| **Mean democracy** | Croatia | 0,514 | 0,657 | +0,143 |
| **score per state** | Romania | 0,524 | 0,558 | +0,034 |
|  | Bulgaria | 0,632 | 0,662 | +0,030 |
|  | Poland | 0,764 | 0,806 | +0,042 |
|  | Hungary | 0,726 | 0,782 | +0,056 |
|  | Czechia | 0,690 | 0,756 | +0,066 |
|  | Cyprus | 0,664 | 0,693 | +0,029 |
|  | Total | 0,645 | 0,702 | +0,057 |

*Note: Rounded to 3 decimals*

**Table 4: Mean democracy score per accession stage per country (comparison 2)**

| | | Accession stage | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | During accession | After accession | Difference |
| **Mean democracy** | Croatia | 0,657 | 0,681 | +0,024 |
| **score per state** | Romania | 0,558 | 0,642 | +0,084 |
| | Bulgaria | 0,662 | 0,635 | −0,027 |
| | Poland | 0,806 | 0,773 | −0,033 |
| | Hungary | 0,782 | 0,675 | −0,107 |
| | Czechia | 0,756 | 0,744 | −0,012 |
| | Cyprus | 0,693 | 0,740 | +0,047 |
| | Total | 0,702 | 0,699 | −0,003 |

*Note: Rounded to 3 decimals*

**Graph 3: Democracy score per year per country (comparison 2)**
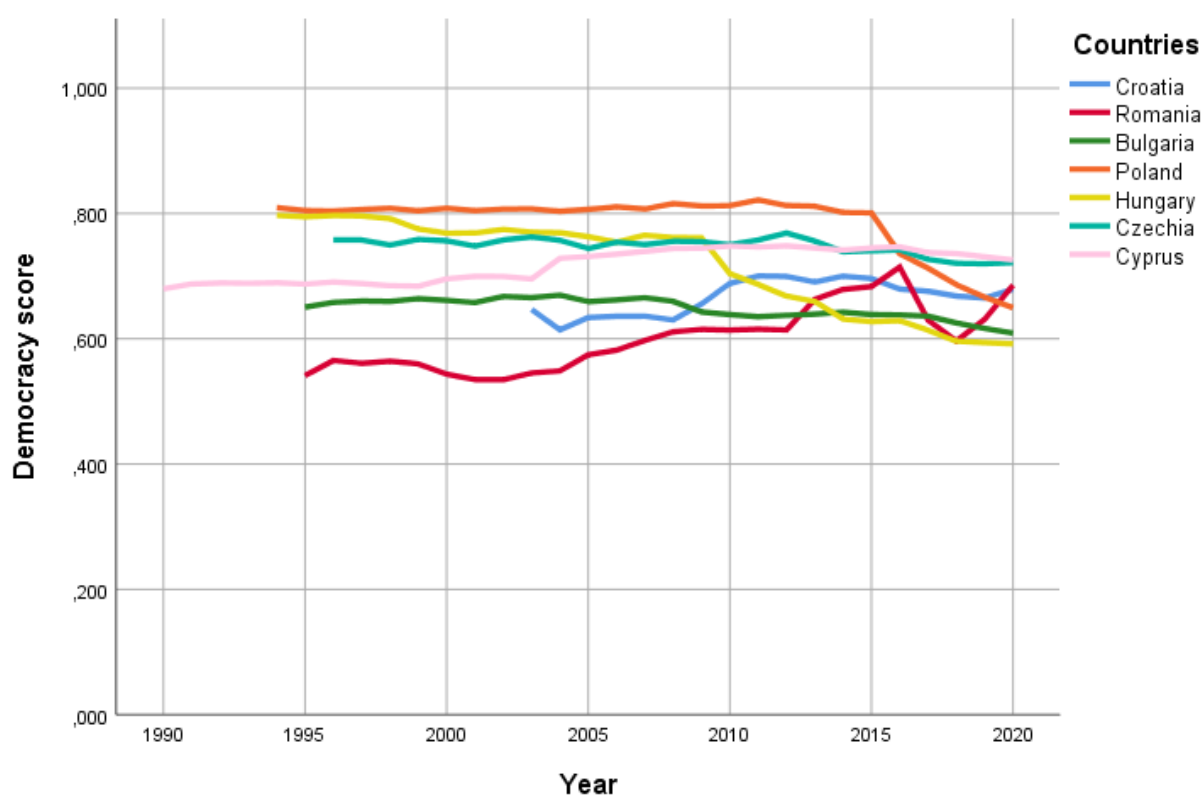
**Table 5: Democracy score per year per country**

|  |  | Year | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | Applied for candidacy (A) | Accession year (2004, 2007, 2013) (B) | Last data (2020) (C) | Difference between A & B | Difference between B & C |
| **Democracy score** | Croatia | 0,647 | 0,691 | 0,679 | +0,044 | −0,012 |
|  | Romania | 0,541 | 0,597 | 0,686 | +0,056 | +0,089 |
|  | Bulgaria | 0,650 | 0,666 | 0,609 | +0,016 | −0,057 |
|  | Poland | 0,809 | 0,803 | 0,649 | −0,006 | −0,154 |
|  | Hungary | 0,797 | 0,769 | 0,592 | −0,028 | −0,177 |
|  | Czechia | 0,758 | 0,757 | 0,722 | −0,001 | −0,035 |
|  | Cyprus | 0,680 | 0,729 | 0,726 | +0,049 | −0,003 |
|  | Total | 0,697 | 0,716 | 0,666 | +0,019 | −0,05 |

*Note: Rounded to 3 decimals*

## 6. Analysis

### 6.1 Quantitative comparison 1: pre-candidacy and during accession process periods

When examining the results from the current model on the comparison of mean democratic values before and during accession, the following can be observed: there exists a clear positive difference in mean democratic scores between the pre-candidacy situation and during the accession process. On average the democratic score of a country in this model (n = 7) is 0,057 higher during accession (0,702) than it was before candidacy (0,645). In this model every state observed experiences an increase of mean democratic score between the two periods (see 'table 3' & 'graph 1').

The highest difference between these two stages can be measured in Croatia, where the average difference between the pre-candidacy period and during the accession procedures is 0,143. However, Croatia is within this model also the state which starts off with the lowest mean score before candidacy with an average of 0,514 (see 'table 3' & 'graph 1').

In comparison, states such as Poland (0,806), Hungary (0,782) and Czechia (0,756) reached the highest average democratic scores during accession. However, these high scores can also be linked to the fact that Poland (0,764), Hungary (0,726) and Czechia (0,690), are the three most consolidated democracies in this model before their candidacy (see 'table 3' & 'graph 1'). When examining the total difference in democratic score between start and finish of the accession process, a slight decline or stabilizing trend can be observed in these cases (see 'graph 5').

In short, when analysing the model (n = 7) on mean democracy scores per accession period this thesis observes on average a positive difference (8,84%) between democracy scores during accession and before candidacy status is acquired. Democracy scores on average increase by 0,057 (scored from 0-1) during the accession process of the European Union.

This general trend and the individual findings affirm the first hypothesis, which predicts there to be an increase in democracy scores during the accession procedures or at least a stabilizing trend in already consolidated democracies. The main model of this thesis, indicates how the average democratic score per period from each state increases. Furthermore the total difference in scores reduces in the highly consolidated states, demonstrating a stabilizing trend.

## 6.2 Quantitative comparison 2: during accession process and post-membership periods

By examining the results from the model on the comparison of average democratic scores during and after accession, the following can be observed: there exists a slight negative difference in mean democratic scores between the accession period and after membership is granted. On average, the democratic score of a country in this model (n = 7) is 0,003 lower after accession (0,699) than it was during the procedures (0,702). Unlike the earlier comparison this model does not depict a singular or clear trend when it comes to differentiating mean scores per period. Instead, three different trends are visible by comparing the mean democratic scores of these seven states. A 'positive', 'negative' and 'neutral' difference between the mean scores in the two periods can be observed. To help elaborate this point the democratic scores per year will also be examined.

First this thesis observes a positive difference between the two periods in mean scores, in cases such as: Cyprus (+0,047), Croatia (+0,024) and Romania (+0,084) (see 'table 4'). These states' average democratic scores show an increase in the period after EU membership is acquired. When examining table 5 paired with graph 3, it becomes visible how Cyprus and Croatia 'stabilize' after accession. For instance the difference in democratic score between the year Croatia joins the EU, 2013 (0,691) and the latest available data from 2020 (0,679) is 0,012. In the case of Cyprus the difference between the former (2004) (0,729) and the latter (2020) (0,726) is but 0,003 (see 'table 5'). These differences in total scores are slight and these cases can thus be grouped as cases of 'neutral' differences in democracy scores after accession, compared to their scores during accession. This stabilizing trend takes place after the accession process and deviates from the second hypothesis.

This leaves the case of Romania which deviates from the two cases discussed. Contrastingly, Romania goes through democratic development, decline and recovery during the period after accession (see 'graph 3'). Reaching an all-time high in 2016 (0,714), declining until 2018 (0,596) and increasing again till 2020 (0,686). This development takes place after the accession process of the EU was finalized and deviates from the second hypothesis. In total Romania has increased from 2007 (0,597) to 2020 (0,686) with a value of 0,089 and can thus be grouped as a 'positive' case (see 'table 5' & 'graph 3').

Lastly a 'negative' difference can be observed between the two periods in mean scores, in the cases of: Bulgaria (−0,027), Poland (−0,033), Hungary (−0,107) and Czechia (−0,012) (see 'table 4'). Still these comparisons of mean democratic scores during and after accession do not show the whole truth when it comes to democratic backsliding after accession. The cases of Czechia and Bulgaria are relatively mild compared to the cases of Poland and Hungary. After

acquiring membership, Bulgaria's and Czechia's democratic scores have declined by 0,057 and 0,035 in total (see 'table 5'). This is substantially less than the total decline which can be observed in Poland (0,154) and Hungary (0,177) (see 'table 5'). This negative trend takes place after the accession process of the EU was finalized and is in line with the second hypothesis of this thesis.

## 6.3 Qualitative comparison 1: pre-candidacy and during accession process periods

The quantitative comparison of the mean democratic scores during the pre-candidacy period and the accession procedures, has shown a clear positive difference. With a state's democracy score from the model (n = 7) on average being 0,057 higher during the accession procedures compared to the earlier period. Two illustrative cases in this model are: 1) Croatia with the highest difference in mean democracy scores (see 'table 3'); and 2) Poland which achieved the highest degree of democratic consolidation of all states observed (see 'table 3' & 'graph 2'). The following paragraphs will be dedicated to examining this 'positive' difference, by exploring which factors and theories from this thesis can explain the democratic development noticed.

### 6.3.1 Croatia

In the case of Croatia the democratic consolidation observed can be explained using 'integration' theory (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004), which expects democracy scores to rise due to the nature of the accession process (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004). During a period of ten years (2003-2013), the EU worked to effectuate integration on many topics and policy fields, such as the judiciary (European Commission, 2013; ADE, 2019, p. 13 - 15). With the EU effectively utilizing membership as a 'carrot on a stick', as well as economic aid to effectuate democratic development and donating its experience as well as 'merchandise' (institutions) (European Commission, 2013).

Croatia being one of the lower ranked democracies also meant that democratic reform stemming from conditionality, had to be more drastic and was more impactful on the country. For instance focussing on reforming the constitution, the judicial system and the functioning of democracy itself to meet the accession criteria (European Commission, 2013). Events such as these can explain the relatively high degree of democratic consolidation and reform documented in the model (see 'table 2' & 'graph 2').

Contrastingly, the application of 'resonance' theory to the case of democratic reform in Croatia remains limited (Sadurski, 2004; Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012). Domestic incentives for democratic reform such as pro-EU popular sentiment has varied considerably

during the accession process. In 2005 Croatian respondents were the biggest Eurosceptics, after the United Kingdom (Rose, 2005; Franc & Medugorac, 2013). During the accession process EU sentiment continued to vary. Nevertheless Positive sentiment regarding the EU kept outweighing negative sentiment each year, expect during 2008 (Franc & Medugorac, 2013). By 2012 the Croatian people demonstrated a strong commitment towards democratic institutions and values. During this referendum on EU membership 67,11 percent of respondents voted in favour of EU membership. Still, turnout only totalled 44%, displaying signs of public demotivation with politics in general (Boutherin, 2013).

This positive trend in democratic reform during accession affirms the first hypothesis, which expect a country to experience democratic consolidation during the accession process of the EU. For instance the observed structural reform of the judiciary, can be seen as proof of democratic development during accession as the result of (external) conditionality combined with domestic political will.

### 6.3.2 Poland

When it comes to democratic development in Poland during the accession process, this case is on the lower end of the model. Most likely this is due to the fact these this country was already the highest consolidated democracy from the seven cases observed, before its candidacy (see 'table 5' & 'graph 2'). The next paragraphs will be dedicated to observing to what extend the main theories of this thesis can determine and explain the stabilizing trend observed in the model.

The initial democratic transition which lead to this high degree of consolidation took place between 1989-1991 (Brown, 2009, pp. 421 – 437). This reform can be explained by combining both domestic as well as external factors. In short an internal wish to re-join the Euro-Atlantic community (Petrova & Aydın-Düzgit, 2021; Syzmanek, 2021) paired with economic, societal and political unhappiness led to mass protests and strikes, which resulted in venues for reform (Freedom House, 1995, pp. 466 – 470 ;Brown, 2009, pp. 531 - 534). This was also aided by the international arena which featured a diminishing Soviet sphere of influence and expanding actors such as NATO, the United States and the European Community. These international actors could offer conditional economic aid in exchange for democratic reform (Pinter, 2008).

During the accession process both internal and external factors remained important. For instance the EU remained influential in locking in Polish democracy, by helping to stabilize its political democratization and economic liberalization (Steves, 2001, pp. 340 - 344). With

billions of euro's being loaned and disbursed, to enable Poland to build a self-sustaining market economy and functioning democracy (European Parliament, 2007, pp. 10 - 11). This focus on democratisation through assistance and mentorship can be seen as a key example of 'integration' theory (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004).

Domestic incentives for democratic stabilization during accession, can be seen in the Polish referendum on EU membership from 2003. With 77,5 percent voting in favour, displaying sizeable popular sentiment in favour of maintaining EU reform (BBC, 2003; Freedom House, 2004, pp. 452 - 454). However, public support for EU membership has shown a declining trend during accession. (Blazyca and Kolkiewicz, 1999). Sentiment has fallen from 72% in April 1997 to 58% in June 1998. From May 1998 to May 1999 it had fallen from 60 to 55 percent. (Steves, 2001, pp. 343) Nevertheless a majority of the general populace remained in favour of EU membership during accession (Blazyca and Kolkiewicz, 1999).

This stabilizing trend in democratic reform during accession is in line with the first hypothesis, which expect a relatively highly consolidated democracy to experience democratic stabilization during accession. This trend can be explained by the efforts made by the EU to stabilize the Polish political, economic and social system. Furthermore the high but overall diminishing approval for EU membership, displays important domestic incentives for maintaining the earlier democratic reform made during the democratic transition between 1989 and 1991.

## 6.4 Qualitative comparison 2: during accession process and post-membership periods

Unlike the earlier comparison the difference in mean democratic scores, during the accession process and the period after membership, does not depict a clear trend. Although on average a state in this model (n = 7) experiences a democratic decline of 0,003, this projected decline is proven to be unreliable when taking a closer look at the individual cases (see 'table 4'). These cases can be distinguished in three groups: 1) states displaying a positive difference in mean democratic scores between the two periods; 2) states with a negative difference, showing a negative trend; and lastly 3) states with a neutral difference, displaying very little backsliding or consolidation after accession. This thesis will examine a single case from each of these categories to examine which of the main theories from this thesis can explain the trend observed.

*6.4.1 Romania*

The state of Romania belongs to the first category, displaying a positive difference in mean democratic scores between the accession process and the period after membership is granted (see 'table 4'). However, graph 3 depicts the country experiencing democratic growth, decline and recovery, after the accession process of the EU is completed.

The first instance of democratic growth can be explained by the expanding implementation of accountable "democratic and economic institutions" and the expansion of a more "free civil society" (Freedom House, 2015). These institutions promoting democratic and economic development are also at the hearth of political leadership commitments, with leaders promising (Nine O' Clock, 2015) and implementing (Silvia & Adela, 2014) new transparency and election laws (Freedom House, 2017). Arguably this trend displays 'resonance' (Sadurski, 2004; Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012) between the domestic Romanian leadership and the European Union. Public leadership implements reform which collides with EU institutional preferences (European Union, n.d.), leading to further democratic consolidation even after accession.

Despite these strides towards democratic development. Certain areas of democratic governance remain weaker than others, for instance the media and the independent judiciary (Tanasoiu, & Racovita, 2012, pp. 243 - 244; Freedom House, 2015; Ribeiro, 2017). This can also explain the democratic decline visible in the model after accession (see 'graph 3'). The European Commission even noted how after 2017 momentum for democratic reform declined and how after 2018 a reversal of judicial reform was taking place (European Commission, 2020, p. 3; European Commission, 2021a). These findings conform to the predictions made in the second hypothesis from this thesis. Since the accession process was completed the country should see a decrease in democratic consolidation. This is due to the absence of conditional democratic institutions based on the Copenhagen criteria. Furthermore this leaves 'room' for domestic 'rational' actors to redefine the 'rules' of the 'game', by 'utilizing' the relatively 'unstructured' parts of the post-accession institutions and realities (Ostrom, 1990; Shepsle, 2008).

Yet despite this, the model depicts a recovering trend after 2018 (see 'graph 3'). This occurrence can be explained using both top down and bottom up efforts, made by the European Union and a new Romanian government (2019) (European Commission, 2021a). Due to recent cases of democratic backsliding in Hungary and Poland, the EU reacted to curtail this trend in Romania (Sedelmeier, 2013). One of the main instruments of the EU in this situation is the 'Cooperation and Verification Mechanism' (CVM), this allows the EU to asses and make

recommendations on the topics of the judiciary and anti-corruption policy in Romania (and Bulgaria) (Europa Nu, 2021; European Commission, 2021a). In the 2019 report the Commission notes how it welcomes the changes made on reverting judiciary reform by the new Romanian government, but regrets how not all recommendations were adopted.

The trend discussed contradicts the second hypothesis of this thesis, which expects democratic backsliding to occur after accession. Instead this thesis observes how Croatia experiences a period of consolidation, backsliding and recovery after accession. Ultimately this case can be assigned to the positive category since it displays democratic growth after accession.

### 6.4.2 Croatia

The second comparison between the mean democratic score during and after accession, depicts a positive difference in the case of Croatia. However, in actuality Croatia displays a stabilizing trend when it comes to total democratic consolidation after accession (see 'graph 3' & 'table 5'). For this reason this case is assigned to the neutral category within this thesis.

The case of Croatia can be best explained using 'integration' theory (Dimitrova & Pridham, 2004), with the nature of the accession process and subsequent EU membership being able to explain the trend observed. For instance in the case of the judiciary system Croatia has completely reformed its justice system, guarantying the independence of public prosecutors by altering the constitution (European Commission, 2013). Furthermore during accession civil liberties and political rights were increased and further entrenched (Doric, 2013). Such cases of integration and institution building have up to the present proven to strengthen democratic stability and entrenchment in Croatia (Freedom House, 2020).

Contrastingly, the application of 'resonance' theory is limited since domestic sentiment regarding the EU has been divided. For instance the Eurobarometer of 2013 shows how after the accession 40% of Croat respondents had a positive opinion on the EU, whilst 22% were negative and 36% neutral (European Union, 2013). By 2020 47 % of Croat respondents was positive, whilst 13% negative and 40% neutral (European Union, 2020). In theory this increasing neutrality does not create a source for further growth nor backsliding. Instead it has a stabilizing effect on domestic incentives and subsequent policy.

The trend discussed contradicts the second hypothesis of this thesis, which expects democratic backsliding to occur after accession. For this reason Croatia can be seen as a deviating case. The country can be assigned to the neutral category since it does not display sizeable consolidation or backsliding after accession.

### 6.4.3 Poland

As discussed earlier during the second quantitative analysis, the case of Poland can be assigned to the negative category. Poland displays a negative trend in democratic scores after the accession process of the EU (see 'table 2' & 'graph 1'). Especially when examining the total difference between democratic scores in 2004 and 2020 (see 'table 3' & 'graph 5'), does this trend become noticeable.

In the case of Poland 'resonance' theory can be used to explain the visible democratic backsliding (Sadurski, 2004; Spendzharova & Vachudova, 2012). The backsliding observed starts after 2015. This is the year the socially conservative Polish Law and Justice Party (PiS) won the Polish elections (The Guardian, 2015; Freedom House, 2016). Immediately the party set out to implement structural institutional and constitutional reforms regarding the educational system, media and judiciary (Tworzecki, 2018; Walsh, 2019).

Due to the scope of this thesis, not all reform between 2015 and the present can be covered. Instead the case of Polish judiciary reform after 2017 (Deutsche Welle, 2021; Reuters, 2021) and the subsequent EU response, will be used as an example of 'dissonance'. The Polish judiciary reform after 2017 concentrates around reform which weakens the judiciary or even eliminates its independence (Duncan & Macy, 2021; Szymanek, 2021). The European Commission has reacted decisively on this issue (European Commission, 2021c). Notably, the Commission triggered Article 7(1) TUE against Poland on the 20th of December 2017 (Michelot, 2019). This was later followed by multiple infringement procedures (European Commission, 2021c). Eventually Poland was referred to the European Court of Justice (ECJ), where interim measures were put in place (European Commission, 2021c). When compliance stayed out a record breaking fine of one million Euros per day was imposed (Euronews, 2021).

In the end this change in sentiments carried by Polish leadership as a result of Polish elections or domestic incentives (Freedom House, 2016), can explain the democratic backsliding observed. For instance this lack of resonance between the EU and Polish leadership, was followed by judicial reform which lead to the elimination of judicial independence. These events are in line with the second hypothesis of this thesis, which expects democratic backsliding to occur after accession.

## 7. Conclusion

All in all, this thesis has sought to answer the following question: '*How does the accession process of the European Union influence democratic consolidation in a Member State during and after accession?'*. This was done by combining both quantitative and qualitative research designs, to examine democratic scores and development during and after accession.

The results of the statistical section point out how, on average the democratic score of a country from the model (n = 7) is 0,057 higher during accession (0,702) than it was before candidacy (0,645). Furthermore each case observed displays a positive difference between mean scores per period. Meanwhile the second statistical comparison between the period during and after accession, does not depict a common trend. Instead cases can be divided into three trends: positive, negative and neutral. These quantitative finding are in line with the first hypothesis but deviate from the second hypothesis.

The qualitative analysis sought to further examine the trends observed, by applying integration theory and resonance theory on illustrative cases or outliers. This thesis has found that during accession both theories can explain the democratic development observed. The EU's approach to democratization via integration and the resonance between domestic and international incentives, both influence democratic consolidation during accession. However, pro-EU sentiment and corresponding domestic incentives can be seen declining during accession.

The instances of democratic backsliding after accession can be explained by resonance theory. This democratic decline is caused by domestic incentives shifting away from EU incentives. Contrastingly the cases of democratic recovery or stabilization after accession can be explained using integration theory. The democratic development observed is caused by earlier reform and post-accession efforts to stabilize or restore democracies by the EU. These finding from the qualitative analysis affirm the first hypothesis but contradict and partially disprove the second hypothesis. This is due to three out of seven cases experiencing democratic development or stabilization, instead of backsliding as predicted.

Everything concluded, this thesis has found that the influence of the accession process is strongest during candidacy and becomes more unreliable after membership status has been acquired. This is because domestic and EU incentives for reform are more effective during accession. After ascending the effect becomes less reliable, with domestic factors being responsible for the democratic decline observed. Furthermore the EU's ability to effectuate

democratic restorations after accession remains limited. For this reason a state can be expected to display signs of democratic growth or stabilization during accession, whilst the influence of the accession process after accession remains more uncertain.

Lastly this thesis will address its shortcomings and produce recommendations for future research. First of all this thesis has taken a broad approach by combining a pre- and post-accession based approach and by focussing on seven cases, sacrificing the total depth of the work. A separate thesis could be dedicated to each of these states and the democratic development or decline during and after their accession. Furthermore the total amount of cases included was limited by the availability of data on the pre-candidacy period. Future research could circumvents this by adding and combining other sources on democratic data. Finally this thesis suffers from a 'survivorship bias', since it only focusses on cases which have finished the accession procedures. New research could focus on including and examining the effects of EU accession procedures on non-successful candidate states. This would be done to further understand the nature of the accession procedures, its effects on democratic consolidation and its possible shortcomings.

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# Appendix A

**Syntax: EU Accession on Democratic Consolidation**

**Compute new variable 'Democracy':**

Syntax creating variable 'Democracy':

```
SAVE OUTFILE='C:\Users\thoma\Dropbox\UNI\Bachelor Thesis\7 Cases of Thesis.sav'
  /COMPRESSED.
COMPUTE Democracy=(JudicialIndependence + RepresentativeGovernment + CivilLiberties +
    AbsenceofCorruption) / 4.
EXECUTE.
```

**Syntax all cases and totals**

**Graph: Mean Democracy scores per accession stage (all cases)**

```
* Chart Builder.
GGRAPH
  /GRAPHDATASET NAME="graphdataset" VARIABLES=CaseNmbr
MEAN(Democracy)[name="MEAN_Democracy"]
    Accessionstage MISSING=LISTWISE REPORTMISSING=NO
  /GRAPHSPEC SOURCE=INLINE.
BEGIN GPL
  SOURCE: s=userSource(id("graphdataset"))
  DATA: CaseNmbr=col(source(s), name("CaseNmbr"), unit.category())
  DATA: MEAN_Democracy=col(source(s), name("MEAN_Democracy"))
  DATA: Accessionstage=col(source(s), name("Accessionstage"), unit.category())
  COORD: rect(dim(1,2), cluster(3,0))
  GUIDE: axis(dim(3), label("Countries divided in numbers per case"))
  GUIDE: axis(dim(2), label("Mean Democracy score"))
  GUIDE: legend(aesthetic(aesthetic.color.interior), label("Accession stage"))
  GUIDE: text.title(label("Clustered Bar Mean of Democracy score by Countries divided in numbers ",
    "per case by Accession stage"))
  SCALE: cat(dim(3), include("1", "2", "3", "4", "5", "6", "7"))
  SCALE: linear(dim(2), include(0))
  SCALE: cat(aesthetic(aesthetic.color.interior), include("1", "2", "3"))
  SCALE: cat(dim(1), include("1", "2", "3"))
  ELEMENT: interval(position(Accessionstage*MEAN_Democracy*CaseNmbr),
    color.interior(Accessionstage), shape.interior(shape.square))
END GPL.
```

Clustered Bar Mean of Democracy score by Countries divided in numbers per case by Accession stage
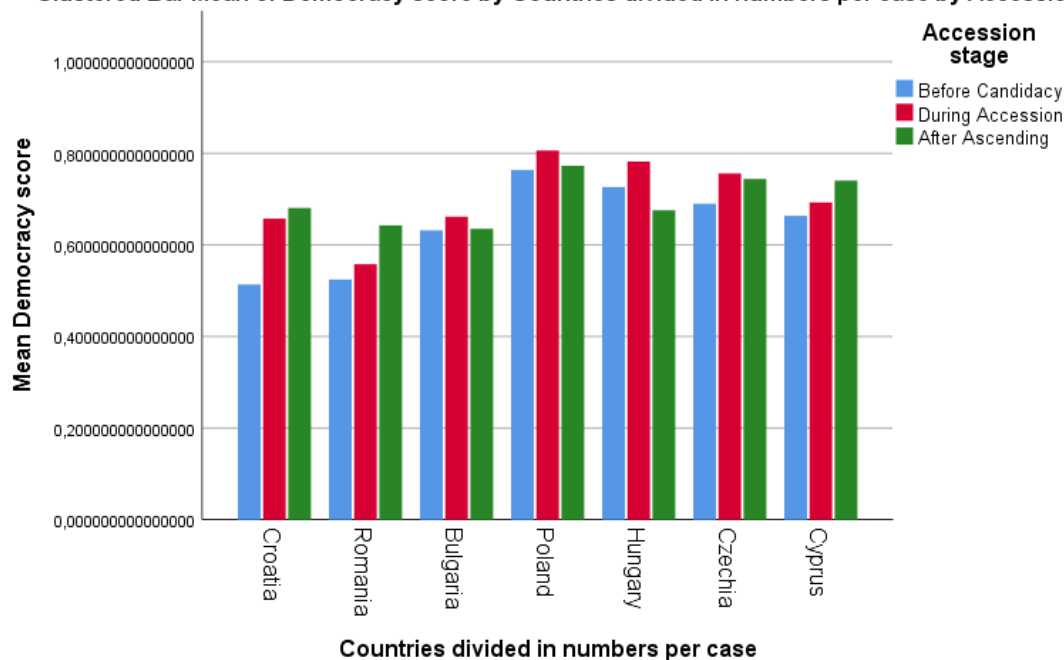
**Table: Mean Democracy scores per accession stage (all cases)**

MEANS TABLES=Democracy BY Accessionstage
 /CELLS=MEAN.

USE ALL.

## Report

| Mean Democracy Score per state | Before Candidacy | Accession stage During Accession | After Accession | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Croatia | 0,513504390981869 | 0,657397116679001 | 0,680523478848712 | 0,608399342627950 |
| Romania | 0,524456829019394 | 0,557851758166076 | 0,642443118771280 | 0,587939275654277 |
| Bulgaria | 0,631840653437731 | 0,661644598700424 | 0,635283996400187 | 0,645783064628923 |
| Poland | 0,763655145602240 | 0,806151605684498 | 0,772697580267690 | 0,782784521088241 |
| Hungary | 0,726394955500000 | 0,782084969977273 | 0,675444926250000 | 0,720063383351563 |
| Czechia | 0,689843588720426 | 0,756142373771651 | 0,743856712625509 | 0,735496683968625 |
| Cyprus | 0,663643013107445 | 0,692526979508708 | 0,740375091165081 | 0,709781144911365 |
| Total | 0,628544335004130 | 0,695766377248054 | 0,704042327980439 | 0,686404132425420 |

**Graph: Mean Democracy scores per year (all stages) (all cases)**

FILTER OFF.

USE ALL.

EXECUTE.

* Chart Builder.

GGRAPH

 /GRAPHDATASET NAME="graphdataset" VARIABLES=ID_year

MEAN(Democracy)[name="MEAN_Democracy"]

   CaseNmbr MISSING=LISTWISE REPORTMISSING=NO

 /GRAPHSPEC SOURCE=INLINE.

BEGIN GPL

 SOURCE: s=userSource(id("graphdataset"))

 DATA: ID_year=col(source(s), name("ID_year"))

 DATA: MEAN_Democracy=col(source(s), name("MEAN_Democracy"))

 DATA: CaseNmbr=col(source(s), name("CaseNmbr"), unit.category())

 GUIDE: axis(dim(1), label("Year"))

 GUIDE: axis(dim(2), label("Mean Democracy score"))

 GUIDE: legend(aesthetic(aesthetic.color.interior), label("Countries divided in numbers per case"))

 GUIDE: text.title(label("Multiple Line Mean of Democracy score by Year by Countries divided in ",

   "numbers per case"))

 SCALE: cat(aesthetic(aesthetic.color.interior), include("1", "2", "3", "4", "5", "6", "7"))

 ELEMENT: line(position(ID_year*MEAN_Democracy), color.interior(CaseNmbr), missing.wings())

END GPL.



Multiple Line of Democracy score by Year by Countries divided in numbers per case
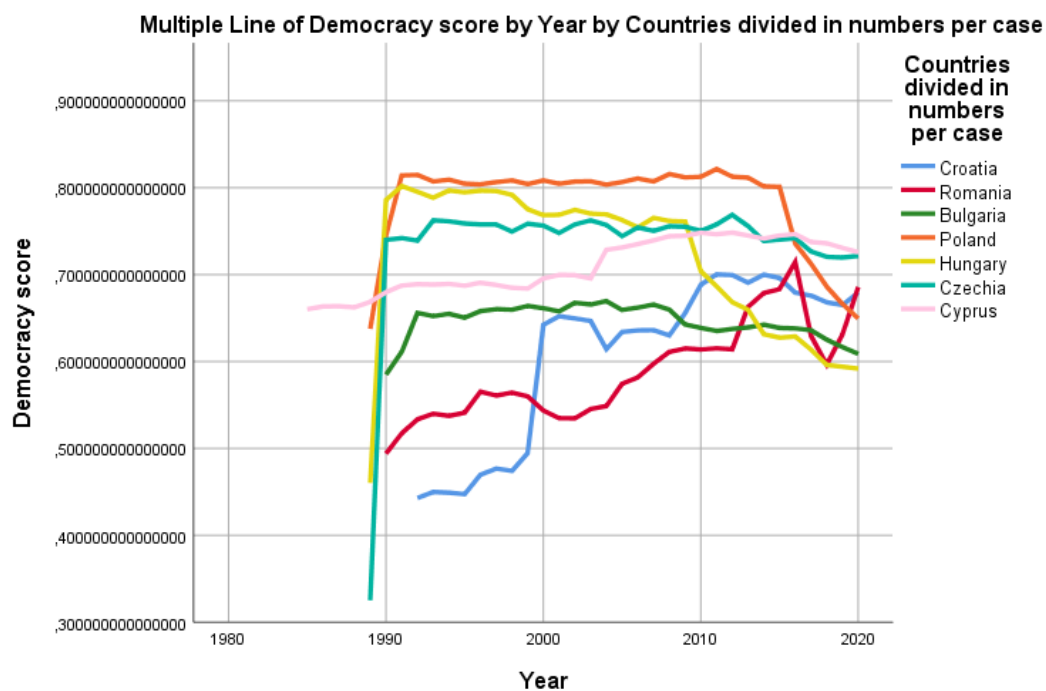
## Graph: Mean Democracy scores per Year (stage 2 & 3) (all cases)

USE ALL.

COMPUTE filter_$=(Accessionstage = 2 | Accessionstage = 3).

VARIABLE LABELS filter_$ 'Accessionstage = 2 | Accessionstage = 3 (FILTER)'.

VALUE LABELS filter_$ 0 'Not Selected' 1 'Selected'.

FORMATS filter_$ (f1.0).

FILTER BY filter_$.

EXECUTE.

* Chart Builder.

GGRAPH

 /GRAPHDATASET NAME="graphdataset" VARIABLES=ID_year Democracy CaseNmbr

MISSING=LISTWISE

   REPORTMISSING=NO

 /GRAPHSPEC SOURCE=INLINE.

BEGIN GPL

 SOURCE: s=userSource(id("graphdataset"))

 DATA: ID_year=col(source(s), name("ID_year"))

 DATA: Democracy=col(source(s), name("Democracy"))

 DATA: CaseNmbr=col(source(s), name("CaseNmbr"), unit.category())

 GUIDE: axis(dim(1), label("Year"))

 GUIDE: axis(dim(2), label("Democracy score"))

 GUIDE: legend(aesthetic(aesthetic.color.interior), label("Countries divided in numbers per case"))

 GUIDE: text.title(label("Multiple Line of Democracy score by Year by Countries divided in ",

   "numbers per case"))

 SCALE: cat(aesthetic(aesthetic.color.interior), include("1", "2", "3", "4", "5", "6", "7"))

 ELEMENT: line(position(ID_year*Democracy), color.interior(CaseNmbr), missing.wings())

END GPL.



43
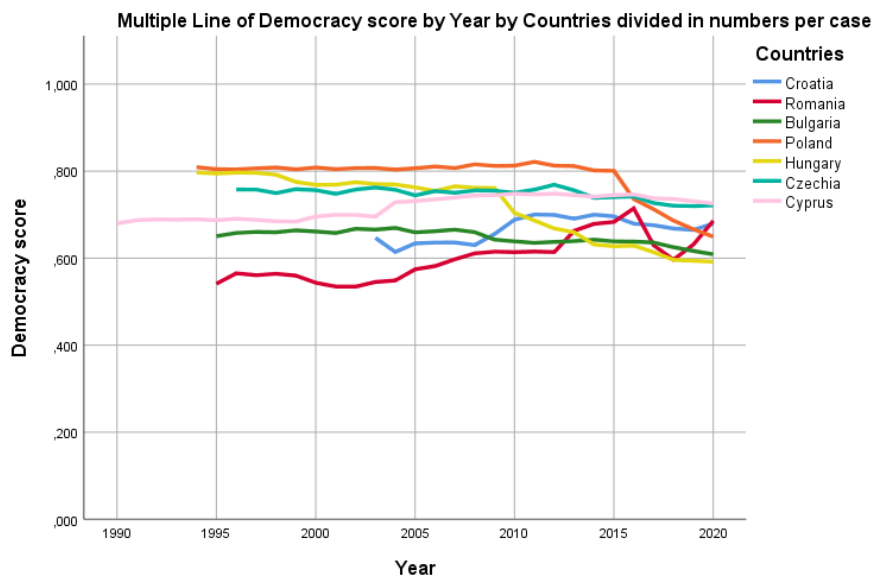
# Appendix B

Variables from 'Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance' (1975-2020) and information from 'the global state of democracy indices codebook' version 5 (Tufis & Hudson, 2021).

**Absence of corruption (C_SD41)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Data source | GSoD Indices |
| Original variable | Constructed variable |
| Name in dataset | C_SD41 |
| Definition | The absence of corruption subattribute denotes the extent to which the executive and the public administration, more broadly, do not abuse their office for personal gain. Four V-Dem indicators explicitly refer to corruption in the government broadly understood, i.e., the executive and public administration more generally (but excluding courts and parliaments). We make use of these and another expert-coded but broader indicator on government corruption from the ICRG data set. The five indicators have been aggregated into the absence of corruption subattribute using IRT. |
| Original scale | Interval |
| Citation | Skaaning (2020) |
| Data manipulation for aggregation | —— |
| Indicator of | 4. Impartial Administration |
| Aggregation | BFA of 4.1. absence of corruption and 4.2. predictable enforcement to create 4. Impartial Administration |
| Indicators included | v_41_01, V_41_02, v_41_03, v_41_04, v_41_05 |
| Final scale | Scaled to range from 0 (lowest score) to 1 (highest score). |

The Global State of Democracy Indices Codebook, Version 5 (Tufis & Hudson, 2021 , p. 172)

**Representative Government (C_A1)**

| Data source | GSoD Indices |
|---|---|
| Original variable | Constructed variable |
| Name in dataset | C_A1 |
| Definition | The representative government attribute emphasizes contested and inclusive popular elections for legislative and executive offices. This attribute distinguishes among four subattributes. Three of them (clean elections, free political parties and elected government) have been aggregated into a contestation index using Bayesian factor analysis (BFA). The representative government index is obtained by multiplying the contestation index by the fourth subattribute, inclusive suffrage. |
| Original scale | Interval |
| Citation | Skaaning (2020) |
| Data manipulation for aggregation | —— |
| Indicator of | —— |
| Aggregation | —— |
| Indicators included | C_SD11, C_SD12, C_SD13, C_SD14 |
| Final scale | Scaled to range from 0 (lowest score) to 1 (highest score) |

The Global State of Democracy Indices Codebook, Version 5 ( Tufis & Hudson, 2021, p. 13)

**Civil liberties (C_SD22)**

| Data source | GSoD Indices |
|---|---|
| Original variable | Constructed variable |
| Name in dataset | C_SD22 |
| Definition | The civil liberties subattribute denotes the extent to which civil rights and liberties are respected. The five civil liberties subcomponents are freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly, freedom of religion, freedom of movement, and personal integrity and security, each of which reflects core concepts in the human rights literature. The five subcomponents were aggregated into the civil liberties subattribute using BFA. |
| Original scale | Interval |
| Citation | Skaaning (2020) |
| Data manipulation for aggregation | —— |
| Indicator of | 2. Fundamental Rights |
| Aggregation | BFA of 2.1. access to justice, 2.2. civil liberties and 2.3. social rights and equality |
| Indicators included | C_SD22A, C_SD22B, C_SD22C, C_SD22D, C_SD22E |
| Final scale | Scaled to range from 0 (lowest score) to 1 (highest score). |

The Global State of Democracy Indices Codebook, Version 5 ( Tufis & Hudson, 2021, p. 45)

**Judicial independence (C_SD32)**

| Data source | GSoD Indices |
|---|---|
| Original variable | Constructed variable |
| Name in dataset | C_SD32 |
| Definition | The judicial independence subattribute denotes the extent to which the courts are not subject to undue influence from the other branches of government, especially the executive. Since our framework places judicial independence under the attribute concerning Checks on Government, it is important to supplement the four judicial independence indicators with two indicators on government compliance with the courts. The six indicators were aggregated into the media integrity subattribute using IRT. |
| Original scale | Interval |
| Citation | Skaaning (2020) |
| Data manipulation for aggregation | —— |
| Indicator of | 3. Checks on Government |
| Aggregation | BFA of 3.1. clean elections, 3.2. free political parties and 3.3. elected government to create 3. Checks on Government. |
| Indicators included | v_32_01, v_32_02, v_32_03, v_32_04, v_32_05, v_32_06 |
| Final scale | Scaled to range from 0 (lowest score) to 1 (highest score). |

The Global State of Democracy Indices Codebook, Version 5 ( Tufis & Hudson, 2021, p. 149)