



The European Parliament's Position beyond National Interests: a Case Study of Kosovo¹

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Abstract

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The foreign policy field of the European Union (EU) is an intergovernmental in nature. Therefore, the powers of supranational institutions are limited. However, the limited power of the European Parliament (EP) in this area is controversial. In addition to its formal powers, the EP also has parliamentary diplomacy tools. The EP obtains the opportunity to direct contact with target actors with the help of parliamentary diplomacy tools. The EP is an elected institution, not an appointed one, so its involvement in policy is very important. In this study, the policies and attitudes of the EU and EP towards the case of Kosovo were researched. The comparison of the EU's policy and the EP's position is made using basic normative elements in the light of normative power. This enables an analysis of priority of normative values or national interests in the EU's policy and the EP's position.

Avrupa Parlamentosu'nun Ulusal Çıkarlar Ötesinde Tutumu: Kosova Örnek Çalışması

Özet

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Avrupa Birliği,
Avrupa
Parlamentosu,
Normatif Güç
Avrupa

Avrupa Birliği'nin (AB) dış politika alanı hükümetlerarası yapıdadır. Bu nedenle, ulusüstü kurumların yetkileri sınırlıdır. Fakat Avrupa Parlamentosu'nun (AP) bu alandaki sınırlı gücü tartışmalıdır. Bu alanda, AP'nin resmi gücünün yanında parlamenter diplomasi araçları vardır. AP, parlamenter diplomasi araçlarının yardımıyla hedef aktörlerle doğrudan iletişim kurmaktadır. AP, atanmış kurum değil seçilmiş kurumdur bu nedenle, bu politikaya dahil olması önemlidir. Bu çalışmada, AB ve AP'nin Kosova örnek olayına yönelik tutum ve politikaları araştırılmaktadır. AB'nin politikası ve AP'nin tutumunun karşılaştırması normatif güç ışığında ana normatif unsurlar kullanılarak yapılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, AB'nin politikasındaki ve AP'nin tutumlarındaki ulusal çıkar veya normatif değerlerin önceliğine ilişkin analiz yapılabilmektedir.

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INTRODUCTION

The EP is the only democratically elected body of the EU, so its participation in all EU policies, including foreign policy, is democratically important. Many scholars do not include the EP in their analysis of EU foreign policy. This is because the EP does not have primary powers in this policy area. However, there have been studies, albeit limited, examining the powers and roles of the EP in foreign policy. For example, the role of the EP on foreign policy was analysed based on its parliamentary groups (Fiott, 2015), budget power (Rosen, 2014), inter-parliamentary delegations (Herranz, 2015) and formal powers and indirect channels (Diedrichs, 2004). In recent years, the EP has been discussed from a more technical and broader perspective, examining the EP's main sensitivities in voting on foreign policy issues (Raunio and Wagner, 2020), the relationship between parliamentary and executive diplomats in crisis situations (Fonck, 2018) and the EP's formal and informal powers in security policy (Rosen and Kaube, 2018).

In addition to these, The Lisbon Treaty had positive impact on the studying the EP's powers. For example, Servent (2014) analyzed the power of the EP in international agreements after the Lisbon Treaty, Herranz (2014) examined the cooperation between national parliaments and the EP within the field of foreign and security policy, one of the novelties of the Lisbon Treaty, and Feliu and Serra (2015) researched the role of the EP in promoting human rights after Lisbon Treaty. The role of the EP not only on human rights, but also on democracy, which is one of the normative values, was examined. Immenkamp and Bentzen (2019) analyzed the diplomatic impact of the EP on Ukraine and focused on its role and tools in democracy support. However this study examines the EP's position in Kosovo by investigating all the powers of the EP, rather than dealing with one power of the EP. In some of the studies examining role of the EP in foreign policy, the effects of the EP were examined based on case studies (Redei and Romanyshyn, 2019; Redei, 2013). In these studies, analyzes were made on the basis of certain events. However this study presents a holistic approach by analyzing the EP's attitude towards a case study (Kosovo) in different periods in the light of normative power elements. In addition, this study does not only examine the EP's attitude but also the EU's position. Thus, it is evaluated whether the EP differs from the EU decision-making mechanism. Therefore, this study differs from the others in 3 fundamental points. First, all the powers of the EP are researched second, different periods are examined for the case study, and finally, a comparison is planned by examining the attitudes not only of the EP but also of the EU.

This study argues that the EP does not consider national interests to shape its attitudes, which makes it different from the EU decision-making mechanism. In the study, the EU attitude and the EP attitude are treated as two separate positions. The EU position/policy refers to the position/policy in the light of the documents adopted in the framework of the Council of Ministers and the Council of the EU, while the EP's position refers to the documents adopted by the EP as an EU institution.

MAIN ELEMENTS OF SHAPED POLICIES IN THE FRAMEWORK OF NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE

The under-researched dimensions (cognitive and ideational) of EU foreign policy have been discussed in the NPE (Niemann, 2010). Manners defined normative power as the ability to shape what is normal in international relations. One of the arguments of NPE is that the EU places norms and principles at the centre of its relations with member states and the world. According to Manners certain norms define the goals of the EU and guide its actions in world politics. Manners (2002) states that there are five basic norms within the framework of Union law and policies. These are peace, freedom, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The critical point about normative power is that there is no clear framework for defining normative power. In this context, Manners (2009) has developed a normative power method that includes principles, actions and influence. Forsberg (2011) has developed a normative power framework consisting of four different mechanisms: persuasion, invoking norms, shaping discourse, and power of example. Arne Niemann and Tessa de Vekker (2010) make their analysis based on three factors: normative intent, normative process and normative effect. This study aims to examine adopted policy in the light of normative power rather than examining normative power. For this reason, presence or centrality of normative values and target actors' needs and wishes in adopted policy will be discussed.

Firstly in the NPE context it is an important issue whether the main focus of the EU's policy towards the relevant country is norms. Arne Niemann and Tessa de Vekker (2010) first question in their analysis whether the EU is serious in its normative commitment. Diez (2013) stresses the normative power's commitment to international norms, whether for self-interest or not.

Based on the importance and centrality of normative values, the EU has been criticized from various perspectives. One argument on this topic is that the EU insists on norms because of its strategic or economic interests. In this context, it has been stated that these interests may be hidden under the cover of values and norms rhetoric (Diez, 2005; Langan, 2012). Another view on the instrumentalization of normative power belongs to Cebeci (2012). She states that the concept of normative power is a tool to achieve the goals of the EU. In this framework, the opinion of Adrian Hyde-Price is also important. Hyde-Price (2006) argues that the EU as a whole is used as a tool by powerful member states to shape foreign policy in a way that is beneficial to them.

In this context, another aspect of the discussions has been the issue of priority. According to the argument, states sacrifice values when they conflict with basic national interests. In the EU framework, it has been argued that the EU may act on ethical concerns in some countries or regions where the great powers do not have significant strategic interests (Hyde-Price, 2006). Michael Merlingen (2007) has also criticized in the same direction and states that European foreign policy has strategic calculations and this strategic calculation takes precedence over the normative agenda.

Despite these discussions, Diez (2005) emphasizes that strategic interests and norms cannot be easily distinguished from each other. Nathalie Tocci (2007) has also defended a similar view. For Tocci, the pursuit of strategic goals does not simply mean that it is contrary to normative power characteristics. At the same time, Tocci states that normative values can also form the basis of strategic goals.

It is difficult to distinguish norms from interests, and its discussion goes beyond the study's focus. Based on these criticisms, in order to analyze the importance of norms in the case study, one basic question needs to be asked: Are norms of primary importance in the EU's policy and EP's position towards the target country? The main objective of the question is to understand the importance of norms in the EU's policy and EP's position towards the target country.

Another issue is about target actors' needs and wishes. Perception of the target country or region was not included in the initial analyses. Elizabeth De Zutter (2010) was the first to detail the importance of recognition of normative power by others.

Chaban, Masselot and Vadura (2015) emphasize that normative power moved beyond the questions of "what does the EU do?" and "what is the EU?" and they added question of "what does the EU look like?" to the frame. Esther Barbé and Elisabeth Johansson-Nognés (2008) underline the importance of the role of the target actor by expressing that ethical action is subjective. Emilian Kavalski (2013) emphasizes that

normative power emerges in relation to the intersubjective environment in which it is exercised. Kavalski notes that an actor's international identity is mostly about recognition, not just talent. Richard Whitman (2013) states that unless the target actors accept it, progress cannot be achieved even regarding universally accepted values. Shortly, normative power emerges on a relational basis, and the perception of target actor is of vital importance.

Stefan A.Schirm (2010) states that the inclusion of dominant interests and / or ideas in other countries in the strategies of the leading powers is the condition for them to be able to prevent negative reactions and receive support from the target actor. Based on this argument, Kavalski (2013) states that the most reliable incentive is adding dominant ideas and interests in target states to the normative power strategy. However, needs or wishes of target country or region may change over time. For this reason, it is stated that the method of normative power should be appropriate to changing needs and wishes of the target actors (Strubbs, 1991 quoted in Kavalski, 2014). In this framework, it can be concluded that it is not correct to apply the same policies to each target actor.

Hiksi Haukkala (2008) evaluates the issue through enlargement and states that the adoption of the EU normative agenda is based on its legitimacy in the eyes of the target states. Because, on the basis of this relationship, there are financial incentives, expectation of concrete membership and European identity.

Kavalski (2013) also shows the mechanism of Europeanization as an example of this subject. He discusses that the features in the Europeanization mechanism that are developed for the candidate states and neighboring countries are not suitable for the non-European area. In short, it has been emphasized that these countries do not see the EU as a magnet. For this reason, it can be said that the relationship should be designed not only from the EU perspective, but also from the target country perspective.

It is an important issue whether adopted position or policy for the target country is related to the local context. A question to be asked in this context is as follows: Are the promoted norms key for the target country? This question is important because normative power implies a form of relationship and therefore the role of the local actor is important.

THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN THE NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE

According to Article 10 of Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union, the EP represents citizens directly at Union level. Members of the EP are elected directly by EU citizens so the EP constitutes the democratic aspect of the EU. In addition, according to the second paragraph of Article 14 of the treaty, "Representation of citizens shall be degressively proportional, with a minimum threshold of six members per Member State. No Member State shall be allocated more than ninety-six seats." This paragraph is in accordance with the pluralism emphasis in the 2nd article of the treaty (European Commission, 2016). Democracy and pluralism are important features of the EP. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that the formation of EP is based on normative values. In addition, the credentials of selected members are verified to confirm that they do not have a role incompatible with being an EP member. An example of this is membership in any member state parliament or government (European Parliament, 2022). In addition, decisions in the EP are taken by majority, not unanimity (European Parliament, 2022). Their meaning is that EP members are independent of national politics and national interests. Thus, the EP's stance on foreign policy issues can be expected to be independent of national interests and identities, and to be in the direction of normative values.

The foreign policy field of the EU is an intergovernmental area, the EP has only information and consultation rights (European Commission, 2016). However the EP makes contact directly with the target

actors through parliamentary diplomacy. Parliaments participating in parliamentary diplomacy seek to complement, enrich and develop policies (Bajtay, 2015). The EP shows its foreign policy perception with its direct contacts in foreign policy through parliamentary diplomacy. The EP has organs and tools through which it can communicate with external actors. These are European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), reports and resolutions and delegations.

AFET is responsible for strengthening political relations with third countries through international agreements. It deals with issues which are related to human rights, protection of minorities and promotion of democratic values in third countries (European Parliament). AFET publishes reports (Rumrich, 2006) and it is visited both by officials of the EU and third countries, and by non-governmental visitors (such as journalists, think tanks etc.) (European Parliament).

EP resolutions, another parliamentary diplomacy tool, are an important tool to be known for the EP's views. Resolutions adopted by the EP in the field of CFSP are used for making a statement about an international situation or revealing EP's position on a particular issue in the intra-EU process. Most resolutions concern the role of the Union in the context of normative values (Wessel, 2019). Reinprecht and Levin state that although these documents are not given much importance in Europe, they are front-page news outside (Reinprecht and Levin, 2015).

Another contact point in parliamentary diplomacy is EP delegations. EP delegations are official groups of EP members and they engage with countries, regions or organizations outside the EU. There are two types of delegations: permanent delegations and ad-hoc delegations (European Parliament). Permanent delegations towards third countries meet twice a year (one in Europe, one outside the EU). Foreign representatives attend a joint session with EP members on current issues at joint meeting in Brussels. These meetings are open to the public. On the other hand, during visits outside the EU, EP members come together with all relevant political forces, parties and civil society representatives in each country (Redei, 2013). They also meet with groups suffering from specific problems, economic groups, opposition party members and others. Through these delegations, the EP gets qualified information about the dynamics of each country. Ad-hoc delegation is formed in response to specific political situations and to observe electoral processes (Herranz, 2005).

With parliamentary diplomacy, the EP has gone beyond the area where treaties limit it (Stavridis, 2016). The features of parliamentary diplomacy tools are that they deal with normative values, aim to reach all groups and are transparent. Shortly, by dint of its formation, institutional structure and parliamentary diplomacy tools, the EP can move in the direction of normative values in foreign policy.

STRATEGIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT TOWARDS KOSOVO

In the 1980s, tension between Serbia and Kosovo Albanians began to intensify. As a result of Serbia's random and disproportionate violence, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) airstrike began on March 24, 1999 (European Parliament). The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established on June 10, 1999 by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1244. This resolution granted autonomy to Kosovo. With this resolution, Kosovo was removed from the Serbian administration and came under the auspices of the UN (UNSC, 1999).

In April 2002, it was stated that before discussing the final status of Kosovo under the UN framework, Kosovo institutions and society must demonstrate their readiness for it. For this, evaluation criteria were determined. These criteria were existence of effective, representational and functioning institutions, the rule of law, free movement, respect for the right of return and stay of all Kosovars, development of a sound basis

for a market economy, clarity of property rights, normalization of dialogue with Belgrade and downsizing and transforming the Kosovo Protection Corps in accordance with its mandate (UNMIK, 2002). With the publication of the “Standards for Kosovo” in December 2003, the fulfillment of eight criteria before the final status discussion was approved (UNSC).

In this section, positions of the EU and EP towards Kosovo are examined for the period of status debates and the post-independence and it is discussed whether normative values and local context are taken into account in their stances. In addition, difference between the EP’s stance and the EU’s strategy is discussed.

European Union’s Kosovo Policy

It is possible to examine from the documents whether the EU's policy towards Kosovo is based on normative power elements. On February 24, 2003 European Council Conclusion, it declared unconditionally support the policy of “standards before status” and it said that UNSC Resolution 1244 remained the basis of the EU policy towards Kosovo (Council of the European Union). In this document, although the EU emphasized normative values by supporting the standards, the EU stated the problems arising from status ambiguity in its previous documents. For example, the Council stated in 2001 that private investment was insufficient due to insecurity, property problems and uncertainty of future status (Council of the European Union, 2001). In addition, the Commission noted that the uncertainty of Kosovo's future status, fears about security and desperate employment prospects negatively impacted the return of Kosovo Serbs and other communities (European Commission, 2005). However, in practice, the EU followed the UN and preferred to ignore the problems it mentioned. In addition, due to Kosovo’s uncertain status the EU had inability to integrate Kosovo into the Stabilization and Association Process for the Western Balkan region which plans to bring peace and stability and bring countries closer to EU standards (Palokaj, 2015).

The EU's stance on the implementation of standards did not change in changing situations or events. For example, in March 2004, the European Council adopted a document on the conflict between Serbs and Kosovo Albanians in Kosovo. In this document, it reiterated its support for the implementation of Resolution 1244 and the policy of standards before status (Council of the European Union, 2004). The EU interpreted the crisis in this period not as a result of social fatigue in Kosovo, but simply as a lack of standards. However, the UN and other international officials stated that some of these attacks were spontaneous, while the other part was organized by radical forces (Kim and Woehrel, 2008). That is, the uncertainty in Kosovo increased the violence.

In this period, the UN, under the leadership of Kai Eide, decided to prepare an evaluation study to examine the implementation of standards and situation in Kosovo (UNSC, 2005). Meanwhile, on the EU front, Javier Solana and Olli Rehn were tasked by the Council in February 2005 to examine the possible contributions of the EU to the implementation of Resolution 1244 and the role of the EU in the future stages in Kosovo. In their joint report of 14 June 2005, Solana and Rehn stated that the EU should continue to support UNMIK and the implementation of standards and emphasized that it should be closely involved in Kai Eide's work (Council of the European Union).

Shortly after this joint report, the European Council addressed this issue in its 2005 document. In the document, the European Council stated that rapprochement with the EU would depend on full implementation of the standards and therefore the EU would continue to follow this process closely (Council of the European Union, 2005). It can be said from the document that norms were key in the EU’s attitudes towards Kosovo. In short, the EU's position in the evaluation process of the implementation of the standards became in favor of supporting the standards.

Meanwhile, Eide completed report and Eide declared that the implementation of standards in Kosovo was uneven but it was time to move on to the next stage of the political process (UNSC). Martti Ahtisaari was appointed by the UN as Special Envoy to lead the political process to determine the future status of Kosovo (UN, 2005). After this step, Solana and Rehn prepared the second joint report. The report of 9 December 2005 emphasized implementation of standards. In other words, it was stressed in the report that both status and standards should be considered together. In this report, the post-status role of the EU was also discussed. It stated that the EU could take responsibility for the police, the rule of law and some remaining economic areas in Kosovo (Council of the European Union). With this report, the EU touched upon the status issue for the first time.

While this process was ongoing, Solana and Rehn published their third report in July 2006. In the report, it was stated that the EU planned to be the “driving force” in the future international structure. The fields and positions that the EU intended to take place in Kosovo were clearly stated in this report. The report stated that EU would support rule of law, representative office and Kosovo’s progress in Stabilisation and Association Process (Council of the European Union). With this report, it has been seen that the EU started to focus on the post-status process. But it refrained from adopting a clear stance on status.

In the status negotiations, there was no result because Belgrade demanded the autonomy of Kosovo within Serbia, while Pristina insisted on independence. Ahtisaari declared that the appropriate preference for Kosovo was independence to be overseen by the international community for the initial period. On the basis of this opinion, Ahtisaari’s Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement included provisions regarding the Special Representative, the International Civilian Representative and the rule of law mission (UNSC, 2007). Only the Pristina authority accepted this proposal, Serbia rejected it and Russia threatened to veto the proposal at the UNSC. Therefore it was agreed to initiate a monitoring process to deal with this dispute (Greçeveci, 2011). A troika consisting of EU, Russian and US officials undertook negotiations for the agreement between Belgrade and Pristina (UNSC, 2007).

In the process of discussing the troika negotiations, it was conveyed in the EP session that Solana, on the 10 July 2007 meeting with the UN Secretary General, said that it would not be beneficial to postpone the Kosovo issue any longer (European Parliament, 2007). Solana was not the only example of this issue. During this period, EU institutions continued to discuss the status issue vigorously. In the EP session, the President of the Council, Manuel Lobo Antunes, stated that the EU should be at the forefront in solving the problems related to Kosovo, since the problem was in the European region, and the status quo was unsustainable (European Parliament, 2007). Until the the Ahtisaari proposal, the EU repeatedly stressed that standards were indispensable in its documents. However, although there was a change in these emphases after the Ahtisaari proposal, an official document supporting Ahtisaari’s proposal was not published.

No agreement could be reached in the negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina for 4 months (UNSC, 2007). At the European Council meeting after the troika negotiations, it was stated that the status quo in Kosovo was unsustainable and it was emphasized that progress towards the Kosovo status solution was needed for regional stability. It was also stated that the resolution of Kosovo’s ambiguous status would not set any precedent and was a unique situation. It was also underlined that the EU was ready to play a leading role in strengthening stability in the region and implementing the solution that determined the final status of Kosovo (Council of the European Union, 2007). Thus, after exhaustion of remedies, the EU strongly stated that the status quo was unsustainable.

The EU, until the UN took a step to clarify the status, only focused on standards. It is another reality that standards cannot be achieved without status. Because, as explained above, Kosovo had economic and social

difficulties due to the lack of clear status. It adhered to the standards in its documents but the situation in Kosovo was not sufficiently taken into account. Therefore, in the period of status debates, it can be said that the norms were at the center of the documents but the EU did not be successful in considering the local context because these norms were not key for Kosovo in that period.

Kosovo declared its independence on 17 February 2008 after the problem could not be resolved through dialogue. It was stated that this declaration reflected the will of the citizens and it was committed to implement the Ahtisaari plan (Kosovo National Authorities). Serbia, on the other hand, declared that it would never recognize the independence of Kosovo. Russia also agreed with Serbia and stated that this declaration was a dangerous example (UN, 2008).

At the meeting of 18 February, the Council stated that with this declaration, Kosovo committed to the principles of democracy and equality of all citizens, the protection of Serb and other minorities and the protection of cultural and religious heritage, as well as international supervision. The Council underlined that the member states would decide on their relations with Kosovo in accordance with national procedures and international law. In addition, the Council emphasized that Kosovo was an unprecedented case study that did not question the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Helsinki Final Act, the UN Charter and Security Council Resolutions (Council of the European Union, 2008).

Most EU states quickly recognized the new state. But the EU's five member states - Southern Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain - refused to recognize it. One of the meanings of the divergence between the members was that as a condition of membership, the EU would not ask Serbia to recognize Kosovo as an independent state (Economides and Ker-Lindsay, 2015). The five EU members, that do not recognize Kosovo, refrained from that this situation would set an example for some independence movements in their own territories (Ducasse-Rogier, 2011).

Within the framework of Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union, the EU did not use the common position and common strategy, which are the tools in foreign policy (European Commission, 2016). On the other hand, the EU provided significant assistance to the new state with its tools but the lack of common position harmed these structures. For example, there were problems with the deployment of the rule of law mission, the representation of the International Civilian Representative/EU Special Representative with double hat, and the intention to increase the function of the Liaison Office (Greiçevci, 2011). One aspect of these tools was to spread norms in Kosovo (European Parliament). However, lack of common position harmed the normative intentions.

The EU's inability to speak with one voice damaged both the provisions within the scope of the foreign policy and the tools in Kosovo. Thus normative values were overshadowed by the security concerns of the five member states. In addition, it can be said that the local context was not taken into account because Kosovo's need in this period was to be recognized as a state. In the process of the status debates, the focus was on standards and the local context was ignored, but in this period, both the normative values and local context were not taken into account due to member state interests.

European Parliament's Stance on Kosovo

The EP started to articulate the status issue 3 years after the adoption of the UNSC Resolution 1244. For example, in a resolution it adopted, the EP asked the Council and the Commission to consider defining a strategy for Kosovo's future, reviving regional cooperation, and fully and effectively integrating Kosovo into EU policies. The resolution also stated that the future of Kosovo would depend on successfully implementing and strengthening reforms (European Parliament, 2002). Kosovo's uncertain status prevented

its integration into EU policies. Therefore, with these statements, the EP emphasized the clarification of Kosovo's status.

In another EP resolution, the EP mentioned that many secondary problems could not be effectively resolved without defining Kosovo's final status. The EP recommended the EU play a more active role in setting a time frame and roadmap to reach a conclusion on Kosovo's final status, preferably within the next two years (European Parliament, 2003). The EP thought that without the status, the standards could not be achieved and the existing problems could not be solved. After the events of 2004, the EP condemned the ethnically motivated violence on 17-18 March 2004 and called for a quick and definitive end to all violence and unlawful acts. It called for the Council to work towards the final status of Kosovo (European Parliament, 2004).

The EP continued its previous positions on status issue after the 2004 attacks and, unlike the previous period, referred to the role of the EU more frequently. For example, in the EP session, EP member Lagendijk stated that the EU held the prizes for Kosovo and Serbia and therefore had to take the lead in the status discussion regardless of Europe's will and intention. EP member Richard Howitt also emphasized that Europe today invested 25 times more money and 50 times more troops per capita in Kosovo than in Afghanistan (European Parliament, 2005). These statements were a criticism to the EU. Because, although the EU had the potential and effective tools, it refrained from adopting an active stance on the status issue.

The EP adopted a resolution on this issue. In this resolution, the EP called on the Council and the Commission to take a leading role in preparing the negotiations on Kosovo's final status (European Parliament, 2005). The EP continued to press on EU about this issue because negotiations on the final status had started. For example, in a resolution the EP called on the Council to take an active role in a constructive solution. In addition, the EP called on the Council, the Commission and the member states to define a common strategy, actively participate in the negotiations, and cooperate closely with the UN (European Parliament, 2004). The EP reiterated the necessity of resolving the status issue in its documents and called for the EU to take a lead by speaking with one voice on this issue.

After the Ahtisaari report and proposal were announced, the EP clearly stated its position on the issue, unlike the EU, in its resolution of 29 March 2007. In this resolution, the EP fully supported the Ahtisaari Plan and stated that sovereignty overseen by the international community was the best option. In the resolution, it was emphasized that the EU member states should define a common position towards Kosovo and speak with one voice and continue this in the international arena, especially in the UNSC (European Parliament, 2007). This report is important as it is the EP's first official position on the Ahtisaari Plan. At the same time, it asked to influence intra-EU decision making process in the direction of being one voice with its resolution.

The EP insisted on status resolution in its reports, resolutions and sessions. The EP argued that the status issue should be resolved in order to fulfill the standards and ensure the welfare of the people of Kosovo, thus it can be said that the EP took the problems at the local level seriously. Therefore, the local context was the basis of its attitude. The EP did not ignore standards but it thought that standards could be achieved with clear status. Thus, in this period, problems in local context were dominant in the EP's stance.

The reactions of the EU and the EP also differed in Kosovo's declaration of independence. The EP's response to the declaration was unequivocal. This issue was discussed in the EP session one day after Kosovo declares independence. The EP President said that this decision was expected and it showed will of people in Kosovo to make a decision about their future. He emphasized that Kosovo was not a precedent, was a unique situation and so could not be compared with others. The president stated that the duties and responsibilities of the EU and the EP were to support the political leaders in Kosovo to create democratic political

institutions that respect the freedom and rights of all citizens. There were also EP members who did not agree with this speech and attitude. For example, Boguslaw Rogalski stated that Kosovo's declaration of independence came to mean a violation of international law and with the declaration nationalism would grow. Ján Hudacký also stated that Kosovo's declaration of independence would set a dangerous precedent for regions and various countries around the world (European Parliament, 2008). Swoboda stated that no other solution was found (European Parliament, 2008). In short, it was largely underlined in the session that the independence of Kosovo was the inevitable end.

The EP adopted a resolution on this issue. In this resolution, it called on the Commission to closely monitor the full implementation of the conditions in the settlement proposal. In addition, EP requested from Commission, together with the Council, to implement the necessary coordination arrangements so that various EU actors in Kosovo could speak with one voice (European Parliament, 2008). The EP stated that the EU should speak with one voice for its own initiatives. In other words, it saw speaking with one voice as not an arbitrariness but a necessity.

The EP's calls to speak with one voice to the EU continued with its documents. For example, the EP resolution of February 5, 2009, encouraged states that did not recognize the independence of Kosovo to recognize independence (European Parliament, 2009). In another resolution, the EP stated that it would welcome all member states to recognize Kosovo. In the resolution, the importance of all countries' EU integration processes in the region for regional stability was emphasized, it was underlined that the expectation of accession to the EU would be a strong incentive for requested reforms from Kosovo, and it was called for steps to be taken to make this expectation more concrete for both the government and the citizens (European Parliament, 2010). In this resolution, the EP, by mentioning expectation of accession, linked the possibility of Kosovo's adoption of standards/norms to the common position of the EU.

In addition to the resolutions and debates, inter-parliamentary meetings were also held between the EP and Kosovo. The EP held meetings with Kosovo as well as with other Western Balkan countries. However these meetings were made informally before Kosovo declared its independence. The first official meeting was held on 28-29 May 2008 (European Parliament, 2009). An important point is that UNMIK representatives were not invited to these meetings after Kosovo declared its independence. In addition, at these meetings, the Kosovo flag appeared for the first time in an EU institution (Redei, 2013). In other words, the EP treated Kosovo as a normal state.

A Joint Parliamentary meeting, another example of direct contact, was held in 2008 between EP members and representatives of EU member states and Western Balkan countries. This meeting is the first known meeting between Serbian and Kosovo parliamentarians in an international field (European Parliament, 2008). At this meeting, the Council and the Commission communicated directly with Kosovo, without the UNMIK representative. Also at the meeting Kosovo was positioned on an equal footing with Serbia and others (Redei, 2013). EP member Lagendijk pointed to progress by emphasizing that the parties that did not want to sit together and listen to each other for years were sitting together (European Parliament, 2008). These two examples showed that the EP was consistent in its attitudes and made bold decisions because of its low adherence to protocols.

The EP showed a clear stance towards the Declaration of Independence, unlike the EU. In this period, local context and normative values were in the same basket because recognition or speaking with one voice was necessary for the tools and policies that could spread norms in Kosovo to function. Therefore, it can be said that in the period the EP formed its attitudes on basis of normative values and needs of local level. In

conclusion, the EP took steps in the direction local level in two periods. Because the EP ignored national interests it formed strategies on the needs of target country.

CONCLUSION

Attitudes of the EU and the EP towards Kosovo were examined for periods of status debates and the post-independence within the framework of normative values and local context. The EU's position was in favor of standards during the status debates but Kosovo did not be successful in meeting the standards due to its uncertain status. For this reason, it can be interpreted that the policy was not effective since the EU did not take into account local sensitivities and needs in its policy towards Kosovo and Kosovo did not adopt standards appropriately. On the other hand, in this period the EP supported strongly settlement of status issue. Although it did not seem to emphasize standards, it can be easily said that the EP gave importance to normative values like local context in this period, as it emphasized that standards could be achieved with clear status.

In the period of post-independence the EU did not speak with one voice because of national interests so it harmed its normative power identity and tools. In other words, normative values and local context were ignored because of national policies. In the period, the EP, unlike the EU, treated Kosovo as a state and called the EU to recognize Kosovo as a state so it can be said that the EP, in this term, gave importance to both normative values and local level.

Unlike the EU, which ignored the local level in both periods, the EP took into account the local level in both periods. As an EU institution, the EP differed from the EU in its stance which was adopted regardless of national interests and identities. In both periods, the EP emphasized values and norms in its documents but it thought of status settlement and recognition as a way to spread norms in Kosovo. Therefore, it stressed firstly and intensely on status issue and recognition. In conclusion, normative elements were included in the EP's stance towards Kosovo. Although the EP is not monolithic, its outputs are normative.

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