



# EU Foreign Policy Practices and Democracy Support in Lebanon

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## **Abstract**

This paper critically evaluates the democratic nature of the European Union's policies in Lebanon through five key policy areas: migration & refugees, security, border management, democracy and trade.

It aims to provide a holistic understanding of how EU interventions align with democratic principles and the needs of the Lebanese context. The paper shows how EU policies toward Lebanon are predominantly unilateral, focusing on the interests of the EU with a top-bottom approach that is very short term and punctual. These policies are guided by elite thinking and gives little room to the civil societies and grassroots. Such a situation alienates local actors from local ownership, contribution and development of these issues and the problems around them; as such, this might also contribute to worsen the prevailing inequalities and disparities within and with Lebanon.

## Introduction

The European Union (EU) has had a lengthy and well-established relationship with Lebanon, specifically since the 1965 E.E.C.-Lebanon Trade and Technical Cooperation Agreement (Dandashly, 2021). Since then, the cooperation between the two has been on the basis of its European Neighbourhood Policy and the Renewed Partnership with the EU's Southern Neighbourhood – A New Agenda for the Mediterranean. Within the scope of this framework, EU member states have been providing considerable democracy support to Lebanon in various forms, ranging from bilateral financial assistance and supporting donor conferences (e.g. Paris I, II, and III international donor conferences convened by France), to supporting civil society by working closely with and funding them, to monitoring elections and encouraging key policy reforms, to implementing EU international border management strategies and assisting with border governance in the country (see Tholens, 2017; Ouazzani, 2019).

From the analysis conducted, it is clear that the policies of the EU toward Lebanon are predominantly focusing on the interests of the EU with a top-bottom approach that is very short term and punctual. It is common to notice that policies of this nature are rarely constructive. Instead, such policies would tend to be flexible to a fault, focusing on funding provisions while solely increasing the European Union's soft power. In addition, policy formulation is top-down in nature, driven by the interests of the elite in power and aim at stabilising the system in place, while undermining state institutions, instead of serving or responding to the calls for civil society. Such a situation alienates local actors from local ownership and development on the issues and problems as such may only worsen the prevailing inequalities within Lebanon.

### 1 Migration & Refugees

Lebanon is today known to have the highest refugee influx in the world both per capita and per square kilometer. Government statistics indicate around 1.5 million Syrian refugees and 11238 refugees from other nationalities ([UNHCR, n.d.](#)). This movement has put a heavy burden on the country's economy, infrastructure, and public services, aggravating existing political and financial problems. In contrast to other host countries, Lebanon does not have any official refugee camps which means that the majority of refugees are stuck in very difficult situations where they simultaneously face legal, economic, and residency restrictions as well as increasing violence against them during this crisis ([ESCWA, 2020](#)). The European Union (EU) is reported to have provided the most funding for the Lebanon migration policy which has greatly affected the country's management of these populations.

Ever since the escalation in Syria shifted to open conflict in 2011, the country has had roughly 6.8 million people internally displaced and over 5.5 million citizens seeking refuge in bordering countries ([UNHCR, 2024](#)). Taking into account its geographical closeness with Syria, Lebanon became one of the primary open border destinations, especially in the early phases of the Civil War. As a result, Lebanon received a large influx of refugees. This migratory crisis has made significant impacts on Lebanon's already strained social, economic, and political environment. Simpson (2021) lists Lebanon as one of the top 5 nations to have suffered unprecedented loss of stability. Currently, with the economy being as rough, both the displaced Syrian refugees and impoverished Lebanese are forced to heavily rely on foreign aid. According to [ESCWA \(2020\)](#) reports, 90% of the displaced Syrian population is living in extreme poverty while 55% of the Lebanese population is below the poverty line.

The Lebanese crisis continues to deepen, and these refugees live in never-ending ambiguity where returning to Syria is unsafe but at the same time resettlement in a third country is shown as a possibility but not for all ([RPW 2020](#)).

### **1.1 What did the EU do?**

Lebanon's migration policies are constructed according to the legal framework of the bilateral relations between the EU and Lebanon, manifested in the EU–Lebanon Association Agreement and the European Neighbourhood policy (ENP) Action Plans. Migration has always been a salient factor of EU–Lebanon cooperation as seen and practiced since the signing of the Association Agreement in 2002, which reported illegal migration phenomena ([European Council, 2017](#)). The first ENP Action Plan in 2007, which broadened the scope of cooperation to include migration, has considerably increased the focus on it ([European Commission, 2007](#)). Gradually, the EU has attempted to increase the scope of its institutional relations with Lebanon, for example, with the new EU aid policy through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) in 2009 which Fakhoury (2014, p. 134) argues enabled more integrated external relations of the EU through its representation and delegation in Beirut.

As of 2017, the EU has allocated €1.2 billion for Lebanon which has been distributed through various cooperation programmes aimed at solving the issues that stemmed from the influx of refugees ([European Council, 2017](#)). One of the most significant developments during this period was the introduction of the EU–Lebanon Compact in 2016, which sought to aid Lebanon manage the refugee crisis without further undermining the country's stability ([EU–Lebanon Association Council, 2016](#)).

Simultaneously, the EU tried to improve migration governance with the Migration Partnership Framework of 2016, which placed focus on border control, curtailing irregular migration, and strengthening the institutional capacity of Lebanon ([European Commission, 2016](#)). The EU also started exploring the possibility of a Mobility Partnership (MP) with Lebanon in 2014, but it was never really finalized, which is indicative of the difficult nature of migration policy ([European Council, 2017](#)). These measures are part of the EU's overarching strategy of security–stability, which seeks to maintain a certain level of stability within the region in a bid to stave off additional migration to Europe (Roccu and Voltoni, 2017).

### **1.2 Absences and Presences**

The European Union's attitude towards migration governance in Lebanon reflects some degree of social embeddedness as funds are given to the country without establishing new structures or reducing spending on the existing public service provisions. Taking into consideration Lebanon's deep recession, the EU has focused on critical areas such as health, education, and social assistance. The Lebanese public services are already overstretched, and this approach addresses the needs of both refugees as well as the host communities. However, despite this support, the EU does not explicitly condition its backing for border control on Lebanon's respect for non-refoulement, the principle prohibiting the forced return of individuals to countries where they face persecution or harm ([HRW, 2024](#)). This lack of protective measures illustrates the gap in the EU's approach, where resources are channeled toward achieving security and stability at the expense of fully integrated measures to uphold the rights of refugees.

In addition, the EU's approach remains focused on containment rather than long-term empowerment. Policies fail to address economic integration, as there are no significant efforts to support legal work permits or employment pathways for Syrians in Lebanon. This reflects the EU's broader strategy of 'governing migration from a distance,' prioritizing stability over meaningful socio-economic inclusion for refugees (Fakhoury, 2020).

The way migratory movements are managed by the European Union with respect to Lebanon raises concerns about its social accountability since it attempts to juggle funding, security, and humanitarian issues at the same time. In regard to EU migration deals, Human Rights Watch has been quite critical because of the risk exposure to individuals, the erasure of asylum guarantees, and the obliteration of the international protection system ([HRW, 2024](#)). Officials from Lebanon like the former Foreign Minister, Gebran Bassil, have ridiculed the claims of financial aid by stating that it is not enough and rather needs a political resolution to be made for the socio-economic integration of Syrian refugees ([L'Orient Today, 2024](#)). On the other hand, figures in Europe such as S&D Group President Gianni Pittella, while acknowledging the abundant hospitality shown by Lebanon, call on Member States of the EU to do more than just express concern because there is more to do ([Socialists & Democrats, 2015](#)). The May 2024 announcement by the European Commission of a €1 billion aid package is indicative of what the EU wants to achieve—stability in Lebanon ([The Brussels Times, 2024](#)). Detractors of the policy, however, note that the EU seems more interested in containment than more permanent solutions. Also, the Palestinian Human Rights Organization (PHRO) has defended the EU regional policy approach on the grounds that it purposely restricts mobility rather than attending to humanitarian needs, placing further limitations on those afflicted, which puts security and migrant protection in sharp contradiction to each other (Ismail and Chakal, 2018).

## 2 Security

### 2.1 Community Policing

Lebanon's security sector reforms as well as its EU's assistance schemes had originated from the protracted political instability, internal governance challenges, as well as regional conflicts. The country has been in constant crisis due to phenomena ranging from the fallout of the Syrian civil war, an influx of refugees to raging economic conditions, and even the activities of armed entities such as Hezbollah. Lebanon faced compounded and concomitant dysfunctions ranging from weak state institutions, rampant corruption, to severe absence of trust towards the security forces which crippled law enforcement and governance functions. In this scenario, international partners, the European Union in particular, aspired to augment Lebanon's security sector in rule of law, bring accountability, and reform policing for greater social cohesion and stability.

#### 2.1.1 What did the EU do?

The SSR Lebanon Project began in March 2016 with the support of the European Union and aimed at providing technical assistance to help the Lebanese authorities carry out security sector reforms ([EU Neighbours South, 2016](#)). The project was implemented by FIIAPP and Civipol, which coordinated the use of European funds by key security institutions like the Lebanese Armed Forces and the General Directorate of General Security, analysts concentrating on internal organisation, communication, and accountability boosting ([FIIAPP, n.d.](#)). In 2018, the EU registered a support package equalling €50 million, from which €46.6 million were dedicated to strengthening the rule of law, security, and terrorism countermeasures until 2020 and €3.5 million

targeted to support airport security at the Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport ([EEAS, 2018a](#)). Also, the [MED9](#) offered support for the Lebanese Armed Forces to help stabilize the southern part of Lebanon, which has been a conflict zone between Israel and Hezbollah ([Hadjicostis, 2024](#)). The long-term goal of the project funded by the European Union is to develop a community policing model for Lebanon that enforces the law while promoting social harmony.

### 2.1.2 Absences and Presences

The aim of the ‘Promoting Community Policing in Lebanon’ project, funded by the EU, is to develop a model of policing that is community-based, and integrate it into the Internal Security Forces (ISF) as well as improve the capacity of municipal police, especially in the areas of human rights, NGO coordination, and civic engagement ([European Commission, 2019](#)). It correlates with overarching aims such as provision of safety and security through the fighting against terrorism and crime, fostering community relations, advocacy for human rights, and professionalism and better management within the ISF. While there is commendation for achieving user milestones such as graduating courses for police officers, renovations of police stations, and providing police officers with computer gadgets, several issues still remain unaddressed ([FIIAPP, 2025](#)). According to UNDP a comprehensive set of operational or administrative policies relating to recruitment such as certified training for police personnel which raises questions of professionalism and accountability is still absent. Along with this the lacking of training in cultural sensitivity can make trust with various groups within the community difficult to obtain ([UNDP, 2016](#)). The “Promoting Community Policing in Lebanon” project has received some praise for making the police serve the society in a more broad-based, inclusive, and computerized manner ([European Commission, 2019](#)). However, Middle East Institute has expressed caution related to this approach. Community policing may not be relevant in a country like Lebanon, which has many problems, especially in relation to socio-political power structures, therefore, the reforms may not be as effective ([Mazzola, 2018](#)).

In addition, International Alert and Lebanon Support discuss how implementing security measures like curfews and armed raids against Syrian refugees is a potential danger to human rights and self-respect ([Civil Society Centre, n.d](#)). Instead, they suggest a more genuine and proactive approach towards policing that is community-centered and does not contribute to the feelings of insecurity that the Lebanese people, as well as the refugees, experience.

## 3 Border Management

### 3.1 What did the EU do?

EU’s partner, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) is tasked with the project titled Strengthening Capability for Integrated Border Management in Lebanon ([ICMPD, 2021](#)). Under the project, ICMPD is supposed to assist Lebanese authorities in border management while ensuring that trade and the movement of legitimate travellers are done in a safe manner. The Initiative promotes cooperation between the Lebanese Armed Forces, General Security, Lebanese Custom Administration, Internal Security Forces, and Lebanese Civil Defence. In March 2021, ICMPD working with NATO affiliated Multinational CIMIC Group initiated the provision of civil-military relations technical assistance focusing on stability and security within the border zones ([EU Neighbours South, 2021](#)). Adding to this effort, the EU in together announced a package of 1 billion euros announced in June 2024 for the period stretching from 2024 to 2027 to be spent on improving basic services and economic reforms as well as

strengthening Lebanese security agencies through the provision of equipment and border management training ([Al-Monitor, 2024](#)). This was part of the EU Lebanon partnership priorities set in 2016 which created a space for political cooperation towards Lebanon's stability and democracy with a strengthened commitment to integrated border management and coordination between the security institutions ([European Commission, 2016](#)).

### **3.2 Absences and Presences**

The EU-sponsored border control projects in Lebanon are intended to improve coordination among various Lebanese security agencies by blending them into the institutional framework, rather than establishing an external one. This method takes into account Lebanon's multifaceted security environment, which includes border confrontations with Israel and the presence of Hezbollah. These policies, though, ignore the informal networks that profoundly inform border interactions. The projects' main emphasis is on security, but it also has social and economic aspects like trade, movement, and employment. This broad concept seeks to improve local governance through capacity building and technical support, thereby increasing institutional legitimacy and responsiveness towards border communities. Still, without more social embeddedness, the risk is that of excluding some of the most vulnerable such as refugees and informal workers. In addition, looking at the issue of migrant smuggling primarily as a matter of national security does not tackle the real causes of the problem: poverty, closed immigration policies, and democratic underdevelopment, pointing to the absence of a well-thought-out migration policy. Additionally, 'The politics of resilience-building, which is the cornerstone of the EU's refugee response, has left the ruling elite unscathed and intact' (Fakhoury, 2020).

The EU's border management policies in Lebanon were faced with scepticism from rights organisations. In a joint report, the Lebanese Centre for Human Rights claims that European policies seem to be largely aimed at curtailing people's movement while also infringing on their most basic right – to leave one's country and seek asylum elsewhere ([CLDH, 2023](#)). Amnesty International and EuroMed Rights, together with ACHR, publicly addressed the relevant companies stating that both Lebanese and EU countries have to comply with international law and do not have the right to return the refugees to Syria – a country that is fraught with potential harms for the refugees ([RPW, 2024](#)). This critique emphasises the necessity for border management policies to be framed and implemented within a legal framework that aligns with international law and human rights standards.

## **4 Democracy & Elections**

The European Union has played an active role in Lebanon's democratic processes, particularly through its involvement in both parliamentary and presidential elections. In Lebanon, the EU has aimed to enhance electoral integrity, promote political stability, and ensure greater representation of citizens.

### **4.1 What did the EU do?**

A significant phenomenon in Lebanon's political landscape was the Parliamentary Elections of 2005, 2009, 2018, and 2022 ([EEAS, 2022a](#)). The European Union (EU) paid significant attention to the events as it was directly involved in monitoring the elections and reforming. The EU installed Election Observation Missions for every one of these elections with the intention of improving transparency, credibility, and the overall integrity of the elections like in the case of issuing Preliminary Statements concerning the Parliamentary elections that were conducted on

May 15, 2022, wherein around 200 observers were deployed. These activities were supposed to assess and report on the status of the elections and work on improvements.

The EU also lobbied the adoption of proportional representation and helped draft Lebanon's 2017 election law, which was the first to introduce proportionality in the country's history ([IFES, 2017](#)). The shift was meant to accommodate more political representation inside the country's sectarian based political system. The change also prompted the EU to encourage the Lebanese government to allow and enhance women's engagement in politics to raise the standard of political representation which is critical for any democracy ([EODS, 2018](#)). Though the number of female candidates increased in the 2018 elections, only six women were elected suggesting that female representation in Lebanese parliamentary politics continues to be low and restricted due to systemic obstacles to women's active political participation. These efforts respond to a broader call to improve democracy and enhance the electoral system in Lebanon.

## 4.2 Absences and Presences

The European Union has continued a political dialogue with Lebanon on human rights, democracy and the rule of law as specified in the EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities of November 2016 ([EEAS, 2018b](#)). These priorities reflect the EU's efforts in working with Lebanon's civil society and improving the effectiveness and accountability of the Lebanese public institutions, especially the justice system. When it comes to parliamentary elections, the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) significantly recommended reforms that led to the adoption of the new proportional representation system, voting by Lebanese citizens abroad, and improved secrecy of the ballot during the 2018 elections ([EODS, 2018](#)). All of these measures were designed to increase the level of competition and choice in elections. Notably, none out of the 25 EU EOM 2018 recommendations were fully accepted, which proves it is still difficult to implement reform ideas in these structures ([EEAS, 2022b](#)). In addition, the EU has worked with the Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform (CCER) to demand an improvement of the electoral transparency and accountability ([Melhem, 2023](#)). The Civil Society Knowledge Centre however argues that the chronic political situation in Lebanon does obstruct the proper application of these changes ([Civil Society Centre, n.d.](#)).

In their reports, the European Council on Foreign Relations and Carmen Jeha have emphasised a shift from engaging elites to empowering activists and ordinary citizens trying to manoeuvre through the country's convoluted and corrupt systems ([Geha, 2021](#)). In a similar vein, the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) has raised alarm over more pronounced problems like electoral malpractice in vote buying, media partisanship, and absence of an independent electoral supervising body, arguing that much of the support and even policies of the EU should be more focused to solve these problems ([UNDP, 2022](#)). These comments, among others, demonstrate the difficulties in enhancing democratic governance in Lebanon.

## 5 Presidential Elections

### 5.1 What did the EU do?

After the end of President Michel Aoun's term in November, 2022, there was a worrying gap in presidential rule. The EU expressed worries about the absence of political structure in the country. In response, EU High Representative Josep Borrell said that leaders should act fast to choose a new president and government, and added that a delayed action could lead to

aggravating the consequences of the economic crisis to public order and social security ([L'Orient Today, 2022](#)).

The election of Joseph Aoun as President of Lebanon in January 2025 filled a vacuum in the country. The EU offered its congratulations to the new president and praised the Lebanese parliament for broad consensus, stressing the importance of national unity as well as an optimistic approach toward political stabilisation and socio-economic recovery ([EEAS, 2025](#)). In addition to diplomatic activity, the EU has engaged in supporting the Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform, CCER, a network of civil society organisations that advocate comprehensive reforms of voting processes ([Melhem, 2022](#)). These changes are intended to increase the representation of the citizens, the accountability and transparency of elections, and deepening democracy in Lebanon.

In terms of financial support, the EU provided funding through the European Neighbouring Instrument (ENI), allocating resources to numerous fields, including democracy and governance issues and electoral activities (Lannon, 2021). This support has eased the implementation of reforms, enhanced governance structures through multi-stakeholder capacity development, and good governance systems. As much as the European Union's involvement signals its intent in Lebanon's democratic growth, the realities brought about by local politics and the firm grip of legacy power structures make the all-encompassing changes in elections and governance very difficult to achieve.

## **5.2 Absences and Presences**

Lebanon is a deeply divided society, and the office of the president, which has historically been assigned to a Maronite Christian, is a major power holder crucial in sustaining the delicate sociopolitical equilibrium. The European Union has continuously insisted on the proper conduct of presidential elections within the stipulated time frame and without delays, in particular to focus on the internal unity of the country to facilitate political order, reconstruction and economic growth ([EEAS, 2025](#)). In the institutional responses, including those of the EU High Representative, the EU has commended the Lebanese parliament for what appears to be responsible behaviour by a broad consensus, the need for a reforming government to resolve the multitude problems at hand ([EEAS, 2025](#)). Notwithstanding, the concern is that the policies serve much of EU interests, and too little for the public alongside inadequate attention and efforts put forth toward democracy-friendly changes. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance pointed out that there is a discrepancy between the EU statements and its actions in advocacy of democracy and reforms for fear of enabling the ordinary citizens and grassroots movements to take over and reshuffle the political landscape (Khatib, 2009). This belief may restrain democratisation by placing a premium on order as opposed to greatly needed change.

To conclude, the EU's diplomacy illustrates its engagement and commitment to Lebanon's political stability. However, their devised strategy could incorporate broader engagement on elite capture of governance would increase the effectiveness of Europe's support towards Lebanon's democratic governance.

## **6 Trade**

The European Union (EU) and twelve Southern Mediterranean Countries (SMC) agreed on a coordinated approach to the political, economic, and social issues facing them, which was

announced in the Barcelona declaration in 1995. The declaration recognises the objective of turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity requires a strengthening of democracy and respect for human rights, sustainable and balanced economic and social development, measures to combat poverty and promotion of greater understanding between cultures, as essential aspects of partnership. The signatories to the agreement accordingly agreed to establish a comprehensive partnership among the participants the Euro Mediterranean region through strengthened political dialogue on a regular basis, the development of economic and financial cooperation and greater emphasis on the social, cultural and human dimension, these being the three aspects of the Euro Mediterranean partnership.

For Lebanon, the EU accounted for a small share of its exports, which was 14 percent for Lebanon in 2022. Greece was Lebanon's main trading partner in the EU with about three quarters of Lebanese exports on metals, and a remainder of foodstuff and chemical products. Lebanon's imports from Greece were instead largely refined petroleum products. The second largest EU exporter to Lebanon was Italy, with mineral products, machines, jewellery, and chemical products accounting for the bulk of imports.

It was envisaged that the trade agreements would lead to greater integration within the region as a lowering of the cost of trade among the SMC countries would help to promote trade among them. However, there was no trend increase in the share of exports from Lebanon to the region.

Lebanon's exports to the EU seem to have become less diversified. For Lebanon, the decrease in diversification in recent years reflects the expansion in metal exports, namely scrap metal. Notwithstanding these conclusions, an assessment of the effect of the trade agreements would need to be considered in the context of these countries' overall relationship with the EU. Even though these countries may not have benefited directly from the agreements as had been envisaged, there could have been other non-economic benefits that are associated with them.

## Conclusion

The interventions of the EU in Lebanon have been described and critiqued for lacking democracy, especially in matters of security, migration, and governance. The EU pledged about €1 billion to Lebanon, out of which €200 million was specifically meant for security forces, demonstrating a lack of clear oversight and collaboration, and undermining democracy through civil society and parliament (Tholens, 2024). Increasingly, EU aid is directed toward levelling tensions among Lebanon's security apparatus. This policy prioritises short-term stability over governance reforms that could help democratisation in Lebanon in the long run (Tholens, 2024). Such a policy prioritises relative stability over democratic prospects in Lebanon, is punctual, short-term, and relatively dependent on the availability of funds. The EU's approach has been largely unchanged, favouring security-focused interventions that mitigate immediate tensions rather than implementing governance reforms that could drive long-term democratisation. This persistence in policy demonstrates not only a continuity in their actions but also a failure to learn from past outcomes. By continuing to direct funds toward security at the expense of strengthening democratic institutions, the EU seems unwilling or unable to shift its focus toward reforms that would empower civil society, promote political accountability, and foster true democratic change in Lebanon.

This democratic deficiency is also evident in how the EU approaches migration policies. Funds disbursed by the European Union with the intention of managing migration abuses have contributed to human rights violations such as the criminalisation and deportation of Syrian refugees from Lebanon. The EU's showed willingness to "look the other way" at such violations is in direct contradiction to their stated democratic values which emphasize human rights and the protection of at-risk groups (Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2024). In the same vein, the International Politics and Society Journal (2024) contends that EU money enhances the Lebanese security forces' capacity which would allow them to breach International Law. Not only it contradicts general international human rights norms, but also demonstrates a domineering attitude that shuns democratic values in exchange for greater control of borders.

A policy note of ReliefWeb (2024) states that a potential 'EU-Lebanon migration deal' could erode asylum protection and undermine the international protection system as a whole.' This deal, in essence, undermines democratic principles and humanitarian aid by treating refugees as problems to be contained. It indicates a shift from an aid first approach to a more malicious and border centric one.

Stassen (2023) contends that the EU's move from a normative paradigm to realism regarding Lebanon, especially with the Single Support Framework (SSF) and the Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP), has further diminished democratic values. Stassen notes that the EU's funding approaches are biased against small organisations, which would participate in and strengthen a more democratic civil society. These practices not only risk deepening the undemocratic approaches but also impede the development of a robust and adequately representative civil society, which is essential for any democratic governance.

Tholens & Ruffa (2023) go further and claim that while providing European security assistance, there is too much focus on post-colonial factors of power that aid the top bottom development of neocolonialism instead of promoting democratic relations. Unlike the EU model, U.S. model imposes is relatively more pragmatic and presents local partners a clear set of expectations such as measurable outcomes and performance benchmarks, in contrast to the EU model, which often takes a more flexible, long-term approach without clearly defined criteria for success. The EU equally maintains a form of democracy undermining patron-client relationship with the citizens of the recipient states.

To sum up, the EU approach appears to focus strongly on regionally relevant socio-economic issues but in reality promotes a form of development that is more authoritarian and security-centric as opposed to encouraging democracy. While the European Union speaks of democracy and human rights, it appears that its policies within Lebanon are more pragmatic and are focused on maintaining security and stability. This conflict of speech and action weakens the democratic governance in Lebanon.

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