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I. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

EUROPE AND MODELS OF GLOBAL ORDER[1]

***Richard SAKWA*[*]**

Abstract. *However, the collapse of the Soviet challenge and the victory of the Atlantic power system radicalised what came to be known as the 'liberal international order', which effectively claimed to be synonymous with order itself. This resulted in a two-fold return swing of the pendulum: rethinking forms of national and social solidarity; and the shift towards more pluralist (multipolar) forms of international politics.*

Keywords: *Europe, liberal internationalism, global order, nationalism, civil society, mercantilism.*

The thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall forces us to reflect on the path that Europe has taken in the past three decades and the mistakes and achievements that characterise this period. It also prompts us to look more broadly on how international politics has changed in these years, and where we are today. In both respects, it is clear that many of the hopes vested in the revolutions of 1989 have not been achieved, above all when it comes to international affairs. At the same time, the aspirations of 1989 merged with major changes in the character of Western democracies, as ideas of the social state eroded and new forms of individualism gained prominence. The promise of the 'social Europe' of the 1980s gave way to a project focused on competitiveness and regulation of newly-privatised sectors of society and the economy. While collectivist forms of social solidarity were delegitimized after 1989, today new visions of the social state and, dare I say it, socialism, are back on the agenda.

Visions of social change

Before turning to models of global order, let us look at some of the key domestic issues provoked by the great change launched thirty years ago. One of the fundamental problems is that much of the discourse in Eastern Europe focused on the 'rectifying' agenda outlined by Jürgen Habermas. He called the 1989 events a 'rectifying revolution' intended to compensate for a previous error and to turn the societies back on to the correct path of development. (Habermas, 1983: 4) This inevitably means that these countries had little new to offer to the European debate, but simply joined an already established discourse. That may have been true in the early post-communist years, but today the distinctive regional contribution to Europe as an idea and as a project is back on the agenda.

Every country is different, yet most national cultures in Central and Eastern Europe have a strong emphasis on national and social solidarity. In the communist years this took a specific form, but in many respects long predated the creation of Soviet-type systems. It is hardly surprising that with the liberation from oppressive political power the emphasis at first was on individualism and personal freedoms, with collectivism denigrated as retrograde

[1] This paper was presented as LECTIO MAGISTRALIS on the occasion of receiving the title of Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of Oradea, Romania (November 07 2019)

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and despotic. This was reinforced by the triumph of neo-liberal thinking in the Western part of the continent, with state activism delegitimated and the market elevated to some ideally perfect self-correcting mechanism of personal and social advancement. In light of the global financial crisis of 2008, labour force precarity, rising inequality and the stagnation of middle class incomes, this fundamental issue needs to be revisited to rethink the relationship between individualism and collectivism.

The debate can be located in the larger intellectual history of the post-war years. The defeat of fascism in 1945 and the onset of the Cold War shifted the focus to the contrast between the individual freedoms offered by the liberal order and the collectivist promise of social emancipation offered by revolutionary socialism. The collapse of the organised alternative in 1989 allowed one half of the discourse to become hegemonic, discrediting socialist alternatives as not only unable to deliver the promised emancipation but also as destructive of freedom. The post-communist order inherited the anti-collectivist ethos that had gathered pace from the 1970s in the West, and its only contribution was to radicalise opposition to what was now labelled utopian alternatives.

In opposition to the maximalist utopia promised by revolutionary socialism, which advocates of the totalitarian model insist ineluctably leads to the gulag, Samuel Moyn describes the human rights globalism that took shape from the 1970s as the 'last utopia'. (Moyn, 2017) Any trace of a programme of human self-fulfilment has gone, and instead the last utopia develops Isaiah Berlin's idea about 'negative freedom' to the limits, and asserts what should not be done by humans to each other. The negative space around each individual should not be transgressed. The social solidarity advanced by the welfare states in the advanced capitalist democracies, accompanied by redistributive mechanisms, universal social security and high degrees of equality, was replaced by human solidarity in which state power was tempered by the rights of individuals. This represented an epochal transformation of solidarity that in the end turned the European Union away from 1980 ideas of a 'social Europe' towards one focused on advancing competition by increasingly intrusive regulatory bodies.

This fits in with the dissident legacy of 1989. The anti-politics professed at the time stressed human and civil rights against the state, rather than the management of public goods by the state. The idea of civil society against the state became deeply entrenched, and reinforced the neo-liberal trend already present in Western European societies. The state became the enemy rather than the organiser of emancipation. This entailed programmes to limit the scope of state interventionism, that finally grew into the paleo-conservative project to 'deconstruct the administrative state' in its entirety, as Steve Bannon put it so eloquently in February 2017. This is a negative programme of state limitation, if not outright destruction. The emphasis shifted from traditional institutions of political representation (trade unions, parties, civic associations) to networks based on values and moral principles, rather than political programmes of the traditional sort. Rather than seeking to create the good society, the goal now became for the individual to find the good life. Timothy Snyder describes this as the shift from a universalist and future-oriented political legitimation (the politics of inevitability) to particularist and past-based version (the politics of eternity). (Snyder, 2018) The semantics of 'revolution' have once again reverted to its original cyclical meaning. The future has arched back over itself and is now sought in the past.

The Atlantic power system and the liberal international order

International politics today is often characterised as chaotic and disorderly, but such a view implies that we have moved away from a more ordered system in an earlier period. There is little evidence that this is the case. Instead, the main process appears to be the declining power and authority of the particular hegemonic system that took shape after 1945. The Atlantic power system was presaged long before, but in particular Woodrow Wilson's appeal in 1919 to create what became the League of Nations, accompanied by a special role for the old imperial powers as they moved to new forms of legitimation based on norms of self-determination and development. This gave rise to the mandate system in the interwar years and full-scale decolonisation after the war. In August 1941 the United Kingdom and the United Stated adopted the Atlantic Charter, which further reinforced the importance of norms in international affairs. In 1949 the Atlantic Charter became the foundation stone of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), which is not only a collective security alliance but also one founded on principles of human rights and democracy. In the 1950s this was complemented by the creation of what became the European Union (EU). This is the Atlantic power system (APS), which until recently was sponsored and guided by the US.

In one of those ironies that are typical of history, as the absolute economic pre-eminence of the APS began to decline, it was rebranded as the liberal international order (LIO), a term that until the early years of the twentieth century had barely been mentioned. (Ikenberry, 2001) (Ikenberry, 2011) After 1989 the APS entertained expansive ambitions and either had to 'go out of area or out of business', as the reigning parlance of the day had it in the 1990s, yet these global ambitions ultimately remained rather limited. However, when these ambitions were described in terms of the LIO, then its scope was truly universal. This immediately provoked charges of double standards and hypocrisy, since there was ultimately no way to transcend the fact that the LIO was a more ambitious version of the APS and rooted in large part in the same hegemonic structures of power.

As the Atlantic power system after 1989 reprofiled itself as the liberal international order, it became radicalised. At the economic level, globalisation combined free trade with the transformative power of new communications and transport technologies. The LIO really did appear to herald a new world without borders and in which the power of states to manage their own affairs eroded to the point at which some talked of their ultimate redundancy. Third way leaders like Tony Blair in the UK repeatedly argued that large swathes of policy were now beyond the reach of government. In politics, the promotion of democratisation and human rights was embedded in notions of the democratic peace theory. Security for the APS would be guaranteed if more states became democratic; but for that to happen, it was assumed not only that democracies do not go to war with each, but that they would inevitably align with the Atlantic powers. The third level is the normative one, in which Kantian ideas about 'perpetual peace' focused on regime type and the values of liberal democratic societies. By shifting the terms of discourse towards the liberal international order, the geopolitical realities and the power hierarchies embedded in the Atlantic system were occluded.

At the same time, this allowed the LIO to claim effectively to be with synonymous with order itself. This audacious affirmation could only be viable because of the semantic shift that had taken place. It would be absurd for the Atlantic power system to have global ordering ambitions, yet when couched in terms of an expansive liberal international order, they appeared legitimate. After all, the ideas and processes at the heart of the LIO had become hegemonic after 1945 and effectively unchallenged with the collapse of bipolarity and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. More than that, the LIO had undoubtedly delivered enormous public goods in this period, in terms of development and the defence of human rights and dignity. It also delivered repeated economic crises, growing inequality, the erosion of social security rights, and the growing precariousness of the terms and conditions of employment as well, ultimately, as a new Cold War. Social solidarity had given way to human solidarity, but in the end there was not much of the latter either. It was also coming under pressure from alternative models of world order.

The international system

This is why it is important to distinguish particular models of world order from the broader international system. This is something that Henry Kissinger failed to do in his masterful book on world order, and which is the common failing of world order studies. (Kissinger, 2014) Drawing on English School thinking, I describe the international system as a three-level construct.[2] (Sawka, 2017) At the top, there are the developing apparatus and processes of global governance (termed the secondary institutions of international society by the English School), with the United Nations at its apex and complemented by an increasingly ramified network of international law and normative expectations. The English School distinguishes between primary institutions of international society, comprising sovereignty, territoriality, balance of power, war, international law, diplomacy and nationalism, and describes how these European-generated elements were expanded to the rest of the world. (Bull & Watson, Oxford: 1984) The so-called secondary institutions include not only the United Nations but also other bodies that seek to generalise solidarist practices in a plural international system. (Buzan, 2014) They cover the institutions of international financial governance, derived initially from the Bretton Woods system comprising the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the system of global economic governance, notably the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Here also are the international legal and environmental covenants, as well as those covering the rules of war and international humanitarian practices. These secondary institutions are by definition universal, whereas the primary institutions generate practices of exclusion, with the western core imposing its own 'standards of civilisation' and acting as the gatekeeper, notably in the context of colonialism. (Gong, 1984)

Many of the secondary institutions are of Western origin, but their development has been governed from the outset less by expansion than by mutual constitution.[3] (Dunne & Reut-Smith, 2017) For example, the establishment of the UN drew on various Western traditions as well as Soviet, Chinese, Indian, Islamic and other ideas. As the secondary institutions strengthen and become more genuinely universal they threaten accustomed patterns of Western hegemony, but at the same time provide the sinews for order after the waning of this hegemony. English School thinking suggests that the international state system evolved out of institutions like the state, territoriality, the balance of power, diplomacy and sovereignty, which formed in Europe and then expanded through colonialism and then revolutionary nationalism across the world to become truly universal, whereas many of the institutions of international society were created by the Allies during the war and reflected Western values, and were at first relatively exclusive. Without challenging this genealogy, it should be noted that from the first a universalist dynamic was embedded not only in the primary institutions of international society, but also in the top-level secondary

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[2] For an earlier analysis of parts of this model, see Richard Sakwa, *Russia against the Rest: The Post-Cold War Crisis of World Order* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 38-68.

[3] This is explored by the various authors in Tim Dunne and Christian Reut-Smith (eds), *The Globalization of International Society* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017).

institutions, which have since become generalised as the institutions of 'global governance' and have become more delineated and gained in authority.

This is where we move to the second level. Beneath the solidarity of international governance institutions we have competing states whose relations in English School thinking are governed by the primary institutions of international society. In the original English School formulation, the international society of states devised in Europe expanded in successive waves to encompass the whole world. This really was an 'expansion', enlarging a system into which Russia, with its characteristic ambivalence, was soon incorporated. (Neumann, 2011) However, the original expansion model is based on a single level system, but with the development of the 'secondary institutions' and their associated sharing of sovereignty on functional issues (such as the environment), the single-planed model becomes inadequate.

The third level of the international system encompasses a broad range of civil society organisations as well as the media and other forms of societal intervention. Hard-line realists typically dismiss the role that international organisations play in international politics, and even more so sub-state movements and processes. However, in the era of neo-liberalism and globalisation these can have a substantive impact on global processes. The peace movement of the 1980s failed to prevent the deployment of cruise and Pershing missiles to Europe, but fears of re-awakening the mass anti-nuclear movement are part of the calculation of responses to the end of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) agreement in 2019. Above all, pressure for drastic decarbonisation in the face of the climate catastrophe is now part of the calculus of all rational governments. The upsurge populist movements and sentiments act as a warning to the complacency of entrenched elites. Civil society may well take its revenge on the widening inequalities of the neo-liberal era and reshape our thinking about international order.

Models of global order

It is in this context that four types of global order have shaped international politics in the post-1945 era. By global orders I mean 'software' systems that provide a consistent set of norms about the correct and most appropriate conduct of international affairs. A global order comprises the claim that a particular set of norms and institutions have universal validity. It is not to be confused with globalisation, which is a particular technological, communicative, economic and cultural process that cuts across the various models of world order, although populists and other critics tend to confuse the two. Neither is it to be confused with the globalism that Donald J. Trump contrasted with patriotism in his speech to the United Nations in September 2018.[4] Globalism as we shall see below comes in at least four forms, and some are no less 'patriotic' than the one that he favours. The models are not necessarily tied to a specific space but refer to a way of conducting international politics, although they do tend to have a regional focus. The four are ideal types, and the practice of international affairs typically draws from a range of world order repertoires that are not tied to a single model. States can choose elements from the different models, although the character of a regime and its place in international affairs will predispose it to apply one operating system relatively consistently to the exclusion of others.

[4] Alex Ward, 'Read Trump's Speech to the UN General Assembly: "We Reject the Ideology of Globalism and Accept the Doctrine of Patriotism"', 25 September 2018, https://www.vox.com/2018/9/25/17901082/ trump-un-2018-speech-full-text.

The Atlantic power system - liberal international order

The first is the US-led liberal international order, which was born in the early years of the twentieth century and then formulated by Woodrow Wilson in terms of a commitment to an Atlantic-based system of universal order. The liberal international order is based on an expansive dynamic of universal rules and economic interactions. This has been the most vigorous international order of the modern era, transforming much of the world in its image. The liberal international order combines military, economic and political (normative) sub-orders, each operating according to a specific dynamic but coalescing to create a polymorphic and energetic international order.[5]

Contrary to much analysis, this order evolves with the changing character of international politics in any particular era. Thus the post-war Atlantic power system up to the end of the Cold War in 1989 was shaped by the bipolar confrontation with the Soviet Union and its promotion of an alternative model of world order. The second phase between 1989 and 2014 was characterised by the apparently limitless opportunities opened up by unipolarity. It was in this period that the APS developed a new persona in the guise of the liberal international order. In the absence of a coherent alternative, the LIO became radicalised in at least five ways: the Hegelian, associated with the discourse of the ‘end of history’; the Kantian, with the extreme emphasis on human rights; the Hobbesian, with numerous ill-judged military interventions intended, among other things, to advance democracy in the world; the Hayekian, which represented the triumph of neo-liberal thinking and the disembedding of market from social relations; and the Marcusean cultural victory of social liberalism accompanied by the social fragmentation associated with identity politics. (Sakwa, 2018) Some of this radicalisation was the natural result of the absence of a viable competitor, allowing the inherent character of the liberal international order to be developed to its full extent; but some of it was hubristic, exposing a dark exclusivity and intolerance of other social orders and traditional life patterns. (Pabst, 2018)

In the third phase, the one in which we now find ourselves, the expansive liberal order met its limits both domestically (in the rise of national populism and a revived leftist internationalism) and in international affairs, in the emergence of coherent alternative models of world order. In part this reflects the broader shift of economic power from the West to the East, but also from the larger failure of the expanding US-led liberal international order to find ways to incorporate the periphery without the former outsiders fearing for the loss of their identity. In the Russian case resistance in the end took the form of a New Cold War, while in the case of China long-term civilisational contradictions have re-emerged.

Transformative (revolutionary) internationalism

The second type of globalism is the one represented until 1991 by the Soviet Union and its allies, which for a time in the 1950s included China. The Soviet Union from the beginning represented an unstable combination of socialist nationalism and revolutionary internationalism, but with the consolidation of Stalin’s rule the former predominated. With the disintegration of the Soviet bloc in 1991, the challenge of revolutionary internationalism largely disappeared, although there remain some echoes of the old model in the international system today. At the same time, new sources for the transformational renewal of the international system are emerging, notably the climate

[5] For analysis of the three discrete sub-elements of the liberal international order, see Malcolm Chalmers, *Which Rules? Why there is no Single ‘Rules-Based International System’*, London, Royal United Services Institute, Occasional Paper, April 2019, https://rusi.org/occasional-papers/Which-Rules-Why-There-Is-No-Single-Rules-Based-International-System.

emergency. The meaning of revolutionary transformation, of course, in this context has changed from the old Leninist idea of the forcible seizure of power towards the more Gramscian notion of the transformation of social relations, beginning above all in the lower level of our three-story edifice, the arena of civil society and cultural norms. The climate emergency demands new forms of social organisation and a thorough rethinking of growth-led models of economic development. Decarbonisation will change not only technological but also social relations. Emerging disruptive digital technologies and biotechnologies are already changing the way that people live and work, and we are only at the beginning of this new revolution. In the end, a new form of revolutionary internationalism may be the only answer to the survival of humanity on this planet.

More broadly, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), established in Bandung in 1955, has gained a new vitality to oppose the re-emergence of bloc politics and to give voice to countries overshadowed by the return to great power relations in international affairs. ‘Nonalignment 2.0’ has been advanced as the keystone of India’s foreign policy in the new era.[6] At the same time, rampant militarism and unchecked arms spending, accompanied by the breakdown in the strategic arms control regime inherited from the Cold War, is provoking the return of active peace movements. The long-term stagnation in middle class and worker incomes accompanied by the erosion of the physical and social infrastructure in the advanced capitalist democracies has prompted a new wave of leftist radicalism. The question of socialism is once again on the agenda. In short, this transformative model of globalism has deep roots in civil society and is forcing change in states and the institutions of global governance. It may well represent a revolution in international affairs as profound as any provoked by world wars and economic crises.

Mercantilist nationalism

The third type of globalism is gaining increasing traction today. This is the transactional and mercantilist approach adopted by Trump and the various national populist movements of our time. (Eatwell &Goodwin, 2018) For Trump the international sphere is simply the extension of the market into the larger domain, where a zero-sum logic predominates and in which there is a ruthless battle for market share. The strong become stronger, while the weak endure what they must. There is no room for multilateral agencies or international alliances, which in Trump’s view only constrains the US. Values are humbug, everything is transactional, and there is no need for democracy promotion. This is a stark model of Westphalian internationalism, harking back to an earlier era before 1914 when the first era of globalisation came into contradiction with statist Social-Darwinism. The national interests of sovereign states predominated, and in part the First World War represented a revolt against the erosion of state sovereignty by market relations. Today, this logic is reprised in the arguments of radical Brexiteers in the UK, and in the sovereigntist movements in continental Europe, notably in Marine Le Pen’s National Rally in France, Thierry Baudet’s Forum for Democracy in the Netherlands and Matteo Salvini’s Northern League (La Liga) in Italy.

Russia is presented as the defender of a more conservative and traditional representation of Europe, and thus a strange alignment of Moscow and neo-nativist

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[6] Ashley J. Tellis, Sadanand Dhume, Richard Fontaine and Teresita Scheffer, *Nonalignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the Twenty First Century*, Washington, DC, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 12 March 2012, https://carnegieendowment.org/2012/03/12/nonalignment-2.0-foreign-and-strategic-policy-for-india-in-twenty-first-century-event-3587.

European national-populists has been forged. Russia thus returned to its nineteenth century manifestation as the defender of conservative cultural values and legitimate government; anti-liberal and authoritarian. This representation is at most only partially accurate, but in conditions of New Cold War, Russia was certainly looking for friends wherever it could find them, especially if it could help undermine the unity required for the biannual renewal of European Union (EU) sanctions.

The revolt against globalisation took place in the very countries who had taken the lead in outsourcing jobs and services. The benefits of globalisation had been spectacularly badly distributed, and while lifting millions out of poverty in China, destroyed the industrial heartlands of the advanced capitalist democracies while allocating increased wealth to the rich. This is accompanied by a cultural revulsion against not only globalisation but also the apparently heedless cosmopolitanism with which it became associated. This is why the *policies* advanced by elites in the Anglo-Saxon world are so readily dismissed, and instead the marginalised masses increasingly look for *meaning*.[7]

The putative defection of the US from the liberal international order that it had done so much to create was at first welcomed by the Russian elite as a vindication of its conservative stance, but it soon became clear that Trump's mercantilist nationalism has no room for allies or even friends, and that it lacks the intellectual or political resources to challenge the US national security establishment. Because of the Russiagate collusion allegations Trump had a fraught relationship with some of the security agencies, but overall the Trumpian insurgency quickly made peace with what Michael Glennon calls the 'Trumanite state', the vast Cold War military and security apparatus. (Glennon, 2015) Russia was once again left out in the cold. However, it was not alone, and America's European allies faced the unprecedented situation in the post-war era of having to give substance to the idea of 'strategic autonomy'.[8] Not surprisingly, they talk of chaos in the international system but in fact the crisis is more localised. It reflects the loss of hegemony and strains in the liberal international order, and in particular in the Atlantic power system. A rogue America threatens to spread this chaos globally.

Conservative (sovereign) internationalism

The fourth type of globalism is the one now associated with Russia, China and their allies in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). This model of conservative internationalism emphasises sovereign decision-making by nation states, but it also understands the importance of internationalism. As in the two-level European Union, where the Commission and its agencies exercise elements of supranationalism while the member states retain large areas of inter-governmental autonomy in decision-making, so the international system in this sovereign internationalism model operates on the three levels of the international system presented earlier. For conservative internationalists it is the middle floor that is the most important (for Trumpians it is the only one that matters), but this does not preclude a strong normative commitment to the secondary institutions of

[7] This was supplied by the Trumpian slogan of 'Make America great again', and the Brexiteer slogan 'Take back control'; they are meaningless but, paradoxically, offer meaning.

[8] European Union, *Shared Vision: Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*, June 2016, pp. 4, 9, 19, 45, 46, http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en. For an examination, see Mark Leonard and Jeremy Shapiro (eds), *Strategic Sovereignty: How Europe Can Regain the Capacity to Act* (London, European Council on Foreign Relations, 2019), https://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ecfr_strategic_sovereignty.pdf.

international society on the top floor, including as we noted earlier the UN and the whole ramified network of international legal, economic, environmental and social governance.

Sovereign internationalists recognise the importance of global governance institutions to manage economic and social processes, and increasingly to deal with the climate crisis and digital innovations, notably cyber-attacks and information management. Their internationalism is more than instrumental, although defenders of this position are certainly not willing to cede extensive supranational powers to international society. We are still a long way from creating a world government, but there remains a constant dynamic (as in the EU) between the two levels. In other words, contrary to the common charge of liberal internationalists that this model represents a regression to non-cooperative Westphalian statism, in fact this model of world order espouses a non-hegemonic and more traditional form of internationalism. It rejects the democratic internationalism promoted by post-Cold War liberal internationalism, based on the expansionist logic of an order that essentially claims to have ready-made solutions to problems of peace, governance and development. Instead, the emphasis is on diplomacy between sovereign subjects, although this does not preclude commitment to the norms embedded in the institutions of global governance.

Conclusion

European history moves in roughly 30-year cycles, and 1989 joins the pantheon as one of those turning points that shape the continent. Like all other great inflexion points, from 1848 to 1919, 1945 and 1968, the significance of the events is debated long after. The absence of a settled meaning and the capacity for endless reinterpretation may well be the characteristic that makes these events so important. This certainly applies to 1989, the moment when the bipolar security order that took shape in the late 1940s gave way to what was considered to be a moment of European unification. It was also the moment when the long-term challenge of revolutionary socialism as an alternative modernity gave way to what was perceived at the time to be the victory of capitalist democracy, liberalism and the onset of the 'end of history'. Collectivist models of social emancipation gave way to the primacy of 'negative freedom' and the primacy of individual human rights. Sustained alternatives to capitalist democracy and the international order in which it was embedded were delegitimated.

However, the collapse of the Soviet challenge and the victory of the Atlantic power system radicalised what came to be known as the 'liberal international order', which effectively claimed to be synonymous with order itself. This resulted in a two-fold return swing of the pendulum: rethinking forms of national and social solidarity; and the shift towards more pluralist (multipolar) forms of international politics.

Analytical clarity is essential and honesty in facing the challenges of European development is vital. Without either we are in danger of being caught up in endless false bottoms and looking glass worlds in which instead of looking out we only see distorted reflections of ourselves.

In this context, some concluding points stand out. First, if indeed the liberal international order is a universalised version of the Atlantic power system, then the challenge is to ensure the relative decoupling of the two. The relative decline of the Atlantic power system need not threaten the fundamental postulates of the liberal international order, if the latter can be fully grounded in the autonomous operation of the secondary, as well as the primary, institutions of international society. This would help overcome charges of double standards and the problem of hegemony. This is the implicit challenge advanced by the conservative internationalists.

However, and this is the second point, the sovereign internationalists may well be right to defend the traditional practices of international affairs, above all the accustomed practices of international diplomacy and the niceties of respectful interstate relations, but ultimately they cannot be immune to the normative demands for human solidarity. Some of these states, notably China, have delivered impressive public goods within the framework of social solidarity, but the stick, as in the Soviet bloc before 1989, is pushed too far in one direction. A new balance needs to be found.

Third, while revolutionary internationalism of the traditional sort has waned, the transformative internationalism rooted in the third level of the international system, civil society, is gathering strength. Today the environmental catastrophe is threatening the very sustainability of life on earth. At the same time, the threat of the nuclear holocaust has not disappeared, exacerbated by the onset of a whole suite of new hypersonic and other destabilising weapon systems.

Fourth, the populist return to nationalism, mercantilism and Trumpian 'patriotism' reflects very real problems in post-Cold War domestic and international politics. The sort of globalism (by which he primarily means globalisation, although he also attacks the globalism embedded in the UN and other international governance institutions) condemned by Trump has been part of the hollowing out of belief in the efficacy of state intervention and in social solidarity as whole. Populism is the demotic idiom of the oppressed and excluded, but it is also used opportunistically by the privileged and the powerful.

Finally, in our European context the challenge is twofold: to find meaningful forms of human solidarity within the European Union, and thus once again to turn it into a genuine instrument of peace and emancipation; and to think about the ways that we can meaningfully engage in the biggest challenge of all: devising a post-Atlantic West in which Europe can finally combine societal and human solidarity from one end of the continent to the other.

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AN ENERGETIC TRANSATLANTIC ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract. *This paper aims at investigating the evolution of the transatlantic cooperation in the post-Cold War period, focusing on the energy and environment sectors, mainly from a European perspective. To this end, both qualitative and quantitative methodology instruments have been resorted to: secondary data analysis, discourse analysis, interpretation of statistical data. Comparing and contrasting between the EU and the US perspectives, as well as between the three European Commissions' approaches (Barroso, Juncker and von der Leyen), we have determined the EU's growing ambition to consolidate its specific policies, its interdependences and divergences with the US on matters of common concern.*

Keywords: *transatlantic cooperation, LNG, interconnection projects, GHG emissions, Paris Agreement*

Introduction

"U.S.–EU energy cooperation has a win-win history. Many challenges remain, and opportunities to build business ties abound. We should seize them", Douglas Hengel, a former U.S. foreign service officer and Senior Fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States remarked back in 2017 (Hengel, 2017).

The EU and the US account for the two greatest energy consumers at global level and they do share the responsibility to react with a joint approach to constantly growing challenges on energy security. Generally speaking, the European Union and the United States shared a common vision on the need to promote open, transparent, competitive, and sustainable global energy markets, and have been cooperating in the energy sector and on environmental issues for many years.

"Whatever the Trump Administration decides to do about the Paris Agreement, the climate agenda is not going away", Hengel argued. "Presidents Bush and Obama both found it useful to shape the international climate framework working with our European partners, despite our differences on approaches. Europe will want to keep the United States engaged on climate as much as possible, and it is not in the U.S. interest to be isolated on this issue. So despite our differences, there will be strong incentives for the United States and EU to work together on a structure that allows continued forward movement on global climate engagement" (Hengel, 2017).

In the wake of global challenges, we uphold the opinion that transatlantic cooperation on energy and environment is significantly needed nowadays, as it has been for decades. Bilateral agreements and high-level EU-US forums have tried to shape the two partners' strategic directions and impose concrete action plans to address the evolution of climate and sustainable energy trends.

With a visible desire to "lead by example", EU policies developed and perpetuated (or enhanced) over the years have managed to propel a strong European pillar

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within the transatlantic alliance, with notable aspirations for both its own member states' progress on sensitive topics like energy and environment and the multilateralism-driven wellbeing and economic prosperity of its global partners and the world at large, as we speak here of cross-border issues, bearing a visible impact on future generations.

1. Premises of Transatlantic Cooperation

1.1. Transatlantic energy cooperation

The EU-U.S. Declaration "Initiative to enhance transatlantic economic integration and growth" (Washington, June 20, 2005), adopted at the June 2005 EU-US Summit, signaled that "one of the greatest needs for developing countries today is to provide the basic energy services necessary to lift their citizens out of poverty". The Parts have acknowledged "the important potential that can result from further efforts" and pledged "to cooperate to promote sound energy policies, improve energy security and foster economic growth and development".

As stated in the document, targeted activities fell in the following areas of common action, among others: promoting energy efficient policies and the use of renewable energy sources to help developing countries reduce poverty by working closely with them in this regard, as well as deploying advanced, efficient, affordable energy technologies to help meet their energy needs; working together through the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum to foster the development and deployment of clean, efficient technologies, especially in key developing economies, as global reliance on fossil fuels, particularly coal, continued; promoting work on hydrogen technologies and the International Partnership for the Hydrogen Economy; cooperating to ensure the continued safe operation of existing nuclear generation and to exchange experience on nuclear safety measures and control; continuing research to advance all forms of renewable energy, and to promote the use of renewable and energy efficiency technology and policy measures (Council of the European Union, 2005: 11-12).

In 2006, the US and the European Community have agreed to renew their agreement on the energy efficiency labeling of office equipment products using EPA's ENERGY STAR, signed in 2001. It was one of the accomplishments of the first EU-US informal economic ministerial meeting (on the 30th of November 2005) following up on the commitments made during the June summit in Washington.

The renewed version of the Accord continued to cover office equipment including computers, monitors, printers, copiers, fax machines, and scanners, with other products possibly added in future years (Energy Star, 2006). It has expired on February 20, 2018.

Besides considering enhancing bilateral relations with actors like Russia, China, India, or developing new ties with Central Asian producers like Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and the African countries, the EU International Energy Policy Priorities as of 2007 mentioned "the scope of relations with partners like the US should continue to cover areas like promoting open and competitive global energy markets, energy efficiency, regulatory cooperation and research" (Commission of the European Communities, 2007: 23-24).

The 2008 EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan, delivered by the European Commission to The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of the Regions, included among its priorities comprehensive infrastructure projects, aimed at interconnecting EU member states, providing "transparent and reliable framework conditions within the EU and with respect to third countries so that business will be able to take up new investment opportunities" (Commission of the European Communities, 2008: 4).

Developing a Baltic Interconnection Plan covering gas, electricity and storage, as well as a southern gas corridor for the supply of gas from Caspian and Middle Eastern sources and North-South gas and electricity interconnections within Central and South-East Europe were considered on the Commission agenda for the coming years and will have been reiterated by President Barroso and his successors in Brussels as key elements in the EU energy policy. Engaging with third countries like Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, Iraq and Mashreq countries or Uzbekistan and Iran had been proposed in the 2008 Commission's Communication for the medium and longer term (Commission of the European Communities, 2008: 4-5).

Considerable efforts of all involved parties to finance such projects and a closer and collaboration with the private sector and financial institutions, notably the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, was deemed indispensable to promote the necessary financing for cross-border initiatives, especially if considering the EU response to the financial crisis (Commission of the European Communities, 2008: 6). We will explore further a concrete example of this kind, as we will discuss the BRUA pipeline project in the next subchapter.

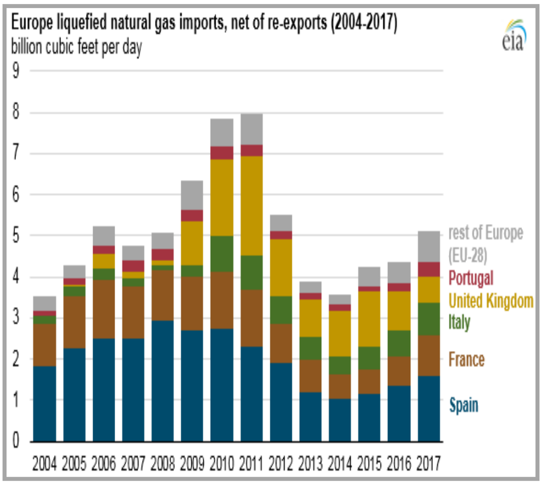

Fig.1.1.1.a Europe liquefied natural gas imports, in bcf/d (2004-2017)

Source: *U.S. Energy Information Administration*, imports based on International Group of Liquefied Natural Gas Importers (GIIGNL) Annual Reports, 2005–2018

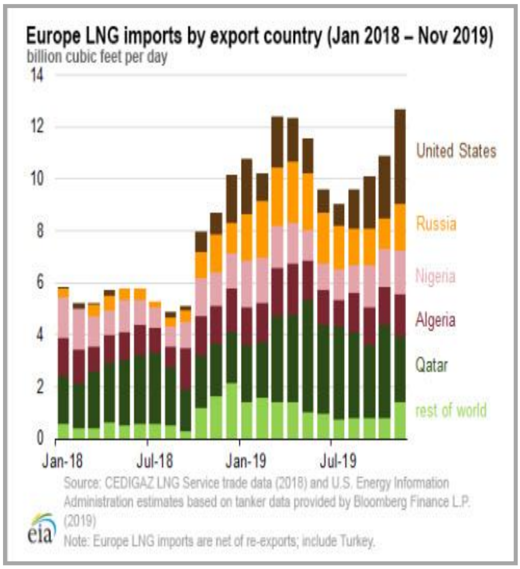

Fig.1.1.1.b. Europe LNG in bcf/d (Jan 2018-Nov 2019)

Source: CEDIGAZ LNG Service trade data (2018) and US Energy Information Administration, based on Bloomberg Finance LP (2019)

Future energy cooperation with the BRICS and African countries did not exclude the US from the EU's vision to deepen and promote a common view on global energy security, to improve the transparency of global energy markets and to address the issue of sustainability (Commission of the European Communities, 2008: 9). Though admitting that "Russia will remain the EU's main energy partner far into the future", particularly important for Member States overwhelmingly dependent on a single gas supplier at that time was also the perspective of LNG imports and adequate storage capacities (Commission of the European Communities, 2008: 8). "LNG terminals and ship-based regasification in the EU should be available all throughout the EU", to meet the member countries' specific needs, the Commission proposal noted (Commission of the European Communities, 2008: 5).

The figure below (Fig.1.1.a) depicts the evolution of LNG imports into the EU, from 2004 to 2017, with an overall ascendant tendency between 2004 and 2009. In 2011 they reached a peak of 8 bcf/d and they will have gone mostly up since then until the end of 2019 (some variations can be seen in Figure 4.1.1.b). The first US LNG delivery to Europe came no sooner than April 2016, when a single cargo entered Portugal (Cornot-Gandolphe, 2016: 24).

1.2. Environmental aspects

Concerning environmental policies, through the 2020 climate & energy package, the EU has committed in 2007 to the goal of the "20-20-20" initiative: reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 20%, increasing the share of renewables in the energy consumption to 20% compared to 8.5% today and improving energy efficiency by 20%, all by 2020. These goals were also headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (European Commission, 2020).

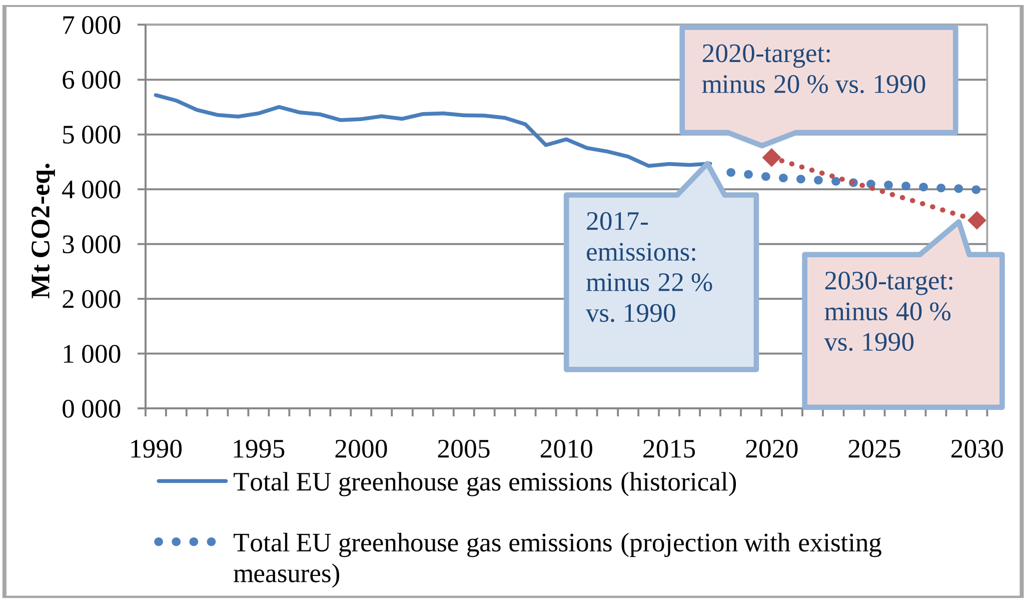

Fig..1.2.1. Total EU GHG emissions (historical emissions 1990-2017, projected emissions 2018-2030) (Mt CO2 eq.) and GHG reduction targets.

The EU has overachieved commitments made under the Kyoto Protocol (entered into force on 16 February 2005) to reduce emissions by 8% over the first commitment period 2008-2012, compared to the 1990 base-year level, as well as over the second commitment period 2013-2020. The EU has reached its 2020 target six years earlier than projected, managing to reduce emissions by around 22% between 1990 and 2017 (covering emissions from international aviation, but not emissions and removals from land use, land-use change and forestry), according to a European Commission assessment (European Commission, 2020). Targets for GHG emissions reduction will have risen during the next European Commissions' mandate, as displayed in the figure below.

The US has never ratified the Kyoto Protocol.

2. Transatlantic Cooperation Between 2009-2017

2.1. Energy cooperation

"The economic and financial crisis and the scientific evidence of climate change have shown us that we need to invest more in sustainability", José Manuel Barroso assessed in his 2009 Political Guidelines (Barroso, 2009: 21)**.** With a vision for a more sustainable Europe by 2020, the EU global leadership in fighting climate change was expressed in the Guidelines**,** as he defined the Europe he believes in Barroso pledged for "promoting energy security, while helping European technology and European companies to pioneer the development of a low carbon economy", which can provide huge opportunities.

Tackling climate change and putting sustainable energy policies in place was deemed as requiring European and global solidarity, as "our interdependence, inside Europe and worldwide, has never been clearer", he added. Moreover, "good interconnections will be crucial to power future growth", Barroso opinionated, an idea which remained constant in the Juncker Commission too.

The creation of the EU-US Energy Council in 2009 has helped enhancing transatlantic energy cooperation. The Council is now chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, the EU Vice-President for Energy Union, the EU Commissioner for Climate and Energy, the US Secretary of State and the US Secretary of Energy. A representative from the rotating EU Presidency also takes part in bilateral sessions European Commission, 2020). The Council was set to meet annually, alternately in the EU and US, and report to the EU-US Summit. The most recent official encounter took place in Brussels on 12 July 2018, as the first Energy Council during the Trump Administration.

Within the Council work was going to be structured in working groups of senior officials from both sides, focusing on the following specific areas: Energy Policies, Global Energy Security and Global Markets, and Energy Technologies Research Cooperation (European Commission, 2009).

As the founding document reads: "The EU-US Energy Council will provide a new framework for deepening the transatlantic dialogue on strategic energy issues such as security of supply or policies to move towards low carbon energy sources while strengthening the ongoing scientific collaboration on energy technologies" (European Commission, 2009).

Concrete actions that the partners have envisioned included: supporting stable, reliable and transparent energy markets, particularly in oil and gas and electricity supply, modernization of existing infrastructures and diversification of energy routes and sources, increasing energy efficiency, promoting security of transit and key energy infrastructures to improve energy security at regional and global level, deepening ongoing joint work on new and renewable technologies, deepening collaboration on nuclear energy, supporting sustainable development of biofuels and biomass, developing technologies for carbon capture and storage, strengthening cooperation on international energy policy while prospecting bilateral energy relations with third countries, encouraging energy efficiency and low-carbon energy use in developing countries and examining ways to promote partnering between US and European companies and investors in green and sustainable technologies European Commission, 2009).

As the table above depicts, between 2007 and 2012, EU hard coal imports from the US (% of extra EU-28 imports) have been on an ascendant curve, reaching their maximum level in 2012 (22, 9%). Since then, they have declined visibly until 2017, when values rose again up to almost 17 %. Russia has been the largest hard coal supplier to the EU for the last decade, while the United States had been the third main supplier of hard coal imports to the EU-28 in 2017.

	Hard coal (based on tonnes)										
	2007	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Russia	25.2	26.1	31.1	27.4	26.7	26.2	30.0	31.0	29.8	30.7	38.9
Colombia	11.8	11.9	16.4	18.7	21.3	22.2	19.4	19.8	22.2	21.1	16.9
United States	9.7	14.7	14.3	17.6	18.6	22.9	22.3	20.5	14.7	13.2	16.9
Australia	14.2	12.5	7.9	11.3	9.4	8.0	8.5	7.2	11.2	16.3	11.8
South Africa	20.2	16.8	15.6	9.8	8.3	6.6	6.1	7.9	7.4	5.3	4.9
Indonesia	7.8	7.2	6.7	5.5	5.1	4.6	3.3	3.7	4.0	3.4	3.4
Canada	3.3	2.8	1.5	2.1	2.3	1.8	2.0	2.9	1.7	2.3	2.5
Mozambique	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.2
Kazakhstan	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.7
Others	5.1	5.5	4.2	3.5	4.0	3.0	3.1	3.6	2.4	2.5	2.4
	Crude oil (based on tonnes)										
	2007	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Russia	33.7	31.8	33.6	34.7	34.7	33.6	33.7	30.4	29.0	31.9	30.3
Norway	15.0	15.0	15.1	13.7	12.6	11.3	11.8	13.1	12.1	12.5	11.4
Iraq	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.2	3.6	4.1	3.6	4.6	7.6	8.3	8.2
Kazakhstan	4.6	4.8	5.3	5.5	5.7	5.1	5.7	6.4	6.6	6.8	7.4
Saudi Arabia	7.2	6.8	5.7	5.9	8.0	8.8	8.7	8.9	7.9	7.8	6.6
Nigeria	2.7	4.0	4.5	4.1	6.1	8.2	8.1	9.1	8.4	5.7	6.4
Iran	6.2	5.3	4.7	5.7	5.8	1.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	2.9	5.2
Libya	9.7	9.9	8.9	10.1	2.8	8.1	5.6	3.3	2.4	2.3	5.2
Azerbaijan	3.0	3.2	4.0	4.4	4.9	3.9	4.8	4.4	5.2	4.5	4.5
Others	14.6	16.0	14.4	12.7	15.9	15.6	17.9	19.6	20.7	17.4	14.8
	Natural gas (based on terajoule (gross calorific value - GCV))										
	2007	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Russia	38.7	37.4	33.0	31.9	34.4	34.9	41.1	37.4	37.7	39.8	38.7
Norway	28.1	28.5	29.7	27.9	27.6	31.8	30.4	32.1	32.1	25.1	25.3
Algeria	15.3	14.7	14.1	13.9	13.1	13.3	12.6	12.0	10.8	12.5	10.6
Qatar	2.2	2.3	5.9	9.7	11.6	8.4	6.5	6.8	7.7	5.7	5.2
Nigeria	4.6	4.0	2.4	4.0	4.4	3.1	1.7	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.5
Libya	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.7	0.7	1.9	1.7	2.1	2.1	1.3	1.1
Peru	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.9
United States	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.4
Trinidad and Tobago	0.8	1.7	2.0	1.4	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.3
Others	7.3	8.5	9.9	8.3	6.9	5.0	4.7	6.7	6.6	12.9	15.0

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: nrg_ti_sff, nrg_ti_oil and nrg_ti_gas)

Fig.2.1.1. Main Origin of primary energy imports, EU-28, 2007-2017 (% of extra EU-28 imports)
Source: *Eurostat*, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/10165279/KS-DK-19-001-EN-N.pdf/76651a29-b817-eed4-f9f2-92bf692e1ed9

Imports of US natural gas were inexistent until 2016, when they amounted to 0.1 %, rising to 0.4 % in 2017 (Eurostat, 2019).

European Commission's President Jean-Claude Junker's Political Guidelines (15 July 2014) read: "Current geopolitical events (n.n. the Ukraine crisis) have forcefully reminded us that Europe relies too heavily on fuel and gas imports" (Juncker, 2014).

One of the former Juncker Commission's priorities (2014) underlined the need "to reform and reorganize Europe's energy policy in a new European Energy Union. We need to pool our resources, combine our infrastructures and unite our negotiating power vis-à-vis third countries. We need to diversify our energy sources, and reduce the energy dependency of several of our Member States. I want to keep our European energy market open to our neighbors. However, if the price for energy from the East becomes too expensive, either in commercial or in political terms, Europe should be able to switch very swiftly to other supply channels. We need to be able to reverse energy flows when necessary" (Juncker, 2014).

In his 2015 State of the Union speech, President Juncker reminded that the European Commission "has been working with the countries of Central and South East Europe in designing the networks that will guarantee gas supply in case of disruption of imports", while also upgrading "the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan to bring the electricity grid of that part of the EU closer to the European markets thereby strengthening the energy security of the Baltics" (Juncker, 2015).

Interconnectivity projects among EU member states continued to be promoted by the European Commission (e.g. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland/ Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Austria, and Romania), as pointed out in the 2016 State of the Union speech, with a focus on energy security aspects, to minimize interruptions to supply. As infrastructure is critical, the EU leaders have adopted 195 European projects of common interest that benefit from accelerated planning and simplified regulation, and are eligible for financial support (Juncker, 2016).

To give an example, the strategic aim of diversifying gas supply sources and routes as an alternative to the Russian production had been and is currently addressed by the comprehensive infrastructure project called ROHUAT/BRUA, denominated after the initiating European countries: Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria. BRUA was launched as a concept in the second half of 2013, when the former NABUCCO was deselected as the route preferred for the Caspian gas transmission to the Central European markets, and it accounts for a strong example of Romania and the EU developing its own internal potential in the field of energy.

The BRUA project aims at developing the gas transmission system capacities between the interconnections of the Romanian gas transmission system and the similar ones in Bulgaria and Hungary, consisting in the construction of a new transmission pipeline to connect the Technological Node at Podișor to the Horia gas metering station (GMS).

Ensuring adequate gas transmission capacities at the cross-border interconnection points between Romania and Bulgaria and between Romania and Hungary bears the potential to increase interconnectivity at European level, with the Black Sea gas resources reaching broader Central-European markets.

BRUA was included on the updated list of Projects of Common Interest published in November 2017 as an Annex to EU Regulation 347/2013 and on the list of priorities of the CESEC (Central East Europe Gas Connectivity).

The two implementation phases envisage: the development of the transmission capacity in Romania from Podișor to Recaș, including a new pipeline, metering station and three new compressor stations in Podișor, Bibești and Jupa – 6.24.1-2 in the Third PCI List /2017-BRUA Phase 1 and the expansion of the transmission capacity in Romania from Recas to Horia towards Hungary up to 4.4 bcm/a and expansion of the compressor stations in Podisor, Bibești and Jupa – 6.24.4-4 in List 3 PCI/2017- BRUA Phase 2. The completion of Phase 2 (a commercial one) depends on the procedure for capacity booking at Csanadpalota IP and on the timeline of this procedure.

On top of that, this second phase could enable extracting gas from the Black Sea and transporting it on the Romanian and other European markets, provided the concessionaires of the specific offshore perimeters (Exxon Mobile-US and OMV Petrom-Austria) decide to make this investment and initiate the drilling procedure (incentivized by a friendly Romanian legislation in this field). In order to facilitate this procedure, the Romanian gas transmission operator, Transgaz, has set up the goal of constructing a 308.3

km Tuzla-Podişor telescopic gas transmission pipeline to connect the gas resources available at the Black Sea shore and the BRUA corridor, thus enabling gas transmission to Bulgaria and Hungary through the existing interconnections, Giurgiu – Ruse (with Bulgaria) and Nădlac – Szeged (with Hungary). Commissioning (start-up) of the Tuzla-Podişor pipeline is due 2022.

Fig.2.1.2. The interconnection points of the Romanian gas transmission system with the similar Bulgarian and Hungarian systems
Source: *Transgaz*, https://www.transgaz.ro/sites/default/files/Art.2%20engleza_11.pdf

Besides the company's own financial resources invested in the project, the EU has supported BRUA with a grant of around € 180 million (40% out of the total eligible costs amounting to € 478.6 million) for the construction of the pipeline, through Connecting Europe Facility. For the design of the three compressor stations, a Financing Contract was signed with Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) for a grant in the amount of 1.519.342 EUR (50% of the total estimated FEED costs for the compressor stations). Additionally, loans from European financial institutions (EBRD and EIB) have been contracted. (Transgaz, 2020). BRUA Phase 1 was due to be finalized by October 1, 2020.

Fig.2.1.3. Map of the key development project of the Bulgaria-Romania-Hungary-Austria Corridor – Phase 1
Source: *Transgaz*, https://www.transgaz.ro/sites/default/files/Art.2%20engleza_11.pdf

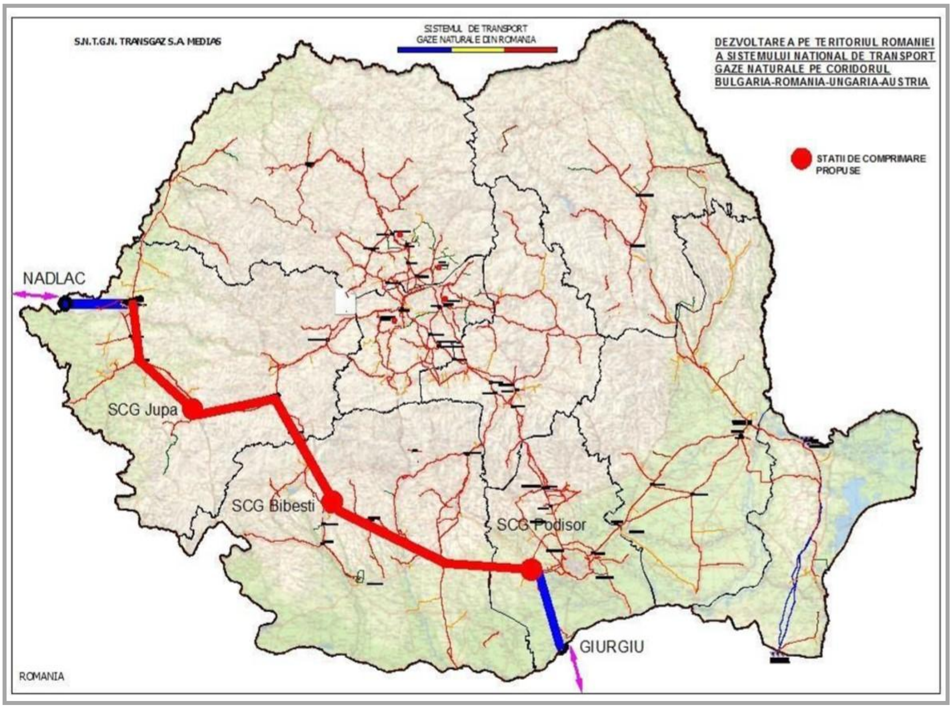

Fig. 2.1.4. Map of the main development project related to the Corridor Bulgaria-Hungary-Austria – Phase 2
Source: *Transgaz*, https://www.transgaz.ro/sites/default/files/Art.2%20engleza_11.pdf

2.2. Environmental aspects

After meeting US President Barack Obama in 2009, while addressing to both houses of the US Congress, German Chancellor Angela Merkel has made clear that an urgent, multilateral climate agreement in the upcoming UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen (2009) must keep global warming below 2°C. She was the first German chancellor to address Congress was Konrad Adenauer in 1957. Though endorsed by over 140 UNFCCC Parties, The Copenhagen Accord was not adopted as a UN decision. Formal acknowledgment by the UN came one year later, in Cancún. The Durban Conference (2011) rendered the Cancún Agreements operational and built on them (European Commission).

Chancellor Merkel underlined that "we have no time to lose. (…) It is true that there can be no agreement without China and India accepting obligations, but I am convinced that if we in Europe and America show that we are ready to accept binding obligations, we will also be able to persuade China and India to join in" (Euractiv, 2009).

In Barroso's view, EU' strength to lead on climate change was revealed not just in "agreeing to binding targets but also in approach the climate change negotiations in Copenhagen (2009) with a clear vision of how the global community can address the problem it faces, and a clear commitment to climate finance for developing countries" (Barroso, 2009).

Global efforts reached their peak with the ratification by almost 190 Parties of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. It is the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate change agreement, adopted at the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December

2015. The EU has formally ratified the agreement on 5 October 2016, and it has entered into force on 4 November 2016 (European Commission).

Junker Commission's priorities (2014) had also made reference to a more ambitious "climate change policy", as part of the consequences of fostering what he called "the Energy Union": "And we need to strengthen the share of renewable energies on our continent. This is not only a matter of a responsible climate change policy. It is, at the same time, an industrial policy imperative if we still want to have affordable energy at our disposal in the medium term. I therefore want Europe's Energy Union to become the world number one in renewable energies" (Juncker, 2014).

2015 and 2016 State of the Union speeches have both reiterated the EU's aim of reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030. Referring to the Paris Agreement, President Juncker denominated it the "last chance to hand over to future generations a more stable world, a healthier planet, fairer societies and more prosperous economies" (Juncker, 2016).

Addressing in the Rose Garden on October 5, 2016, former US President Barack Obama praised the historic day of signing the Paris Agreement "in the fight to protect our planet for future generations". He recalled the beginnijng of talks back in 2009 and the US "leadership by example": "In 2009, we salvaged a chaotic climate summit in Copenhagen, establishing the principle that all nations have a role to play in combating climate change. (…)We continued to lead by example with our historic joint announcement with China two years ago, where we put forward even more ambitious climate targets. And that achievement encouraged dozens of other countries to set more ambitious climate targets of their own. And that, in turn, paved the way for our success in Paris -- the idea that no nation, not even one as powerful as ours, can solve this challenge alone. All of us have to solve it together" (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2016).

3. Transatlantic cooperation after 2017

3.1. Energy cooperation

Supportive of the transatlantic strategic cooperation with respect to energy, in order to diversify its energy import sources and render its energy supply more secure, the European Union would have imported more liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the US, the Joint U.S.-EU Statement (July 2018) reads (European Commission, 2018). American LNG exports to the EU rose significantly between 2016 and 2019. A steep increase could have been observed especially after the visit that the Head of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, paid to Washington to meet President Donald Trump in July 2018.

Despite its continuous goal to reduce EU's reliance on Russian energy since the 2014 crisis in Ukraine, Europeans' pledge to buy more American gas-as long as they sell it at a competitive price- came as a means to ease frictions in the midst of the well-known trade wars between the blocs and to avoid the imposition of further tariff barriers.

US Energy Secretary Rick Perry, attending an energy summit in Brussels, said in 2019 that the agreement to increase US natural gas exports would bring "tremendous mutual benefit" to both sides. He added that price should not be the only aspect taken into account when purchasing gas. "You get what you pay for ... you might buy cheaper somewhere else, but it may not be reliable," he said while answering to a question about the natural gas imported from Russia (Kottasová, 2019).

The EU imports 77% of its natural gas. Less than 1% came from the US, as of 2019.

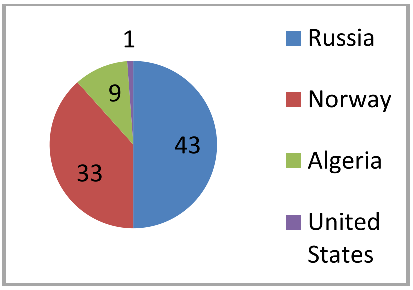

Fig.3.1.1. EUROPE'S GAS IMPORTS (2019)
Source: *CNN Business, https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/02/business/natural-gas-us-eu/index.html*

March 2019 has recorded the highest volume ever of EU-U.S. trade in LNG (more than 1.4 billion cubic meters estimated at almost €0.3 billion). By 19th of November the imports reached almost 2.6 billion cubic meters and their value was estimated at €0.4 billion. The high-level Business to Business energy Forum on 2 May 2019 was a clear signal of the strengthened cooperation between the U.S. and the EU in this field (European Commission, 2019).

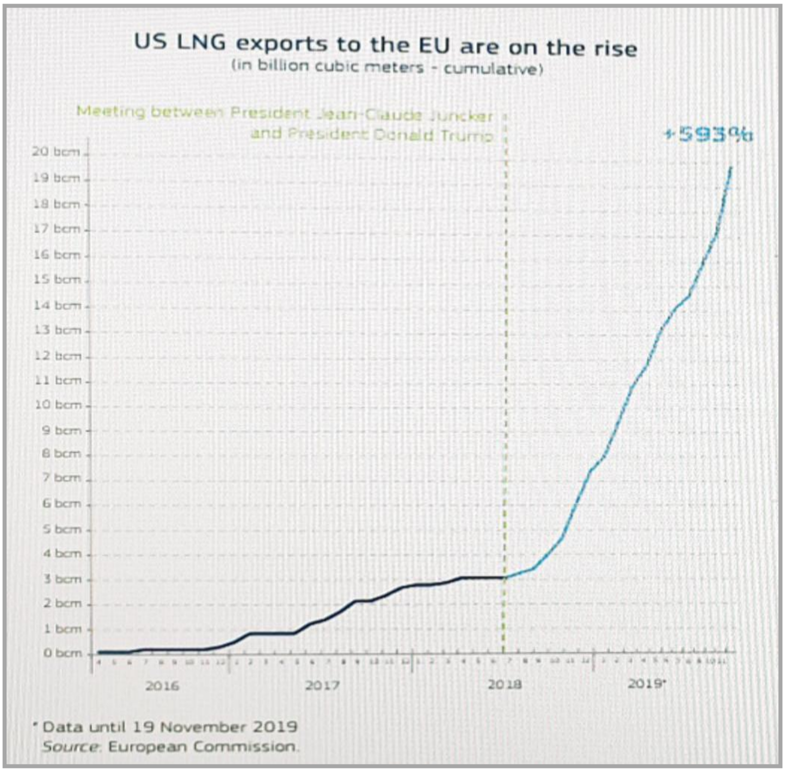

Fig.3.1.2. US LNG exports to the EU (in bcm)
Source: *European Commission*, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/eu-us_lng_trade_folder.pdf

Since April 2016, a total of 19.4 billion cubic meters (EUR 3.4 billion) of U.S. LNG has been imported in the EU. The European Commission assessment underlined in 2019 that transatlantic LNG trade could increase even further over the next four years, as more than 8 billion cubic meters per year were contracted by US and European companies since 2018. Moreover, strengthening EU-US cooperation on energy matters was understood as potentially delivering a signal for the entire European continent and the world at large concerning the advantages of U.S. LNG. According to the European Commission, this can play a significant role in the EU energy supply chain, while contributing to enhanced diversification and the EU energy security.

Further transatlantic cooperation will be aimed at: removing unnecessary U.S. LNG licensing barriers to accelerate U.S. exports, working on reciprocal solutions to provide equivalence for the purposes of access to markets, developing joint efforts to complete key missing infrastructures and investments in Europe to improve access to LNG, and establishing regular consultations and promotion activities with market operators to make U.S. the major gas supplier to Europe (European Commission, 2019). On a different note, boosting gas exports could significantly affect greenhouse gas emissions outside of the US, an analysis conducted by Climate Action Tracker notes (Climate Action Tracker, 2019).

3.2. Environmental aspects

The Political Guidelines of the von der Leyen Commission (2019-2024) did not mention precisely a coherent energy policy of the EU. Instead, the new approach focuses more on addressing climate-related issues, by introducing the ambitious European Green Deal, a European initiative to become the first climate-neutral continent.

The Paris Agreement goals and the 2030 targets are to be met, while extending the EU potential even further. For instance, the goal of 40% emissions reduction by 2030 could be overpassed by more successful results (50-55% by 2030 and even zero emissions by 2050). Proposals also included the first European Climate Law to enshrine the 2050 climate neutrality target into law. In order to ensure that EU companies compete in a fair manner, a Carbon Border Tax will be implemented to avoid carbon leakage, in full compliance with the multilateral system of the WTO rules. A review of the Energy Taxation Directive was also on the new Commission’s agenda.

To ensure a just transition for all (European citizens and regions), the EC has proposed establishing a Just Transition Fund. A European Climate Pact – bringing together regions, local communities, civil society, industry and academia- could design and commit to a set of pledges to stimulate new behavioral patterns, from the individual to the largest multinational.

Since public finances alone will not suffice to achieve the ambitious goals, tapping into private investment will be resorted to as well - as stated in the Guidelines -, with green and sustainable financing to take center stage in the EU investment chain and financial system. A Sustainable Europe Investment Plan will support €1 trillion of investment in the next decade all over the EU (von der Leyen, 2019: 5-6).

As part of the European Green Deal, the European Commission pledged to come up with a Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. People’s and planet’s health are tightly interconnected.

The farmers’ efforts to provide Europeans with nutritious, affordable and safe food will be supported with a new “Farm to Fork Strategy” on sustainable food along the whole value chain, the Guidelines read. Investing in the future development and preservation of the rural areas (which are home to more than 50% of the EU citizens) is a desired end of the Commission’s plan for the period 2019-2014 (von der Leyen, 2019: 7).

The idea of a European Green Deal also came as a consequence of the US’ withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. On November 4, 2019, the US formally notified the international community about their withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement, “because of the unfair economic burden imposed on American workers, businesses, and taxpayers by U.S. pledges made under the Agreement” (Pompeo, 2019). The announcement is the first step of a one-year-long process formalizing the US decision by November 2020, thus making them the only country outside the accord.

In this strained context, the von der Leyen Commission took the opportunity to pledge for an ambitious aim to “lead international negotiations to increase the level of ambition of other major emitters by 2021” (von der Leyen, 2019: 6). Moreover, concerns in the EU have made leaders consider more seriously the already existing EU-China cooperation on climate matters. While in Shanghai to chair the opening ceremony of the international exhibition of Shanghai imports, French President Emmanuel Macron said that “the cooperation between China and the European Union in this respect is decisive”. (Tamma, Oroschakoff, 2019).

Bas Eickhout, a Greens MEP, stated in 2019: “the fact that the U.S. has abandoned the global climate stage makes it even more important that the EU steps up its game and leads the way at international climate negotiations. The new Climate Commissioner, Frans Timmermans, should start by proposing higher climate targets of reducing CO2 emissions by at least 65 percent by 2030”, he added (Johnson, 2019).

Besides this striking political decision, the Trump Administration has put forward over 50 rollbacks targeting climate policy. The table below presents a selection of them - completed or in process - as well as the estimated effects on the environment, some of them potentially contributing to an increase in GHG emissions with about 3% by 2030.

Policy	Status	Trump Administration action	Estimated emissions impact if Trump Administration action is implemented (as compared to current policy scenario)
Clean Power Plan (CPP)	Rollback completed	Replacement in July, 2019 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2019a)	No effect. Even without the policy the cost reduction of gas and renewables in the power sector lead to overachievement of the 32% emissions reduction goal in the sector compared to 2005 levels, that was envisaged by the CPP (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2019)
Energy Conservation Standards for General Service Lamps (GSL)	Rollback completed	Will not enforce (U.S. Department of Energy, 2019)	Cumulative + 100 $MtCO_2e$ through 2020-2028, no effect in 2030, policy rollback only postpones the development (CAT calculations)
Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP) Programme	Rollback completed	Will not enforce (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2018a)	+ 78–101 $MtCO_2e$/yr in 2030 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2015)
CAFE standards for light duty vehicles	In-process	Proposal to freeze standards at 2020 levels (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency et al., 2018)	+22–76 $MtCO_2e$/yr in 2030 (Climate Action Tracker, 2017b)
Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New, Reconstructed, and Modified Sources	In-process	Proposal to modify standards (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2018b)	+9.2 $MtCO_2e$/yr in 2030 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2016)

Fig.3.2.1. Selection of policy rollbacks since the start of Trump’s Administration
Source: *Climate Action Tracker*, https://climateactiontracker.org/press/effect-of-the-us-withdrawal-from-the-paris-agreement/

As an observation, there were two opposite effects which cancelled each other out. Increased emissions generated by the aforementioned rollbacks have been largely compensated by a lower emissions projection in the electricity generation sector, due to a changing power generation mix, with increased use of gas and cheaper renewables, which is continuing to displace coal, the U.S. Energy Information Administration notes in the Annual Energy Outlook 2020 (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2020). The trend was the same in the 2019, as presented in the annual report (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2019).

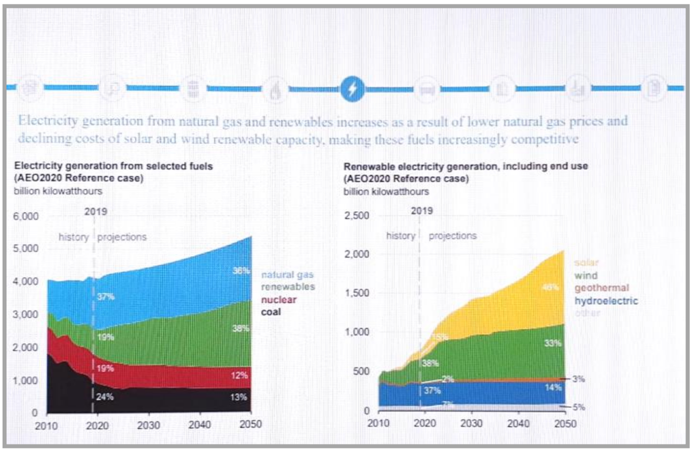

Fig.3.2.2. Electricity generation from selected fuels and renewable (US)
Source: *U.S. Energy Information Administration*,
https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/pdf/AEO2020%20Full%20Report.pdf

The press statement on the U.S.'s withdrawal from the Paris Agreement (November 4, 2019) delivered a reassuring closing remark to their "friends" in the international community, on matters of multilateral engagement in environmental issues: "In international climate discussions, we will continue to offer a realistic and pragmatic model – backed by a record of real world results – showing innovation and open markets lead to greater prosperity, fewer emissions, and more secure sources of energy. We will continue to work with our global partners to enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change and prepare for and respond to natural disasters. Just as we have in the past, the United States will continue to research, innovate, and grow our economy while reducing emissions and extending a helping hand to our friends and partners around the globe" (Pompeo, 2019).

Conclusions

As concluding remarks, over the years, the EU-US cooperation in the field of energy has been growingly active. International institutional frameworks where the two had been involved and transatlantic bilateral forums have laid the foundation for concrete steps to ensure security of supply and to promote sustainable and competitive global energy markets. Trends in American LNG imports into the EU have been popular beginning with 2016.

The US has also contributed to the effective construction of pipelines interconnecting EU countries, such as the BRUA pipeline. From a geopolitical and geo-economic perspective, this project attracting gas from the Southern Corridor (or the Black Sea) stands as a competitor to North Stream 2, the completion of which remains a Russian Gazprom's "clear European priority" (Theisen, Szabo, 2019).

When it comes to environmental policies, history has registered slightly different tendencies on the two sides of the Atlantic, especially under the Trump Administration. Considering that "the EU's emissions account for only about 9 percent of global emissions and, therefore Europe, by itself, can only make a relatively small contribution to putting the planet on a sustainable path toward climate neutrality", GMFUS Senior Fellow Douglas Hengel argued that "the European Green Deal brings both opportunities and challenges for the broader U.S.-EU cooperation", as the EU advanced two main proposals for addressing carbon-leakage, that could be potentially problematic for transatlantic relations (Hengel, 2020).

Firstly, the EU is willing to negotiate comprehensive trade agreements only with Parties to the Paris Agreement. Trade policy in particular was highlighted by the European Commission to support the EU's "ecological transition" (Hengel, 2020). Provided "international partners do not share the same ambition (on climate) as the EU, there is a risk of carbon leakage, either because production is transferred from the EU to other countries with lower ambition for emission reduction, or because EU products are replaced by more carbon-intensive imports. If this risk materializes, there will be no reduction in global emissions, and this will frustrate the efforts of the EU and its industries to meet the global climate objectives of the Paris Agreement" (European Commission, 2019).

Secondly, the European Commission initiative to develop a "carbon border adjustment" (CBA) mechanism meant to reduce the risk of carbon leakage was feared by Americans not to take the form of another protectionist tariff, adding "a carbon price to products imported into the EU to level the playing field between domestic producers facing costly climate measures and foreign producers facing less stringent requirements" (Hengel, 2020).

The European Commission has targeted the CBA measure at several sectors, among which steel, cement, and chemicals are potentially considered, though not already defined as such (Hengel, 2020). A measure like this would definitely be received with strong opposition in the US and it will support further the previous trade rows that have affected transatlantic economic engagement lately.

In the best-case scenario, the launch of the European Green Deal should be appealed to by the EU and the US in order "to enhance their already strong cooperation on the technologies essential to decarbonization", Hengel adds (Hengel, 2020). This could work as a win-win approach, since energy efficiency, hydrogen, carbon capture, battery storage, alternative transportation fuels, electric-grid resilience, and cyber security are some of the areas where the two partners have already developed a cooperation tradition. Like in a spiral, joints efforts on these matters would help bolstering transatlantic progress in the clean-energy competition with China, his argument goes.

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THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN BIHOR COUNTY'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Abstract. *In the complex international system, made up of modern traditional states, it is necessary that the existing resources of the regions are very well managed to increase the citizens standard of living, which is supported by the European Union through public policies. In order to have all the necessary information, to understand the international, national, regional context, to fit their strategies and to receive support, public authorities (national, regional, county, local) have at their disposal legislative and financial measures, opportunities for national and international cooperation. The next step is to corelate them and implement them so that their results and objectives are felt, known, adapted and adopted for improvement in all areas and for all types of organisations. In this respect, the proposed solution, for the case study of Bihor County is the 2021-2027 Development Strategy for International Cooperation elaboration and design of the Guide for international cooperation development, which will be a practical one, presenting operational methodologies and procedures.*

The content of the guide will focus on: deepening and updating knowledge on the legal and institutional framework for regional, inter-regional, cross-border development, international partnerships; developing skills to harness European experience in the field of international relations development; planning and analysis of cooperation and partnerships; implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities in this area. The practical utility of the Guide for the Development of International Cooperation will be that it is a mechanism for initiating, maintaining and developing international cooperation.

Keywords: *European Union, Romania, Bihor, European Instruments, regional development, cross-border cooperation, international cooperation,* development strategy

Introduction

The development of a strategy for the development of a regional administrative unit should also take into account, beyond local-regional and national components, an important component of international development. More since this regional administrative unit is in the border area as is the case with Bihor County. From this latter perspective, the component of cross-border cooperation gives a special note to international cooperation, multiplying it and giving it a much more direct dimension (naturally also by the physical-geographical proximity of the partners involved in the cooperation).

Our work is intended to be an analysis targeted on two main levels: regional development and international cooperation. This theoretical and conceptual analysis is carried out by creating a case study on Bihor County. Thus, at the centre of our debates we place the county's development strategy for the period 2021-2027, with references that

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have an evaluation role for the previous period of 7 years. Our interest is to follow and explicit the role of international cooperation in the process of regional development, at the county level, but also in a cross-border context (given the geographical positioning in the proximity of the border).

At the level of Bihor County, with a view to a unified and coherent development, the objectives of which are set in consultation with the public and administrative-territorial units, the Sustainable Development Strategy of Bihor County for the period 2014-2020 is still in implementation. It is imperative at present to draw up the strategy for the next budgetary programming period of the European Union. For the implementation of this document it is necessary to ensure an internal management and budgetary programming of the institution of the Bihor County Council, together with the subordinate units, in the medium term. In order to achieve the objectives, set and to implement the necessary activities, it is also imperative that a well-trained staff, with the necessary knowledge and experiences, and with skills and capacities that are constantly being developed.

In the Sustainable Development Strategy of Bihor County 2014-2020 was defined as a strategic objective: development of public services and administrative capacity. This can be achieved both by increasing the quality of services provided by local and county public institutions, as well as by promoting collaboration between the public and private environment. In the same way, in order to address cross-cutting issues, the County Council can assume the role of facilitator for the creation of partnerships between institutions and structures that address such challenges in an integrated and efficient way.

The next step of effective strategic management is the ability to implement the strategy and meet the strategic objectives set. The Strategic Institutional Plan (SIP) will be a management and internal budgetary programming document of the Bihor County Council, developed in accordance with the Sustainable Development Strategy of Bihor County, covering the period 2021-2027.

Methodologically, we aim to build the entire architecture of this work based on the stated *aim* of identifying the role and contribution of international cooperation in the development of a region. In this synthetic and analytical mechanism this contribution is intended to be viewed and contextualised within a coherent regional development strategy (in this study we naturally refer to the county administrative-territorial unit of Bihor as a case study).

The assumed *objectives* are: 1. analysis the place held by international cooperation in the process of building a regional development strategy; 2. identifying the role played by cross-border cooperation in stimulating international cooperation and hence regional development; 3. proposing the main pillars for a guide for the development of international relations/cooperation. This guide is intended to be a tool for enhancing theoretical and practical skills, on regional, inter-regional, transnational, cross-border local development, and for stimulating partnerships in the field of international cooperation.

In our analysis we start from the following *assumptions*: 1. the regional development strategy cannot be done without a component that also contains an international cooperation strategy; 2. geographical positioning in the border area stimulates but also requires the multiplication of international cooperation through cross-border cooperation; 3. international cooperation cannot be built and implemented without a guide to international cooperation; 4. Till now, Bihor County does not have such a guide for international cooperation, which explains the lack of sustainable international cooperation with a direct effect on insufficient sustainable regional development mechanisms.

1. Regional development of Bihor County. European, national and regional context

The debate on regional development as a concept, but also as a direction of public policy, is a very complex one. In the equation of our analysis, its understanding goes from the European perspective to the national one, so that in the end we can draw some directions of regional development policy at the level of Bihor County.

The concept of regional development

The conceptual delimitation of our debate must be made through a broad analysis made not only on the concept of regional development, but it must of course refer to the concept of region, but also to that of regional policy. This triad is in a very close regional connection (Marcela Cristina Hurjui, 2015). *The regional development* policy promoted by the EU focuses on reducing development disparities between territorial units. The territorial area subject to the implementation of this policy is *the region*. The latter can be defined as ”an area of a territory with a set of distinct and consistent own characteristics (these can be physical or human), which gives it a certain significant unity and distinguishes it from other neighbouring areas” (Apud Verga, 2017). In the European context, regions are therefore the subject of regional development policies. *Regional development* is a concept through which "the aim is to boost and diversify economic activities, stimulate investment in the private sector, contribute to reducing unemployment and not least an improvement in living standards" (Cîrnu, 2010: 75). This development must meet present and future needs. It “responds to the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Apud Verga, 2017).

Without being prisoners of the concept of development, EU Cohesion Policy allows us to introduce the concepts of *cohesion and regional competitiveness* into the sphere of conceptual debate. Regional competitiveness is closely related to regional territorial development, and the latter is not the result of economic growth, but is one of the causes of growth (Cojanu et. Al., 2009: 6). This competitiveness must not be understood strictly in the economic sense only when the analysis refers to regional development. It has a social dimension, a cultural-educational one, but also integrated services, including public health, environmental protection and habitat. All this must be seen in a unitary set at regional level in order to value human potential and regional resources.

The development and implementation of regional development policies is based on several principles such as: decentralization of decision-making mechanisms (in this context regional actors gain additional decision-making power); partnership at all levels between all actors involved in the field of regional development; planning the entire process of development and use of regional resources; co-financing - the financial contribution of the various actors involved in the implementation of regional development programs and projects (Cîrnu, 2010: 76).

In relation to the EU strategy on sustainable regional development, the *main objectives of regional development policy* have also been defined (Pendiuc, 2014: 44) as follows:

- Reducing existing regional imbalances, with an emphasis on stimulating balanced development and revitalizing disadvantaged areas (with delayed development) and preventing the creation of new imbalances;
- Preparing the institutional framework to meet the criteria for integration into EU structures and access to the Structural and Cohesion Funds;

- Integration of sectoral policies at regional level and stimulation of inter-regional cooperation (intern and international) for sustainable economic and social development.

Regional development depends on the consistency of the existence of several factors that act positively at the socio-economic level. Daniela Antonescu (2013) identified six attributes that can be positively correlated with the high economic performance of a region:

• the presence in the region of a group of medium-sized cities in combination with large ones;
• human resources with secondary or higher education, preferably with moderate salaries;
• good accessibility and appropriate and varied services (consulting, finance, etc.);
• institutional infrastructure and support of local authorities, materialized in development strategies and partnerships;
• the image of the region, the existence of a positive social climate;
• the presence of a mix of industries, consisting of small or medium-sized companies, which promote knowledge.

At ***European level***, the directions of regional development policy are provided by the institutions of the European Union through programmatic documents, public policies and programs, but also by specific instruments for sustainable regional development.

Within the European Union, regional policy can be understood as an investment policy. Through it, the EU wants to "support competitiveness and growth, improve quality of life, create jobs and sustainable development" (European Commission, 2020a). Based on this goal, regional policy is addressed to all regions and cities in the European Union. Regional entities are supported for job creation, business competitiveness, economic growth, sustainable development and improving the quality of life. In line with the EU Strategy, but also with the principle of European solidarity, the main European funds for cohesion policy are targeted at less developed European countries and regions. The EU's aim is to financially support these regions in order to recover and reduce the existing economic, social and territorial gaps (European Commission, 2020a). Precisely this objective of reducing the existing economic and social disparities between the various regions of Europe, gives this European policy a very high relevance (Marcela Cristina Hurjui, 2015). Through the major implications of this policy on important areas for development, such as economic growth, employment and training, transport, agriculture, urban development, environmental protection, education, etc., the European Union is positioning itself as an important and attractive player for the internal space and proximity.

At the heart of European regional development policy is the political principle that richer countries and regions must stand in solidarity with the poorest. It is also based on the economic principle that the levels of production and development in the field of development must be harmonized by reaching the maximum regional potential. Thus, the less developed regions of the Member States and the poorer regions, or those with a high unemployment rate, are considered a brake on the development of the entire European Union by wasting the existing potential (European Union, 2009: 4). In addition, the EU is considering a mechanism for human solidarity at social and economic level with all European citizens.

Without intending to make a comprehensive diachronic analysis of the main directions of regional development policies expressed in EU documents, we mention that 2020 is the year of paradigm shifts. Following evaluations of the results of the 2014-2020 financial framework, in analytical agreement with the Europe 2020 Strategy, the EU has recently sought to develop new directions for its regional policy. The EU has set itself three priorities in the Europe 2020 Strategy that are linked to regional development:

1. smart growth (developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation);
2. sustainable growth (promoting a more resource-efficient, greener and more competitive economy);
3. Inclusive growth (promoting an economy with a high employment rate, ensuring social and territorial cohesion) (Verga, 2017).

The regions that the European Union considers in terms of its development policy are established in accordance with the *Nomenclature of Territorial Statistical Units* (NUTS). These, for a clear ranking and a real establishment of the directions of implementation of institutional and financial support, are compared (regions on the same level) according to specific indicators, such as gross domestic product per capita and structural unemployment rate. The principles of cohesion policy are taken into account in establishing European support. *NUTS* statistically structure the territorial units of the European Union on three hierarchical levels, achieving structural units of comparable size, which allows the harmonization of regional statistics of member countries, conducting regional analyses within the European Union, developing regional Community policies, etc. The level of statistical territorial units is established by size classes, according to the number of the population (Verga, 2017). In this way, the European Union is able to determine the level of its intervention in terms of the regional support needed to ensure cohesion and the disparity of development disparities between regions.

For the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027, the European Commission has proposed since 2018 "the modernization of cohesion policy, the main investment policy of the EU and one of the most tangible expressions of solidarity". Corina Crețu, the European Commissioner for Regional Policy, stated in that context “Today (May 2, 2018 n.n.) we propose a cohesion policy for all regions, which will not leave anyone behind. We have improved the flexibility of this policy to adapt it to the new priorities and to increase the protection of EU citizens. We have also simplified the rules, and this will benefit everyone, from small businesses to entrepreneurs and to schools and hospitals, who will be able to obtain funds more easily” (Ministry of European Funds, 2018).

Proposals to amend cohesion policy, with a direct reference to regional development policy, take into account:

1. increasing attention to investment priorities through which the EU can deliver (most investments in the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund will be directed towards innovation, support for small businesses, digital technologies and industrial modernization);
2. the implementation of a cohesion policy for all regions and a more adapted approach to regional development (three main categories of regions are identified: less developed regions, transition regions and developed regions - GDP per capita being even after 2020 the main criterion for allocating funds). The role of local and regional authorities in implementing this regional development policy is increasing. Local initiatives are becoming more important, benefiting from financial support, but at the same time the responsibility of these authorities is increasing by assuming, where appropriate, increased co-financing rates;
3. reduction and flexibility of implementation rules by simplifying access to funds. A reduction and simplification of bureaucracy is proposed and at the same time a single regulatory framework. The latter aspect will be able to give an additional impetus to the development of underdeveloped regions which have faced a low rate of absorption

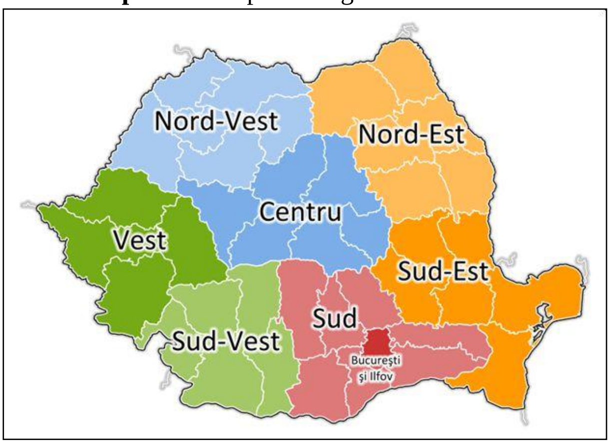
of European funds, a phenomenon also due to regulatory and management obstacles to these funds at national or regional level. Another very important feature, demonstrated in the management of the economic recovery in the context of the health crisis caused by the spread of the COVID-19 virus, is the adaptation to needs as a paradigm shift in the management of cohesion policy programs as a whole;

4. The European Commission aims to make a connection between cohesion policy and the European Semester. The aim of this initiative is to create a favourable environment for business and growth in Europe, so that EU and national investments can be realized to their full potential (Ministry of European Funds, 2018).

At ***national level***, Romania understood the need to pay more attention to European cohesion policy, and implicitly to regional development. Since accession in 2007, the European Union has been the largest investor in Romania, with many local and regional communities benefiting from this European policy (EURACTIV, 2019).

In order to harmonize and make compatible with European norms, the Romanian state had to discuss the idea of a reform at administrative-territorial level. However, *the regionalization* of Romania proved to be a difficult and insufficiently motivating process for Romanian decision-makers as well (Brie and Mészáros, 2015). Issues that required a decentralization at all levels of decision-making and implementation of public authority and administration were also discussed. In the Romanian state, the regional development policy is implemented at NUTS 2 level (the national territory was organized in 8 development regions without the status of administrative units - see Map 1), the level of disparities between these regions being followed at the level of several indicators economic and social, the most important and relevant remaining the value of GDP / inhabitant. The main directions of implementation of public policies generated by the regional development policy, respectively financial allocation, are analysed in terms of increasing or decreasing evolution of these indicators (mainly GDP) (Verga, 2017).

Map 1. Development regions in Romania



Source: author processing according to data from *National Strategy for Regional Development 2014-2020*, Bucharest, 2013, p. 4

The legal framework for the functioning of these development regions has been adopted since 1998 together with *Law no. 151/1998 on regional development in*

Romania[1], after in 1997 through a PHARE project initiated by the European Union and the Romanian Government, *"The Green Paper of Regional development in Romania"* (Verga, 2017). The Romanian legislator defines the concept of *regional development* as*"* a set of policies of central and local public administration authorities, developed in order to improve the economic performance of geographical areas established in "development regions" and benefiting from the support of the Government, the European Union and other institutions. and interested national and international authorities" (GD 634/1998). 8 development regions are established equivalent to the second level of territorial classification, NUTS 2 of the European Union, "areas corresponding to groups of counties, constituted by their voluntary association on the basis of convention, signed by the representatives of the county councils and, respectively, of the General Council of Bucharest" (Verga, 2017).

Without proposing to make on this occasion an analysis of the legislative and programmatic regulatory framework, we mention as relevant for the current period the *National Strategy for Regional Development (NSRD) 2014-2020*. This document is the framework document under which funding programs from European, national and / or local funds are established, regulated and implemented, aiming at sustainable regional development (Strategy, 2013). The general objective established by the National Strategy for Regional Development is "continuous improvement of the quality of life, by ensuring welfare, environmental protection and economic and social cohesion for sustainable communities, able to manage resources efficiently and capitalize on the potential for innovation and balanced economic development and social development of the regions "(Strategy, 2013: 239). This objective of the national strategy was established in line with the European Union's objective of "increasing the competitiveness of regions and promoting equity by preventing the marginalization of areas with economic and social development problems" (Strategy, 2013: 239).

The implementation of the cohesion policy of the European Union, respectively of regional development, understood in the sense of reducing the development discrepancies between the regions, leads to the conclusion that the expected results have not been fully confirmed. Despite an overall development, the level of development was different from one region to another. Moreover, discrepancies have increased between regions. The richer regions became even richer, the phenomenon not being accompanied by more consistent progress in the poorer regions. Thus, the spatial location of poverty and underdeveloped areas remained the same (North-East, which includes the historical region of Moldova, and South, the largest agricultural area of the country). At the same time, the richer and more developed regions (West, Centre and Bucharest-Ilfov) consolidated their position, increasing the development gap compared to the first mentioned category. This gap can be found in terms of income of the population, endowments with technical equipment, human resources and economic potential (Cîrnu, 2010: 78). In this context, the poorer regions have been forced in recent decades to cope with a massive emigration, not only external but also internal ones oriented towards other regions. This demographic phenomenon has led to an even more severe limitation of reaching the development potential, sometimes registering a reduction of it by decreasing the human resource.

[1] This law constitutes the legislative regulatory framework that underlies the establishment of development regions and establishes the territorial and national structures for regional development

Without minimizing the role of regional development, at the national level, development theories were developed at the sectoral level, but viewed from a territorial-integrated perspective. Even in these situations, the sectoral development surplus at the level of one region can make up for the disadvantage of another region. Moreover, identifying the regional sectoral potential, adequate public policies for the development of each region can be initiated (Vlad, 2015; Strategy, 2015; National Strategy, 2018).

At ***regional level***, Romania's regional development policy was conceived and implemented through two types of structures (each numbering 8 corresponding to each development region), established as a result of the recommendations of the paper "Green Paper of Regional Development in Romania":

- Councils for Regional Development;
- Regional Development Agencies.

Romania was thus divided into the 8 regional development regions mentioned, each corresponding to a Regional Development Agency (RDA) and a Regional Development Council. Bihor County is part of the North-West Development Region created in 1998, along with five other counties Bistriţa-Năsăud, Cluj, Maramureş, Satu Mare and Sălaj. The county seat cities (Cluj-Napoca, Baia-Mare, Oradea, Zalău, Satu Mare and Bistriţa) are considered poles of regional economic development. Three of these are metropolitan areas (Cluj-Napoca, Oradea and Baia Mare) (ADR, 2020a).

Through public policies and programs, the North-West Development Agency aims, within the development policy of Romania, to achieve three main objectives (ADR, 2020b):

• reducing existing regional imbalances;
• correlation of governmental sectoral policies at the level of regions;
• stimulating inter-regional, domestic and international, cross-border cooperation.

In the context of the national strategy and the regional strategy, the North-West Regional Development Agency follows the national targets and proposes through the *North-West Region Development Plan 2014 – 2020*[2], a series of measures to contribute to the development of the region in this direction. Some of the strategic objectives for medium- and long-term development (2034) also refer to:

1. Connecting the Region to the international flows of goods, tourists, investments, information and cultural values and ensuring the role of service as a "logistics region";
2. Increasing investments in the human and social capital of the region, in order to ensure support for sustainable development;
3. Transformation of urban centres into spaces of influence and regional and transregional attraction

The Development Plan of the North-West Region 2014 - 2020 establishes four development priorities, correlated with the general objective, divided into investment priorities and indicative actions (Development Plan, 2015: 159), as follows:

- P1 - Increasing the economic competitiveness of the region and stimulating research and innovation
- P2 - Increasing the accessibility of the region, the mobility of inhabitants, goods and information
- P3 - Increasing the quality of life of the inhabitants of the region

[2]It was approved by the Regional Development Council on the occasion of the meeting of April 20, 2015 by Decision number 425 (https://www.nord-vest.ro/strategia-de-dezvoltare-regionala-2014-2020/), accessed in 11.04.2020).

- P4 - Protection of the natural and anthropic environment, efficient use of resources and reduction of pollutant emissions

The regional context identified by the Regional Development Council in terms of the level and implementation of regional development policy, mechanisms and instruments is as follows (Development Plan, 2015: 12):

- the process took place partially in the context of the debates on regionalization / decentralisation
- the existence of a development vision adopted during the previous planning process, which covers the remaining period until 2027
- most public administrations do not have planning documents for the 2020 horizon; there are few local public administrations that have developed local development strategies and identified priority projects for the period 2014-2020
- greater emphasis on territorial integrated policies
- there are few mature investment projects without financing (much less compared to the 2005-2007 period in the "project pipeline" due to the different selection methods adopted compared to the pre-accession period) and also the financial resources of the beneficiaries are insufficient for the preparation of project

Given that the counties in the region have different levels of development, the more the potential and the degree of its maximization are different, the need to prepare for each county in the region an integrated regional development strategy within the region is increasingly clear. It is not enough to have a main development pole in Cluj-Napoca, but it is necessary to reach a uniformity of the development stage of the counties. This integrated vision would involve in a first phase the idea of redirecting investors to the counties / regions in these less developed counties (Buda, 2017: 9). Moreover, "for regional development to be sustainable and cohesion policy to be truly a success, its positive effects must be reflected in rural areas as well" (Buda, 2017: 9).

At the ***level of Bihor County***, in accordance with the regional development directions conferred at European, national and regional level, the *Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2020 of Bihor County*[3] was elaborated. The declared vision is for Bihor County to become: *dynamic, competitive, diverse, open*. Bihor aims to become a dynamic and competitive county, in which the well-being will be felt, directly, by all the inhabitants of the county. Bihor wants to be recognised as a gateway to and from Western Europe, where entrepreneurial initiatives are actively supported by public institutions through quality public services and appropriate infrastructure. Complementary, the county wants to be known as an important tourist destination, both in Romania and in neighbouring countries. In this direction, the Bihor County Council aims to contribute to achieving this vision through an active involvement in modernising and expanding existing infrastructure but also in encouraging entrepreneurship and the development of small and medium enterprises as an engine of economic development. In order to reach the proposed level, four strategic development objectives are assumed within the development strategy (Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2020 of Bihor County, 138-139):

1. Development of public infrastructure in the county;
2. Increasing economic competitiveness in industry and agriculture;
3. Capitalising on the tourist potential of the county;

[3] *See the text of this development strategy on the official website of Bihor County Council* https://www.cjbihor.ro/pdf/Strategia%20pentru%20dezvoltarea%20durabila%20a%20judetului%20Bihor%202014-2020.pdf, accessed in 11.04.2020

4. Development of public services and administrative capacity.

In order to achieve the assumed objectives, the Bihor County Council, through the sustainable development strategy, established five *strategic development initiatives* at territorial level (Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2020 of Bihor County, 140):

1. Modernisation of Oradea airport;
2. Development of the business environment in the Tileagd - Aleşd area;
3. Development of sustainable tourism in the area of the Apuseni Mountains;
4. Development of the business environment in the Beiuş area;
5. Diversification and consolidation of the economic base in the micro-region Valea Ierului (Marghita - Valea lui Mihai - Săcueni).

The principles of development start from the need for a coherent link and organization at the level of development measures and programs. In this sense, a special emphasis is placed on the development of economic competitiveness, as a foundation for the other levels of development of society. In this sense, the following principles are followed (Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2020 of Bihor County, 139):

- *Convergent development* aims to stimulate performance without creating development gaps at the territorial level
- *The inter-correlation* implies that the objectives of the strategy take into account the objectives of the national and European plans and strategies but also the adaptation of the projects according to the recommendations of the governance policies of the different institutions acting at local and county level.
- *Sustainable development* means proposing a type of development that ensures a balance between social, economic and environmental aspects and that takes into account the issues related to restricting access to resources for future generations.

Beyond the development theories expressed, Bihor County, like all the others in the country, has to face an unbalanced territorial development. Thus, the development discrepancies are obvious not only between urban and rural, but also between Oradea and the small towns in the county. The level of investment is not evenly balanced. From here, other phenomena arise: starting from lower incomes, less developed regions face a labour migration, reducing the sometimes-untapped potential of the area. Against this background, we notice a decline in development in relation to the initiation potential, both in the case of rural areas and small towns in the county.

The efficient implementation of the development policies of Bihor County therefore also faces the following negative factors. Here are some of them:

- labour market imbalance between supply and demand (including in terms of quality) - if in Oradea it proved to be deficient, in small towns and rural areas it was in surplus generating migration (especially external);
- the physical infrastructure, of the public utilities, but also the social one is deficient in most of the county - this is instituted in an obstacle of sustainable development and with reaching the development potential;
- still strong dependence on the agricultural sector, the decline of small towns and pre-urban economic centres with non-agricultural activities;
- with the exception of the city of Oradea and a few other points, in the county the infrastructure in the field of business is insufficiently developed;
- limited financial, technical and management capacities at regional and local level;

2. International cooperation in the strategic development plans of Bihor County

Without proposing to make an analysis of the way in which the objectives, initiatives and principles expressed in the sustainable development strategy were pursued during the period 2014-2020, we mention that the sustainable development of Bihor County proved to be closely related to factors direct and indirect influence at European, national and regional level. The international component of this development is becoming increasingly important as European transnational economic interconnection.

The positioning of the county in the immediate vicinity of the border imposed a deep inclination on the cross-border dimension of its sustainable development. Cross-border cooperation therefore becomes one of the important vectors of regional development that Bihor County can not only exploit, but must also do. Inter-connectivity at all levels, including cross-border, can ensure a sustainable perspective on development. However, cross-border cooperation is only part of the dimension of international cooperation.

International cooperation is an essential part of a region's vision of sustainable development. In the context of globalisation, but also of the multiplication of exchanges of any kind in which the regions are included (here we include, of course, Bihor County), international interconnection at all levels requires flexibility and a strategic approach to international communication. They must take into account both the public and private dimensions, but also civil society. Economy, education, health, culture, but also forms of leisure require exchange of expertise. International knowledge is therefore multiplying at regional and local level. Resources and capital move and enhance regional potential. Bihor County tends to understand this aspect more and more. This understanding comes from examples of good practice, cooperation for the management of European cooperation projects, increasing the level of foreign investment, direct and indirect learning. European regulations and EU instruments have made public authorities and private entities more receptive to cooperation, hence the need to create cross-border networks and connections.

Cross-border cooperation has brought Bihor County together primarily with Hungarian neighbours who have become indispensable partners in implementing specific EU-funded projects through instruments for cross-border cooperation. Cross-border cooperation can be defined in relation to direct collaboration between neighbouring regions, found along a border, regardless of the level at which this relationship is achieved. Collaboration can be achieved in all areas, between all national, regional and local authorities, involving all actors. The efficiency, reliability, authenticity and legitimacy of European construction, European integration are also linked to the success of cross-border cooperation (Bărbulescu et. Al., 2016). "The basic principle of cross-border cooperation is the creation of contractual spaces in border areas in order to find common solutions to similar problems, state entities not ignoring, compared to their peripheral communities, the particularity and specificity of neighbourhood problems they face" (Ricq, 2010: 10).

Cross-border cooperation is proving to be "a classic type of mutual cooperation between two neighbouring border regions". It involves states, regions, administrative units at different levels and / or social groups, etc., covering all areas of daily life and participating in the development of common programs, priorities and actions (Bărbulescu et. Al., 2016). Cross-border cooperation is favoured by cultural, ethno-linguistic, historical heritage (see the case of the Habsburg heritage in Central Europe) or the presence of national minorities (as is the case of Hungarians in Bihor County or Romanian communities in Hungary).

The efficiency of cross-border cooperation depends on the coordination of all actors involved in this process, but also on cooperation at all levels, doubled by the existence of an adequate legal framework. Malfunction at one of the levels can cause it to fail. Therefore, cross-border cooperation is no longer the strict prerogative of states as international actors (Brie, 2017a). An important role in this process is played by local and regional administrative structures in border areas, development associations created by them, but also transnational corporations interested in promoting an economic and political environment conducive to business development (Săraru, 2011: 88). Bihor County is such an administrative-territorial unit, and in order to be successful, in the border areas it must cooperate with cross-border partners on an equal footing and respect the interests of each party involved. The European Union encourages and stimulates the development of partnerships in cross-border cooperation that Bihor County, localities or public or private actors to achieve with partners at the same level in Hungary. The EU's interest is not only to harmoniously develop the regions on either side of the border or the security interest in the development of a cooperative and stable neighbouring region, but also to strengthen the European spirit and identity among its citizens, beyond the identities. their national-ethnic (Brie and Blaga, 2015). "The financial instruments and non-financial efforts (e.g. promoting standards to increase competitiveness, methodical approaches, implications for adjusting the regulatory framework, etc.) of European partners in border areas are consistent and designed for a long period of time" (Roscovan et al., 2010: 101). Cross-border cooperation, both at inter-state and regional or local level, has been in the attention of the European institutions throughout the European construction process (Brie, 2017b). In order to make this collaboration more efficient and to direct the numerous existing initiatives in a unitary way, an attempt was made to create a normative framework, including models of partnership and association agreements (European Framework Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation, 1980). Starting from all these conceptual-contextual aspects, cross-border cooperation is no longer a desideratum in the case of Bihor County, but is a necessity required by the international context and the need for sustainable development.

National legislation on international and cross-border cooperation is clearly specified. Emergency Ordinance no. 57 / 3.07.2019 specifies, among others, the following: the local public administration authorities in Romania may conclude twinning / cooperation agreements with the local public administration authorities in other states,…, joint cultural, sports, youth and educational programs, vocational training courses and other actions that contribute to the development of friendly relations, including their financing (OU 57, art. 89, 14). The responsibility for the cooperation or association agreements concluded by the administrative-territorial units rests exclusively with them (OU 57, art. 89, 15). Decides, in accordance with the law, the twinning of the county with administrative-territorial units from other countries; decides, in accordance with the law, to cooperate or associate with other administrative-territorial units in the country or abroad, as well as to join national and international associations of local public administration authorities, in order to promote common interests (OU 57, art. 129, 9).

About attracting funds for international / cross-border cooperation, the legislation specifies, among other things, that strategic initiatives involve projects that are framed by all the objectives of the development strategy and present a type of intervention at territorial level, of integrated type. In this case, the initiatives include project packages both developed by the Bihor County Council and projects in which the Bihor County Council has the role of partner.

Analysing the role of international cooperation in the sustainable development strategy 2014-2020 of Bihor County, we notice that it is not highlighted or exploited enough for the purpose of sustainable development of the county.

At the level of the assumed strategic and specific objectives, the mechanisms and instruments of international cooperation are mentioned indirectly rather than directly in the following situations (Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2020 of Bihor County, 141-151):

1. Strategic objective I. *Development of public infrastructure in the county*

- Specific objective 1.1. Modernisation of the transport infrastructure in the county / Measure 1.1.2. Modernisation of air transport infrastructure. The component of international cooperation is indirectly achieved through the expansion and modernisation of Oradea Airport
- Specific objective 1.2. Network infrastructure development / Measure 1.2.1. Extension and modernisation of technical and municipal networks in the county (I.1215 - Use of geothermal water resources in the cross-border area for the creation / rehabilitation of facilities for the purpose of cross-border circuits. The component of international cooperation is achieved indirectly by making investments in geothermal water use in tourism and heat supply activities on both sides of the border.

Specific objective 1.3. Development of social infrastructure / Measure 1.3.1. Development of physical infrastructure in the social field (I.1314 - Development and modernization of health infrastructure ‹hospitals, clinics› and establishment of first aid points in crowded tourist areas or without appropriate medical coverage ‹construction of new buildings, rehabilitation of existing buildings, purchase of equipment modern in the medical fields ›in the cross-border area, on both sides of the border, for treating patients; I.1317 - Development of the cross-border telemedicine network; I.1318 - Rehabilitation of poor suburban areas in the Ier Valley‹ Development of poor cross-border areas ›). The component of international cooperation is indirectly achieved through cross-border medical and social cooperation.

- Specific objective 1.4. Increasing energy efficiency in the county / Measure 1.4.1. Development of energy reduction projects (I.1411 - Improving the energy efficiency of public buildings ‹hospitals, schools, administrative buildings› by using alternative green energy resources and by thermal rehabilitation. Rehabilitation of public buildings in the cross-border area with major impact on energy efficiency).

2. Strategic objective II. *Increasing economic competitiveness in industry and agriculture*

- Specific objective 2.1. Business Environment Development / Measure 2.1.1. Attracting investors (C.2112 - Participation in international missions and visits to identify investors; C.2113 - Development of a network of fairs with national and international participation). In order to develop the business environment, the Bihor County Council "will actively promote potential business opportunities to domestic and international investors." It will also facilitate "together with local entrepreneurs’ participation in international missions and visits to identify investors and promote international exchanges of experience."

3. Strategic objective III. *Capitalizing on the tourist potential of the county*

- Specific objective 3.1. Development of tourism services in the county / Measure 3.1.1. Tourism promotion (T.3111 - Elaboration of concepts for capitalization of tourist

destinations of national and international importance in Bihor county ‹Oradea, Băile Felix, 1 Mai, Apuseni Mountains area, Valea Ierului›; T.3114 - Participation in international tourism fairs together with local entrepreneurs; T.3115 - Promoting international exchanges of experience).
- Specific objective 3.2. Preservation and capitalization of natural and built heritage / Measure 3.2.1. Preservation and capitalization of natural heritage objectives (T.3217 - Development of environmental infrastructure in protected areas in Bihor and Hajdu Bihar / development and continuation of previous projects).

4. Strategic objective IV. *Development of public services and administrative capacity*
- Specific objective 4.1. Development of public services / Measure 4.1.1. Increasing the quality and diversification of services (A. 4114 - Integrated projects to improve public services and infrastructure in poor and isolated cross-border areas).
- Specific objective 4.2. Increasing administrative capacity / Measure 4.2.1. Human capital development (A.4213 - Supporting the association of ATUs from Bihor county on the cross-border area).

The conclusions that we can draw from the analysis of these objectives but also of the context of the implementation of this development strategy of Bihor County are the following:
- ✓ The focus is on cross-border cooperation rather than international cooperation. In this case, from our perspective, cooperation is understood somewhat in terms of the immediate neighbourhood with which cooperation is needed and less in terms of the idea of international cooperation.
- ✓ Cross-border cooperation has been supported with the aim of gaining access to funding provided by European programs for cross-border cooperation and less to develop international cooperation
- ✓ Through the attributions offered legislatively to the public administration, the Bihor County Council has all the levers to effectively contribute to the local, regional, national and international development
- ✓ Since the elaboration of the Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2020, the part related to international cooperation, including cross-border cooperation, is extremely poorly addressed.
- ✓ Sustainable development of Bihor County is not at the scheduled / expected level, the stage of international cooperation being far below the existing potential
- ✓ Bihor County Council and territorial administrative units in the county have sporadic international cooperation, with very few twinning that have results or are constantly maintained
- ✓ At the county level there was no coordination and exploitation of international cooperation in the sense of capitalising on them for the purpose of sustainable development
- ✓ There is no guideline or manual for coordination and implementation of international cooperation

Given that the period for which this planning document was prepared expires this year, it is imperative to draw up the strategy for the next budget programming period of the European Union 2021-2027 based on the assumption that only coherent international cooperation can ensure Bihor County sustainable development. The European, national and regional context calls for such an integrated approach.

We therefore propose to develop a Strategy for the development of international cooperation for 2021-2027 of Bihor County. We include in this strategy cross-border cooperation as a separate chapter. In order to implement it, it is necessary to develop a guide for the development of international relations / cooperation, useful both for local public administrations and for any type of organization.

The role and content of the *Guide for the Development of International Cooperation* will be practical, presenting operational methodologies and procedures. This guide aims to provide a tool for enhancing theoretical and practical skills on local regional, inter-regional, transnational, cross-border development, to stimulate international partnerships and cooperation.

The content of the guide will focus on: deepening, updating knowledge on the legal and institutional framework of regional, inter regional, cross-border development, international partnerships; developing the skills to capitalise on European experience in the field of international relations development; planning and analysis of cooperation and partnerships; implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities in this field.

The practical utility of the Guide for the development of international cooperation will consist in the fact that it constitutes a mechanism for initiating, maintaining, developing international cooperation. The guide can provide templates and standard document sheets to facilitate the initiation of cooperation agreements. At the same time, it can shape responsible attitudes in the use of resources and tools for the development of international cooperation, while providing examples of good practice.

The guide can also address issues related to the application of international recommendations on sustainable development integrated into the planning and implementation of national and international regional development policies, as well as the current model of integrated regional development of the European Union.

In this context, we propose that in the Sustainable Development Strategy of Bihor County 2021-2027 to be more clearly defined the modalities of international cooperation, to provide logistical support, namely guides for local public authorities, at county level, to develop a specific strategy for international cooperation to be in line with the sustainable strategy 2021-2027 and a vision as clear as possible over a longer time horizon.

Conclusions

Regional development "involves the use of resources (primarily local, but also those attracted from the national and international environment) to increase the overall competitiveness of the territory, increase the adaptability of production and functional components to the needs of structural adjustment (to meet regional and national needs) and, ultimately, from a macroeconomic perspective, to reduce the gaps between the different components of the structure of the national economic space ”(Jula, 2002).

International cooperation is an essential part of a region's vision of sustainable development. In the context of globalization, but also of the multiplication of exchanges of any kind in which the regions are included, the international interconnection at all levels requires flexibility and a strategic approach of international communication.

The great paradox of the 21st century is given by the fact that the more technology, knowledge, progress in general offers more development opportunities, the more and more forms of vulnerability appear. Life in this century is one with a greater potential for the unforeseen, for the unknown, but this uncertainty, which is also reflected in the intellectual world, will lead to a different, diverse strategic thinking, to new approaches. Some of these can be scenarios and possibilities, which are based on correct, accurate and current information.

The development of technology, the fact that access to information and the latest discoveries in all fields, which show a form of progress has not necessarily led to moral or political progress in the structure of international relations.

It is increasingly difficult for states to control the transmission of ideas, goods, people across national borders, so the classic role of the state can be transformed according to Manuel Castells' theory into a network state that generates a "complex communication structure built around a set. of objectives that simultaneously ensure its unity of purpose and adaptability to the environment in which it operates. " (Castells, 2008).

Networks have already been created that develop according to purpose, degree of interest, content that are international, receiving interest in their development, easily exceeding physical boundaries. For example, culture, art, the Internet for communication, science and technology, etc.

For example, the social networks Facebook, Instagram have turned any user into a source of information, maybe even an opinion former or a reporter.

International relations in the past were based on similarity, rules, codes of stability, diplomacy, cooperation, reason. These international relations have changed since the emergence of these “non-state” identities, which do not respect any rules, which create international tensions because their actions are unforeseen.

It is important that efficiency is given by the overall capacity to react, by the creation and approach of mixed capabilities and capacities that can ensure, when moments of crisis occur, the management of the situation even in moments of uncertainty conferred by new, unprecedented situations. , where roles and risks can change constantly, where information and knowledge are vital.

Starting from all these aspects of conceptual-contextual nature, international cooperation is no longer a desideratum in the case of Bihor County, but is a necessity required by the international context and the need for sustainable development.

For efficiency and involvement from the public administration we propose to develop in the first stage a Strategy for the development of international cooperation for 2021-2027 of Bihor County followed by the initiation of a guide for the development of international relations / cooperation, useful for both local public administrations and for any type of organization.

The role and content of the Guide for the Development of International Cooperation will be practical, presenting operational methodologies and procedures. This guide aims to provide a tool for enhancing theoretical and practical skills on local regional, interregional, transnational, cross-border development, to stimulate international partnerships and cooperation.

A very important aspect is the access to quality information, which is based on studies, research on the international context, the interpretation of this information, its adaptation and implementation, in real time in the communities of a county / region / country, flexibility and commitment to making the best decisions and solutions for creating a safe development environment and increasing the living standards of citizens.

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ASPECTS FROM THE ACTIVITY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS (1919-1932). THE COVENANT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Anca OLTEAN*

Abstract. *Finally we can say that the failures of the League of Nations were not due so much to the existance of a totalitarian power, but to the wish of the democratic states to keep the peace with any price. These democratic states made to the expansionist states concessions, sacrifiing for this the territorial integrity and independance of the smaller states. This peace, thus implemented, was a false one and was not of long duration. It was based on the older principles of the balance of the powers and not on the democratic objectives of the League of Nations Pact. This is why it was possible a new conflagration that could not be avoided.*

In spite of its failures, the League of Nations organisation has still the merit to be a road opener in the field of international cooperations between states.

Keywords: *League of Nations, Covenant, Versailles, war, negociations, organization, diplomacy, interwar.*

The honorable innitiative that was the creation of the League of Nations and the Covenant of the League of Nations had at their base the idea of their founding father, the American President Woodrow Wilson, who benefited of two mandates at the presidency of United States of America, between 1912-1920. We could say that the president Woodrow Wilson was a man that thought beyond his time. He was an idealist, not because the ideas promoted by him haven't been good, but because they were unappliable in that moment. When he urged the European states to apply a better treatment to Germany, as a country defeated in the First World War, otherwise another war was likely to emerge he wasn't aware that the future will prove that he was right. Unfortunately, the interbelic world wasn't prepare for the acceptation of the idea of equality of the states independantly of their wealth or power, the ellaboration of certain norms of international law valid for all states which to be applied efficiently in practice or for desarmation, democratic ideas, in essence, proposed by Wilson.

The attitude of Wilson towards the war was somehow ambiguous. In 1914 he was an important supporter of the neutrality of United States towards the war in Europe. However United States did not stay out of the conflict entirely offering with generosity its involvment as mediator in its sollutionning, fact demnstrated by the presence of colonell House in Europe with the purpose to negociate the signing of peace in Europe, a failed mission thow. In January 1917, when the Germans started the submarine war by attacking American vessels, Wilson pronounced for the entrance of United States in the war. At January 22, 1917, president Wilson hold a speech in front of the Senate entitled "Peace

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without Victory", understanding by this syntagm the instauration of a common peace after the war, no adversary shouldn't have strive the other part, it would have follow a peace without victory, when the victor will not make the defeatet powers to kneel completely under the economic and military sanctions burden. But, what it actioully followed was the signing the Treaty ffrom Versailles that was a genuine "Diktat" for Germany.

The Covenant of the League of Nations

By this Covenant of the League of Nations (annexed to the Treaty of Versailles), the "high contracting parties", member states of the present international organisation agree to accept the obligation of no resort to war, to accept the concept of „open diplomacy" between member states, to accept the international law as guiding „the conduct among governments", to respect the justice and the treaty obligations.

The Article 1 of the Covenant mentions the original members of the Covenant „the signatories" (of the Pact) named in the Annex of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The accession of a state to the newly created organisation is possible after a *Declaration of the respective state* after being deposited at the Secretariat two months before the coming into force of this Covenant. Future states (not mentionned in the Annex), asserts the article, can become members of the Pact after their admission is agreed by 2/3 of the members of the Assembly of the League of Nations. A member of the League can redraw from the League after two years' notice to do so.

The Article 2 of the Covenant mentions the organisation (bodies) of the League of Nations which provides the good functionning of the League: Assembly, Council, Permanent Secretariat.

Article 3 of the Pact defines the Assembly and its organisation. Thus the Assembly is formed from the representatives of the members of the League of Nations. It reunites at given intervals at the seat of the League or in other places previously decided upon. The Assembly can deal at its reunions with any problem from the sphere of action of the League of Nations or which effects the peace of the world. Each member of the League has one vote in the Assembly and no more than 3 Representatives.

Article 4 defines the Council and its obligations. The Council is formed from the representatives of „Principal Allied and Associated Powers, together with Representatives of four other members of the League" selected by the Assembly.

With the consent of the majority of the Assembly, the Council „may name additional members of the League whose Representatives can be members in the Council.

The Council meets from time to time, at least once at a year, at the seat of the League and can deal at its reunions with all matters from the sphere of activity of the League or impending the realisation of the peace of the world. At the Council's reunions each state represented in the Council shall have one vote and a single representative.

According to Article 5,"decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all Members of the League represented at the meeting". All of the matters of procedures in the Assembly or Council should be supervised by these two bodies while matters of procedure require the majority of votes.

Article 6 consacrates the permanent Secretariat of the League of Nations, that has the seat in Geneve and comprises the Secretary General and the stafff of the Secretariat. The staffs and the secretaries are appointed by the Secretary General with the consensus of the League. The General Secretary is present at the Assembly and Council Reunions and acts according to his function. The members of the League pay for its expenses in a proportion established by the Assembly.

Article 7 establishes Geneve as a seat of the League of Nations, but the place can be changed according to a decision of the Council. Article 7 establishes, in continuation, that both men and women can compete for jobs in the League of Nations, so we see from here the idea of the quality of genders. The representatives of the League and officials of the League should enjoy „diplomatic priviledges and immunities". The buildings and the property of the League are inviolable.

Article 8 say that one of the objectives of the members of the League is to reduce the national armaments to the lowest necessary level for the prezervation of national security. The plans for reduction of armaments shall be formulated by the Council. These plans can be reconsidered and revised any ten years. It is forbidden the manufacture by private investments of munition and arms. These manufactures should be prevented, limitibg to the bare necessities the production of arms on the territory of the League of Nations. The interexchange of information concerning the reduction of armaments between the members of the League is free and undertaken by the League of Nations member states.

Article 9 establishes a Commission to advise the Council to fullfill the obligations of Article 1 and 8 „on military, naval and air questions generally".

According to Article 10 the members of the League of Nations prezerves the territorial sovereignty and political independance of the members of the League against any external agression. The Council, in case of agression, advice on the means to be implemented further on.

The Article 11 of the League of Nations explains that "any war or threath of war" is a matter of concern for the entire organization named League of Nations which is enabled to take the most wise decisions in order to saveguard the peace among the nations. Any member of the League can bring the attention of the two institutions (Assembly and Council) on the arising matters of conflict in international relations.

In the Article 12 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, it is mentioned that any dispute that can arise among the members of the organisation that can cause a malfunction of the organization can be submitted for arbitration or judicial settlement in front of the Council and the parties will not start a war before 3 months after the arbitration and judicial decision of the Institution in that matter. After the settlement of dispute, the Council is required to make a report on the issue.

Article 13 mentions that the members of the League agree that any divergent interest will appear among them, they will sent the subject matter to arbitration or judicial settlement. In the quest of pacific settlements of disputes, the disputes are submitted to arbitration or judicial settlement (in this case the care is referred to Permanent Court of International Justice or any tribunal agreed by the parties).

The Article 14 of the Covenant of the League of Nations gives a role of the Council of the organisation to formulate and submit adoption plans for the League of Nations members in order to set forth a Permanent Court of International Justice which had to be capable to solve any international dispute between the parties and enact also advisory opinions in the matterns concerned.

Article 15 mentions mentions that parties involved in a dispute must sent notice to the Secretary General that makes all the arrangements for a full investigation. The Council will make efforts to achieve a settlement of the dispute and if the dispute is settled a statement in these sense will be enacted. In the opposite case when the dispute is not settled, the Council should publish otherwise a report.

Article 16 mentions that if, in spite of the Article 12,13 and 15 of the Pact, a state resorts to war, measures of severance of all trade and financial relations with that state will be undertaken by the member states, but, also, it will be provided all inter-course between the nationals of the member states of the Pact and the nationals of the state which resorted to war. The Council of the organization will thus recommend with the view of military, naval, air forces to be used by the League against the respective state. Another provision of this Article 16 is that any member of the League of Nation, who violated the fundamental principles of the League of Nations can by a vote of the Council be eliminated from the organization.

Article 17 consacrates the principle that in the occurence of a conflict between a state that is member of the League of Nations with a state that is not member of the League of Nations or between states that are noyt members of the League of Nations, the respective states will be firstly invited to become members of the League of Nations and only after that, Article 16 will be applied.

Article 18 provides that all treaties and international engagements undertook by a member of the League of Nations shoud be registred in front of the Secretariat and very soon published. All the treaties of the League of Nations which bind the League of Nations members must be registered in front of the organisation.

Article 19 asserts that the Assembly of the League of Nations might advice from time to time the reconsideration of the treaties by the League of Nations member states and the ones innaplicables be eliminated. The Assembly should evaluate the international conditions that still pose problems for the security of the world.

Article 20 mentions that the League of Nations members accept that the present Covenant can abrogate all obligations and understandings between members which are inconsistent with its provisions. In case when a member of the League of Nations, after asserting its membership in the organisation, undertakes obligations inconsistent with the principles of this covenant, the respective state should look to ask the release from these obligations.

Article 21 asserts that nothing written in the Pact will not affect the validity of international arrangements, such as the treaties of arbitration and regional understanding conceived for prezerving the maintenance of the peace and order.

Article 22, asserts the Covenant, foresees that colonies and territories that after the First World War do not belong anymore to their sovereign states which governed them before, will be continued to be civilised according to this Covenant. These people will be put under the tutelage of advanced nations who will accept this task and the colonies will be governed under the form of mandates by mandatory states. Some territories belonging to Turkish Empire reached a stage a development, in which their existance can be ensured and can be provisionally administered by mandatory powers. But in Central Africa and South-West Africa, these peoples are in lower states of development and, thus, the role of the mandatory power increases. Mandatory states must render to the Council of the League of Nations an annual report with reference to administrated territory. The Council must explain the degree "of authority, control or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory" in case that this aspect was left undecided by the members of the League. It follows to be constituted a Permanent Commission in order to receive and examine the annual reports of the mandatory states and further guide the Council in this respect.

Article 23 mentions the obligation that the members of the League of Nations will maintain human conditions of labour for men, woman, children, in their country, in countries with which they have economic relations or interests enabling international organizations to act in this sense; the native inhabitants placed under their control will enjoy a faire treatment; the League will generally suppervise the execution of agreements in the field of traffic of women, children, opium, dangerous drugs. There will be supervised trade with arms and ammunitions in zones of common interest. The League of Nations will ensure the freedom of communications and transit so necessarry in commercial relations of the League of Nation members; will prevent and controll the evolution and expansion of deseases.

Article 24 asserts that under the umbrella of the League of Nations they will be put all international bureaux established by the General Treaties. These bureaux will be put under the tutelage of the League of Nations. In the matters of overall importance that are under the surveillance of a general convention and, in the same time, they are not put under the controll of such an international bureaux, the Secretariat of the League of Nations, can collect and distribute relevant information and can enterprise any other necessary information.

Article 25 asserts that under the tutelage of the League of Nations, it will develop its activities a newly created organisation, national Red Cross in the domain of health protection, preservation of desease and the cure of human suffering around the world.

Article 26 says that ammendments to this covenant will be implemented when the League of Nation members will ratify them, the states being represented in the Council and in the Assembly. This ammendment does not bind a state necessarily, the state can express its dissent, but in this case it cease to be a member of the League.

Starting from the Covenant of the League of Nations and from the very beginnings of the evolutions of this organisation and closing its analysis in 1932 (the date when the present article was written), Eduard Benes (Benes, 1932), political men of interwar period, tries to see how the occurent economic and political crises in vogue in 1932 had impacted on the activity of the League of Nations starting to analyse the mission and general objectives of the League of Nations established in 1920. El arată că Liga Națiunilor avea și un puternic fundament moral such as that the democracy and social and racial justice should have been basis for political constructions. Benes makes reference to the 26 articles of the League of Nations and their content. Thus the states were oblidged not to start a war, they were oblidged to reduce the national armaments, were oblidged to subject all issues arisen between them to the arbitration in front of the League or in front of the Council, they were oblidged to maintain the solidarity between them, so as integrity and political independance in front of the danger of external aggression. Any act of war is considered to be as a war against all member states of the League of Nations, asserts Benes. The author shows that in the decisional process used by the League of Nations is used, most often, the rule of unanimity, it follows to transplant the principle of democracy in the sphere of international order (Benes, 1932: 68) One of task that belonged to the League of Nations at its creation was to establish the peace amongst the nations. Before the war, national interests prevailed in politics but, in the framework of this organization the member states have to realize that they have to harmonize their interests among them and to formulate common ideals, moral and material interests and to act together to achieve them. (Benes, 1932: 68) To act within the League of Nations, asserts Benes, meant much more, to transform the political culture of the electors and to rebuilt the ideas of political parties and national parliaments. (Benes, 1932: 69) League of Nations had to have an important role in the establishment of peace, order and security. In case of agressions the LN bodies had the task to adopt proper measures and to sustain these measures. (Benes, 1932: 69) One of the objectives of the League was the desarmation.

The covenant of the League of Nations gave to this organisation the right to inspect all the international treaties. Public opinion do not deny the role of the League of Nations in the field of arbitration. Some of the conflicts appeared after 1919, were the consequences of the way in which the First World War was concluded points out the author. One first conflict reminded by the author was the conflict between Finnland and Sweden on Aland Islands. In 1921, it was acknowledged the sovereignity of Finnland on the isles with the promise made to Sweden that the isles will never be used as fortresses. (Benes, 1932: 71) Another conflict arosen in the framework of the League of Nations was the Polish-Lituanian dispute on the city of Vilna arisen in the autumn of the year 1920. The Council was helped by a Commission and established neutral zones on the disputed territory, preventing thus a war. Another dispute arisen within the League of Nations, pointed out by Benes, the partition of Upper Silesia (Benes, 1932: 72) It was taken place a plebiscit and Silesia was partitioned between Poland and Germany, each side having the duty to respect the ethnic minorities found under its controll. Other conflicts in which the League of Nations was involved emphasized by Benes was in solutionning of Memel problem, in the reglementation of the frontiers between Poland and Czechoslovakia, the Javorina issue, between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and between Yugoslavia and Hungary. In 1923, it has arisen, also, a conflict between Greece and Italy when after a diplomatic incident, Italy occupied Corfu island. Another conflict, mentioned by Benes, was the conflict between Greece and Bulgaria when a Greek sentinnelle was shot by a bulgarian one. In 1931 it was brought in front of the Court of Geneve the conflict between China and Japan. It followed a few weeks of open war and after that it follows diplomatic negociations. As a consequence, it was created an independant state Manciuko under the Japanese leadership.

Another domain of action of the League of Nations is the fact that it acted as a genuine guardian of the treaties. (Benes, 1932: 75) The Briand –Kellog pact and its ratification lead to the conclusion that violence as an instrument o solutionning the conflicts will be abandonned.

An important issue brought forward in the framework of the League of Nations is the desarmation. More desarmation was considered to bring more security (Benes, 1932: 77) Desarmation meant more that all the signitures of the Pact and all the treaties of arbitrage and conciliation of the League. In the view of the League of Nation, the issues of desarmation was not concerning only the security of the respective state, but is was concerning the whole League of Nations.

The League of Nations, according to Benes, developed important activities in the economic field, social welfare and the culture. The idea of prezerving the peace developed very well in the framework of the League of Nations, the solutionning the political problems arisen by the way of arbitrage as well, the promotion of a deepen economic cooperation between member states and the undertake to stabilize regions like Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria. Another idea promovated by the League of Nations was the promotion of intellectual cooperation, being created two centers fostering this objective: 1). International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (Paris) and 2) International Institute for Educational Cinematography (Rome). Last but not least, Benes proposed that international efforts in the educational domain should continue and be fostered by the League.

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II. COMMUNICATION AND DIGITAL STUDIES

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE NEW DIGITAL EUROPE FRAMEWORK. WHAT CAN THEY BRING TO THE TABLE?

Mirela MĂRCUȚ[*]

Abstract. *This article analyzes the contribution of local authorities, either cities or regions, to the new EU digital strategy, based on the acknowledgment of the need for strengthened coordination among societal actors for digital transformation. By using document analysis of the new policy documents on Digital Europe, the article postulates that the new digital policy is different from previous endeavors and, as such, more active involvement should be sought from various actors. The article lists two potential pillars in which local authorities contribute, namely either by direct involvement, based on the main ideas from the strategy, or by indirect involvement. The indirect involvement regards the building of trust and the encouragement of citizen participation so as to increase the transparency of digital transformation with ramifications up to the European level.*

Keywords: *EU digital strategy, digital policy, local authorities, cities, smart cities, trust*

1. Introduction

The development of a coordinated digital policy at the European level has been a long time coming. Different Commissions have had different conceptualizations, such as knowledge society, information society, information superhighway, digital single market, but they all shared in common the desire to leverage the socio-economic potential of information and communication technologies. These approaches have progressed along with the overall efforts for further integration, characterized by the entrepreneurship of the Commission and countless negotiations with Member States (Mărcuț 2017). The Digital Single Market Strategy implemented between 2015 and 2020 crystalized all these efforts in a single regulatory framework meant to develop the digital side of the Internal Market, which is the cornerstone of the European project.

All initiatives involved both policy entrepreneurship from the Commission and coordination of various actors at various decision-making levels, depending on the varying competences of the Union and the interests of the Member States. Moreover, other actors have also been involved in different initiatives meant to complement the regulatory framework of the Digital Single Market. For instance, private companies and NGOs have been involved in a coordinated effort to boost digital skills across Europe in the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (Digital Jobs and Skills Coalition 2019).

The purpose of this article is to examine the involvement of a different actor, namely local authorities, cities or regions, in the design of the new Digital Europe elaborated by the new Commission that took office at the end of 2019. The reason behind this examination stems from two ideas. Firstly, local authorities have long started

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developing their own smart city strategies that aimed to boost digitization and their visions align in manner with some European ideas (Mărcuţ 2020). Secondly, the coordination efforts for this new phase of digital transformation in Europe have intensified, considering the coupling of the systemic challenges of climate change and digitization in the new policy documents. The hypothesis of this article is that cities and regions, i.e. sub-national entities in general, have already contributed on their own to these challenges with their adaptation to these systemic challenges. Having this in mind, this article explores the new policy documents issued by the Commission regarding the new phase of digital policy in the European Union in order to identify the roles envisioned for them by the EU level and ways in which they can directly contribute.

Firstly, the article delves into a brief overview of the new Digital Europe programs based on thorough document analysis. This will provide the backdrop for the extraction of the envisioned roles for sub-national entities, along with other actors. Finally, the article will provide possible avenues for contribution to the digital policy based on their smart city strategies with a short case study on the subject[1].The article focuses on governance aspects, both as regards decision-making and implementation.

2. Overview of new Digital Europe principles

One of the ten political priorities of the Juncker Commission, the Digital Single Market Strategy (DSMS) had been designed for five years with the main purpose of developing a regulatory framework for the harmonization of policies. Its main policy results are the General Data Protection Regulation, the Copyright Directive, or the regulation on the cross-border portability of online content. Overall, the construction of the digital policy was mainly at a European level, boosted by the realization that digital barriers existed between Member States (MS). For instance, customers from one Member State could not order goods from another one and even if they could, they would have higher costs and fees. Other examples of barriers included the lack of portability of online subscriptions to content across borders, whose removal has been dubbed a successful endeavor in the eyes of Europeans (European Commission 2019).

Based on this backdrop, the change in European leadership in 2019 triggered a rethinking of the digital policy initiatives by the Commission based on the "robust framework" put in place by the DSMS (European Commission 2018). This section aims to extract the main points of this new approach based on a series of policy documents issued by the Commission in 2019, as follows:

- Proposal for Digital Europe Programme 2021-2027(European Commission 2018)
- Communication on Shaping Europe's Digital Future (European Commission 2020a)
- The White Paper on Artificial Intelligence (European Commission 2020b)
- EU's Data Strategy (European Commission 2020c)

The new principles of digital policy in the European Union can be crystallized from these documents and they portray an enforced view on EU-wide efforts for digital transformation. Moreover, they shed a light on the interaction among actors in which local authorities can be involved and in which they can be involved.

The first major change regards **the creation of an investment fund** for digital transformation, entitled Digital Europe, based on a set of fields identified as priorities by

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the European Council, namely artificial intelligence, high-performance computing, cybersecurity and advanced digital skills (European Commission 2018, p. 2). The proposal for Digital Europe is circumscribed within the framework of the next Multiannual Financial Framework and is designed to cover the next programming period as well. Moreover, the proposal for the regulation that would enforce such a funding programme highlights the idea that the proposed investment programme is an EU-wide response to a challenge that cannot be properly tackled Member States individually (European Commission 2018, p. 2). Likewise, in various previous consultations with stakeholders and evaluations of policies, the Commission had concluded that previous funding initiatives, such as Connecting Europe Facility, did not reach the entire scope of digital transformation insofar it only partially addressed current needs and it “could only support the first steps towards EU wide digital transformation”(European Commission 2018, p. 8). Finally, another justification for an investment priority for digital transformation stems from stakeholder consultations, which concluded that there is a need for “a more efficient, less fragmented approach to maximize the benefits of digital transformation to all European citizens and businesses” (European Commission 2018, p. 9). The programme has not been approved yet and it will be included within a post-pandemic EU-wide recovery instrument, but its innovative character still stands, in that it will be the first-ever common public investment fund for digital issues across the European Union. The significance of an investment fund targeting digital priorities directly opens up the involvement of various actors in the governance of digital policies and this brings the discussion to the next feature of digital intervention in the EU.

Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs)are not necessarily a new construct for the European Union, as they date back to 2016 as a part of the initiative to digitize industry (European Commission 2016a). Their focus is on becoming “one-stop shops that help companies become more competitive with regard to their business/production processes, products or services using digital technologies” (European Commission 2016b). Their main *raison d’etre* is that they provide technical expertise and consulting for companies so that they “test before invest” in solutions for digital transformation. As of the Digital Europe proposal, the Commission is aiming to create a network of European Digital Hubs with financing from various financial instruments that would eventually boost the take-up of technologies based on the priorities identified by the Digital Europe programme. As the previous DIH initiatives, this new one, based on the idea of networks, will have both local and European functions, with regions also being able to support them (European Commission 2020d). They coagulate research and business in an effort to boost digital transformation with support from the EU and Member States. The innovation for the Digital Europe Programme is that they have to go through a selection process at EU and Member State level, with the latter having an “essential role” in choosing the hub for the network.

Their connection to the digital policy is clear, considering their focus on bringing digital transformation closer to companies. The governance system behind them showcases the innovative governance mechanisms that are developed within the digital policy of the European Union with various actors coordinating at different levels: European, national, and regional. The priorities areas in which they aim to develop innovative solutions showcase also the complex domains that have to be navigated by the European Union, especially considering that other world powers are much more advanced in some of them, such as China with artificial intelligence.

The current challenges and opportunities faced by the European Union have been presented in the newest communications on Digital Europe on February 19, 2020 and they illustrate the new phase of digital policy in Europe, considering the fact that "the twin challenge of a green and digital transformation has to go hand-in-hand"(European Commission 2020a, p. 2). With this as a justification, the digital strategy highlights one new principle, namely **European technological sovereignty** that focuses on two main directions, "integrity and resilience of data infrastructure, networks and communications" and a focus on values and the ability to set its own rules (European Commission 2020a, p. 3). These two pillars of sovereignty reinforce each other in a feedback loop in order to "focus on the needs of Europeans and of the European social model" (European Commission 2020a, p. 3). The new principle is based on the idea of more assertiveness of the role of digital player globally, as the Communication states the following: "it needs to be a strong, independent and purposeful digital player in its own right" and highlights the objectives by which it aims to do this:

- Development of technology that works for the people
- A fair and competitive economy
- An open, democratic and sustainable society
- Digital Europe as a global player

The main pillars of this strategy resemble the previous policy initiatives, such as the Digital Single Market project, but the emphasis in this current view is much more on values and on principles, such as **trust and fairness.** Trust is necessary so that citizens can safely use and engage with current technologies, but it is also required as a trademark of the relationship between institutions, private companies, and citizens. Trust is actually the keyword in the Communication on Artificial Intelligence, which accompanies this strategy, entitled: "a European Approach to Excellence and Trust" (European Commission 2020b).

Fairness refers to the respect for values in the digital space, to the development of a digital single market without barriers to entry, but with respect for competition. The main targets of these values regard the domination of Internet platforms across the digital space that make it difficult for other smaller players to enter the digital markets. As such, the digital strategy has put forward a proposal for some form of regulation of platforms in their relation to platform workers, but, most importantly, with regards to fair taxation. **Fairness**with regards to fiscal obligations of major Internet platforms is yet another shift of the EU digital policy from previous initiatives, one that represents an uphill battle with Internet giants and Member States.

Finally, these broad strokes of the new digital policy of the EU all converge to the development of an **assertive** EU in digital policies both within the European space and internationally. To highlight this point of view, the Digital Strategy concludes with the following affirmation: "Europe can own this digital transformation and set the global standards… "It will be a truly European project – a digital society based on European values and European rules – that can truly inspire the rest of the world" (European Commission 2020a, p. 8). The EU approach to artificial intelligence highlights the assertiveness of the EU as a significant player in the race towards AI, but it places this assertiveness within the boundaries of **ethics and human-centered innovation**. For instance, the communication states that a human should be always behind the final decision-making process when AI is concerned (European Commission 2020b). All these features are the foundation for the governance of digital policies and the interaction of actors at various levels needs to take them into consideration both when policies are designed by different actors and when **coordination** is the key interaction, as it is stated in the conclusions of the Communication on the Digital Strategy: "Coordination of efforts between the EU, Member States, regions, civil society and the private sector is key to achieving this and strengthening European digital leadership"(European Commission 2020a, p. 8). This brings the discussion back to the major actors and their roles in pursuing the digital policy priorities and principles. The next section briefly explains the main roles that institutional actors play in the pursuit of digital leadership.

3. Institutional Actors and Their Roles in Digital Europe

When designing, deciding and implementing public policy, the European Union can be a fully-fledged actor, but it also requires the support of various other actors, depending on the competences that are summoned for various policies. In the case of regulatory policies for the Digital Single Market, the EU requires the support and the acceptance of MS in the process of decision-making. When it comes to social aspects regarding digital technologies, the EU cannot introduce legislation, but it can offer support and collaborates with various actors to boost digital skills, for instance. Whatever the digital challenge, the collaboration of various actors is required, especially considering the systemic change that it can bring about. This section deals with the proclaimed collaboration between various actors to identify the paths that each must follow in the light of this new digital policy structure.

Firstly, the European Union has been slowly, but surely, building its international leadership in this matter, as it is now obvious from the most recent policy documents. The justification for more EU involvement and coordination stems from the acknowledged reality that individual actions by Member States are not sufficient to tackle the societal changes brought about by digital transformation. This assertion is in direct concordance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality of the EU that try to maintain the decision-making as close to the citizen as possible, while also stating that the EU actions should be proportional with the challenge at hand. Clearly, digital transformation is one of the two key challenges currently facing the EU. In the case of digital policy, by means of the Commission, the EU has opened up the discussion with relation to the priorities and the overall vision of the EU-wide intervention. The current strategy that has been analyzed in the previous section showcases exactly this idea. Nevertheless, the EU must rely on the Member States mostly to help develop and decide on policies.

The second manner in which the EU pushes for certain policies is by designing public investment instruments meant to deliver on the priorities set. The main example is the Digital Europe Programme, which has been analyzed in the previous section as being the first EU-wide investment fund dedicated to digital priorities. Connecting Europe Facility, as well as cohesion and regional development funds also have priorities for digital issues, such as boosting connectivity, digital skills or innovation. Digital Poland Operational Programme is an example of a targeted instrument for one MS sourced from the European Regional Development Fund(Operational Programme Digital Poland 2014).

In this new digital strategy, not only has the EU become more assertive, but it also has also developed the aforementioned principles aimed at guiding the coordination of actors and measures. Member States are tasked with more responsibilities.Even if it was clear before, now more than ever, they must design national strategies to streamline the principles to the national level. They also contribute a great deal to the decision-making process and can heavily influence the policy result, as previous research has shown (Mărcuţ 2020). Another responsibility for them is to support the leadership of the EU, as it is stated in the digital strategy: "In geopolitical terms, the EU should leverage its regulatory power, reinforced industrial and technological capabilities, diplomatic strengths and external financial instruments to advance the European approach and shape global interactions… as agreements reached in international bodies such as the United Nations, the OECD, ISO and the G20,with support from the EU Member States"(European Commission 2020a, p. 7).

The role of the Member States expands also to the development of the network of Digital Innovation Hubs, given that they are tasked directly to designate a national hub to become a part of the European network, as well as to become eligible for limited calls for proposals (European Commission 2020d). In this sense, MS are gatekeepers and are in a controlling position both in the governance and as regards the distribution of public investment funds for Digital Innovation Hubs. The investment role is also another pillar for the involvement of MS in the new Digital Europe strategy. For instance, the European Data Strategy references the need for MS to invest in projects, such as the "High Impact Project on European data spaces and federated cloud infrastructures" (European Commission 2020c, p. 16).

Most importantly, MS should actively engage the initiatives of the European level in their own territories and "develop synergies" with EU programs. Hence, coordination not only refers to an EU-wide agenda setting, but also to the acknowledgment of the fact that MS that they must be more proactive in approaching this new frontier. Gaia-X is a state-led example of a project that is mentioned in the Data Strategy, to highlight the significance of national initiatives that both contribute to national digital policies and to the European goals. Gaia-X is self-described as a "federated data infrastructure for Europe" (Data Infrastructure 2020). Hence, there is acknowledgement of the complementary character of national and European initiatives, without any clear attempt of streamlining them directly to the European level. Coordination is also mentioned in the Communication on Artificial Intelligence, as previous plans for coordination action between the EU and MS have proven to be a proper starting point for a more comprehensive EU policy (European Commission 2020b, p. 4).

The entanglement between responsibilities of MS and the EU stands out in the governance section of the Communication on AI, as cooperation is the key against fragmentation of tools for AI, such as proper certification. Moreover, States need to be supported to "to enable them to fulfil their mandate where AI is used" (European Commission 2020b, p. 24). At the same time, the European level would act as a "forum for a regular exchange of information and best practice, identifying emerging trends, advising on standardization activity as well as on certification". Most significantly, while the EU facilitates the design and decision-making on legislation, the MS are tasked with implementation and oversight of various mechanisms (European Commission 2020b, p. 24).

The EU digital policy has been focusing on concentrating activity more and more at the upper levels, but in doing so, it has not created a hierarchy of decision-makers. On the contrary, it has maintained the competences of MS and it has opened up the discussion to various stakeholders, be it private companies or sub-national authorities. This is stated in the overall strategy, as follows: "Coordination of efforts between the EU, Member States, regions, civil society and the private sector is key to achieving this and strengthening European digital leadership" (European Commission 2020a, p. 8). This next section will attempt to ask the title question: what do local/regional authorities bring to the table when it comes new Digital Europe?

4. Local/regional authorities in Digital Europe

This section is dedicated to highlight the possible involvement of local/regional authorities in the pursuit of the new Digital Europe strategy. Based on the emphasis that a wide variety of stakeholders is necessary to contribute to the overall goals of the strategy, sub-national entities can play a significant role in the European technological sovereignty, as well as in the strategy to boost trust and fairness in the relationship with citizens. The section traces both direct and indirect involvement of local/regional authorities as evident from the policy documents that form the current digital strategy.

Even from the beginning, the communication on the new digital strategy stresses that Europe is strongest when it "acts together and joins forces" with various actors, among them being both regions and municipalities (European Commission 2020a, p. 4). The reasoning for such a partnership stems from the need to develop a bottom-top approach to the coordination of policies, but they can also play a key role in digitization of public administration, as well as building trust in new technologies. Moreover, they can also boost the environment in which small and medium sized enterprises function.On coordination of policies, local and/or regional authorities already have experience with cohesion funds, as regional programmes must be tuned to the long-term European strategies. Similarly, smart city or smart specialization strategies can be tuned to fit the overall European objectives with regards to digital transformation. Moreover, the European digital strategy creates opportunities for these authorities to benefit from public investment based on such instruments as the Digital Innovation Hub framework or the WIFI4EU programme. The significance of regional and/or local authorities in the coordination of policies has been building since the publication of the Digital Single Market strategy, where actually there was no real inclusion of the sub-national authorities in the discussion (Mărcuț 2019).

4.1. Direct involvement highlighted in the strategies

As mentioned before, the involvement of all societal actors in the implementation of the digital strategy stems from the need to tackle the systemic challenges of digital transformation and climate change. The preferred method to do so is the coordination of policies and actors at every level. The overall strategy of new Digital Europe does not mention any concrete lanes on which local/regional authorities should focus, restricting itself to highlight the significance of overall coordination.

The subsequent strategies on data and on artificial intelligence point out certain main directions in which local/regional authorities could be involved directly, but these avenues are not detailed that much in the documents. The strategy on artificial intelligence is split into two pillars, namely the pathways towards an 'ecosystem of excellence' and to an 'ecosystem of trust'. The 'ecosystem of excellence' discusses the alignment of regulatory efforts at European, national, and regional levels, as well as the boost in research and innovation that can take place also at a regional level. Universities can play a significant role in this framework, as they are institutions rooted in a local and regional environment with the ability to boost the research on AI and the skilling of specialists in AI (European Commission 2020b, pp. 6–7). Likewise, the Digital Europe Programme, as well as various other financial instruments are potential sources for financing research and innovation initiatives in AI that can start at the regional level and be scaled up (European Commission 2020b).

Most importantly, the ecosystem of excellence also includes a proposal to boost the use of artificial intelligence in the public sector, with particular emphasis on domains, such as healthcare and transport where the technology is mature enough for "large scale deployment" (European Commission 2020b). So far, the proposal is limited to the idea of building sectoral dialogue with healthcare, rural administrations, and public services operators as the baseline for the development of an 'Adopt AI Programme' to support financing for the introduction of AI-based systems. In the meantime, the results of the most recent Digital Society and Economy Index, whichalso includes the dimension of digital public services, showcase mixed results as regards supply and demand of digital services. 67% of EU citizens submitted public forms online in 2019, while online service completion did indeed rise in 2019. Nevertheless, the level of interconnectedness of public administration that is measured through the 'pre-filled forms' indicator shows an overall EU score of 59 out of 100, with great variety between Member States (European Commission 2020e, p. 3). These figures showcase the lack of harmonization in the use of public services at the national level and the take-up of AI solutions could potentially increase these gaps.

Open data is yet another domain analyzed by the Digital Economy and Society Index, showing "broad diversity in the speed of transformation and in the priorities that countries have set" (European Commission 2020e, p. 8). However, open data is a rich source for the development of AI tools, as well as one of the foundations of the new Data strategy issued together with the other policy documents in February 2020. According to the strategy, "Data generated by the public sector as well as the value created should be available for the common good by ensuring, including through preferential access, that these data are used by researchers, other public institutions, SMEs or start-ups" (European Commission 2020c, p. 6). Local and regional authorities are significant players in harnessing public data and using it for local programmes, such as traffic data, and they can harness the power of open data to improve lives of citizens. The data strategy does not particularly emphasize the role of local/regional authorities in the strategy, including them under the umbrella term of 'public sector'.

Concluding this section, the quick overview of the strategic documents with regards to digital policy of the EU nominate sub-national authorities as key players in the overall coordination of policies, but the direct involvement of the local level is not explicitly stated or emphasized, leaving room for potential analyses on the indirect involvement of local authorities to the European digital strategy.

4.2. Indirect involvement

The first point of contact that citizens have with the local administration is at the local level. The manner in which cities and/or regions manage digital transformation can potentially impact citizens' relations with technology in general and, as such, local authorities can contribute indirectly to the new digital strategy by boosting trust in technology, as well as contributing to the elevation of digital skills.

The second pillar of the White Paper on Artificial Intelligence regards the construction of an 'ecosystem of trust' in the construction of a European AI. Trust-building is targeted through the organization of an EU-wide regulatory framework and the inclusion of a series of principles in the construction of the AI. Ethical concerns are, of course, one of the most significant challenges in AI and they need to be assumed by all actors interested in development and deployment of such solutions.

At a local level, smart city strategies represent solutions for modernization of cities, but a key component of digital transformation in an urban environment must be citizen participation and ensuring that local authorities have the consent and the trust of citizens for such projects (Castelnovo et al. 2015). On-going research on the topic reveals that citizen participation must be actively sought out by local administration, considering that the citizens have fears regarding digital technologies, either in terms of digital skills or in terms of security (Mirela Mărcuţ 2020).

With a proper framework, local authorities, namely cities in this case study, can establish a climate to trust between citizens and technologies, thus indirectly contributing to the establishment of both an ecosystem of excellence and one of trust at the European level. This indirect involvement is emphasized within a case study of the Digital City Darmstadt project and the underlying principles of the digital transformation. Darmstadt is a university city, being focus on science and technology as a part of the postwar reconstruction (Darmstadt 2019). The Digital City project has aimed to add another layer to the profile of the city with targeted efforts on various levels, from education to security and data infrastructure (Darmstadt Digitalstadt 2018). What is especially relevant for this analysis regards two key aspects, the involvement of citizens and the existence of an ethical code. The governance of the project includes an ethical advisory board made up of technology experts, politicians, people from academia and the civil society (Digitalstadt Darmstadt 2019). Their main result is the elaboration of an ethics code, which, although not mandatory, has been assumed by the local administration as the foundation for the development of smart city solutions.

The ethical guidelines are the following:

- **Commitment to the common good** – digitization should target a social and/or ecological improvement in the urban area and this should be done as economically and efficiently as possible
- **Democratic control** – digitization must be under the control of the local assemblies and in accordance to existing regulations. No new power structure can be constructed
- **Responsibility and transparency** – public democratic bodies must maintain their responsibility and not automatic process will be introduced to replace them. Additionally, all automatic processes will be disclosed to the public and explain in a manner in which citizens can understand
- **Sovereignty of the city and the citizens** – “dependency on products and companies should be avoided”
- **Data protection** – “Personal data may be collected and passed on as little as possible. Personal data may not be sold”
- **Publication of data –** open data must be made available to the public in a user-friendly form
- **Sustainability of technology –** the consequences of the use of technology must be examined from the very beginning. Digitization projects must be developed having in mind the current and future generations alike
- **Security of the infrastructure –** all digital city projects must take into account vulnerability of systems and require functional security (Digitalstadt Darmstadt 2019)

These principles highlight the need for democratic control, transparency and sovereignty of citizens in much of the same manner in which the strategies of the European Union emphasize the need for human-centered AI, as well as the ethical use of open data with respect for privacy and security. Indirect involvement in the form of smart city strategies relate here to a matter of principle rather than concrete actions. Nevertheless, transparency at the local level can boost citizens’ trust both in the technology and in the administration. However, the case of Darmstadt does not make a connection with the European Union approach towards technology, which would prove to be fruitful especially considering the emphasis they put on citizen participation and consultation on various projects, as well as the actual involvement of citizens in the consultations, which have taken place both online and offline in an effort towards inclusiveness. The mix between ethical principles and citizen participation has contributed to a more sustainable effort towards digital transformation, as it has been evident from the on-site research.

This short case study emphasizes that a more direct connection between cities and the European Union as regards digital transformation could contribute to the awareness of benefits and challenges of technologies, as well to a possible boost in trust both for technology and for institutional actors.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this article has been to contextualize the new European digital strategy that emphasizes the consolidation of coordination efforts of every societal actors. In this sense, local/regional authorities are mentioned as significant players in the new digital strategy, but few direct avenues for involvement are suggested for them. In the absence of more details on their direct involvement, this article has aimed to offer possible avenues for direct involvement by local authorities in the implementation of the digital strategy by using one key concept from these strategies, namely trust-building. By showcasing the environment of trust-building in the city of Darmstadt, this article has sought an answer to the original question: what can they bring to the table? The case study emphasizes the existence of ethical guidelines and citizen participation as possible answers.

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INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AND EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIONS IN ROMANIAN SOCIETY[1]

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Abstract. *This study is about specific features of interpersonal communication from the point of view of the determining effects that they have on intercultural communication in Romania. This fact is seen as a social phenomenon with a determining role in forming and sustaining global societies.* *The general conclusion of the article refers to the possibility of monitoring and knowing the aspects related to the phenomenon of communication between people, in the context of European Union. This data is necessary in order to implement strategies connected to intercultural education in the social space of the Union. We use the database of Eurobarometer 89.1 (2018) from GESIS Data Catalogue, for making a database about Romanians perspectives and attitudes regard the European union society. We want to understand what European union means for Romanians and we conclude these meanings like arguments for integration. We want to show how is build the European identity in order of the possibilities of adapt intercultural education to Romanian society.*

Keywords: *intercultural communication, interpersonal communication, social behavior, intercultural education, attitudes and representations*

Such as many other aspects of social science, interpersonal communication is a subject close to the common perception, due to the notoriety of this human interaction phenomenon. Due to this fact, at first thought, interpersonal communication is understood sufficiently with the methods of common perception and are easily accessible, as long as not only people, but also animals transmit signals that are usually codified from the point of view of the intent of the messages that they represent. We must not forget that the level of common sense does not develop means that are analytical enough to cover the need for knowledge, and the perspectives that it conveys in almost all situations are lacunary, incomplete, sequential, as it does not succeed in covering the domain in its entirety, considering all the social, cultural, and historical contexts that are specific to it. Migration and integration of minorities in the European Union is related to the place of origin and receiving places of potential immigrants. Integration of minorities in the area of EU is considering as a solution for the concept of Europe without borders (Polgár, 2017). But integration is not possible without intercultural communication.

The phenomenon of interpersonal communication has always been a specific and defining characteristic of humanity, which is the basis for the most elementary associative forms, thus determining the evolution of criteria for the homogenization of groups (Kurtines, Gewirtz, 1991). Through interpersonal communication, people share their needs, faith,

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[1] An important part of this article was published by the author in ”The Role of Intercultural Communication in Adapting Ethnic Groups to the European Union Social Space”, edited by Karla Melinda Barth, Mircea Brie, Dragoș Darabaneanu, István Polgár

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perceptions, experiences, which create a tendency to level all the visions related to the social perspective of human existence. This homogenization phenomenon, which will always have its limits that will ensure a permanent distance from absolute homogenization, is essential from the perspective of social evolution. Practically, it is at the foundation of common accomplishments, which exceed individual abilities, as well as at the basis of acceptance of the rules, social norms and institutions that are legitimized precisely through the idea of a collective accomplishment meant to ensure the change of social existence.

A type of interpersonal communication can be suggestive for the description of a basic social phenomenon, but, at the same time, it can be very complex due to the variety of its manifestations. Of course, the capturing of the means of interpersonal expression entails different points of view and multiple perspectives, in an attempt to capture the most eloquent features of this phenomenon. Considering the context in which it takes place, we discern two types of social communication:

a. Formal interpersonal communication, characterized by a set of communication and expression strategies meant to ensure the efficiency of a professional sector. As suggested by the presentation, this type of interpersonal communication is characteristic to public institutions, given that it is different from what takes places in a daily context. Formal interpersonal communication manifests in other fields of social life and it is characterized by the fact that it entails an official position, meant to establish a certain type of relations between participants, which are oriented towards the activity of the institution. Because of the needs tied to efficiency in communicating with clients, institutions have encouraged the development of specialized services for formal interpersonal communication. These are public relations departments.

b. Informal interpersonal communication manifests itself in daily life, in regular contexts of human existence. It is a type of communication that is unscheduled from an institutional or collective point of view. This type has a set of specific functions:

- It contributes essentially to the development of daily activities of individuals, being the basic element of interaction among them.
- Spontaneous interpersonal communication takes place in different forms, depending on the social context and the positions of the persons involved at a certain point. In time, along with ageing, people acquire a certain experience in communication, which is expressed by models of attitude or behaviour in one form or another, depending on which people they enter into contact.
- One can also speak about a function of knowledge, when people are permanently obligated to improve their abilities in order to undertake some activities efficiently.
- The need for socializing takes place through interpersonal communication, and this contributes to the preservation of a feeling of safety and the satisfaction of the need to belong to a social group.

From the point of view of the number of individuals participating in communication, we can also describe two types of interpersonal communication that imply specific psycho-social processes:

a. Dyadic interpersonal communication, which takes place between two people. It is a special form of communication, which entails a certain degree of intimacy between the two participants resulting in a form of participation that is often times more involved than in case of group interpersonal communication. The means of expression are free, lacking some of the reactions that are specific to social formalism. With this type of communication, participants have the opportunity to share problems tied to their deepest preoccupations and experiences, in the dyadic context that stimulates the manifestation of an empathic approach from the participant. This encourages the strengthening of relations between the individuals and the preservation of a climate of mutual trust.

From another point of view, we can show that the dyadic form is the most appropriate means of adapting the transmitted message to the possibilities of understanding the participant. Usually in informal types of communication, the messages do not fall under a certain standard and, as a result, are not formulated under a specific form that follows the exact understanding of the message. The message formation takes place in concordance to the experience, the understanding and the possibilities of expression of the person transmitting the message. At the same time, the decoding of the messages takes place in accordance to the receiver's experience and the possibilities of understanding. In the context of dyadic interpersonal communication, the possibility to reconfigure the disparities between the transmitted and received message is much higher than in case of interpersonal communication with several participants.

b. Interpersonal communication with several participants has a series of characteristics that separate it from dyadic interpersonal communication. Compared to dyadic interpersonal communication, the abilities tied to acquired models of communication are used to a greater extent, as they represent standardized forms of expression and reaction, which are adapted to specific situations. These acquired models of communication are actually strategies of reaction to different communication contexts in which individuals participate. Continued preoccupation towards the effects that the attitudes and expressed position generate in a communication situation where more than two individuals participate is more pronounced than in the case of dyadic interpersonal communication. The possibility to amend a wrong or too personal point of view is higher in the context of multiple participation. On the one hand, singular points of view are fragile and, if uncovered by the legitimacy of approvals coming from the social entourage, they will be lost in their intensity of manifestation. On the other hand, the specifics of dyadic connection entail a bigger responsibility for the comfort of the participant, which increase the level of empathy towards his feelings, under a natural phenomenon. In the group context, this responsibility does not belong to one individual anymore, as it is decided by the majority reaction that describes the group reaction. For this reason, emotional reactions become more controlled and calculated, following certain spontaneous strategies, depending on group reactions. At the same time, the acceptance of a point of view is easier to accomplish in group interpersonal communication, considering the conditions in which it is identified as being approved by the majority of the group to which they report.

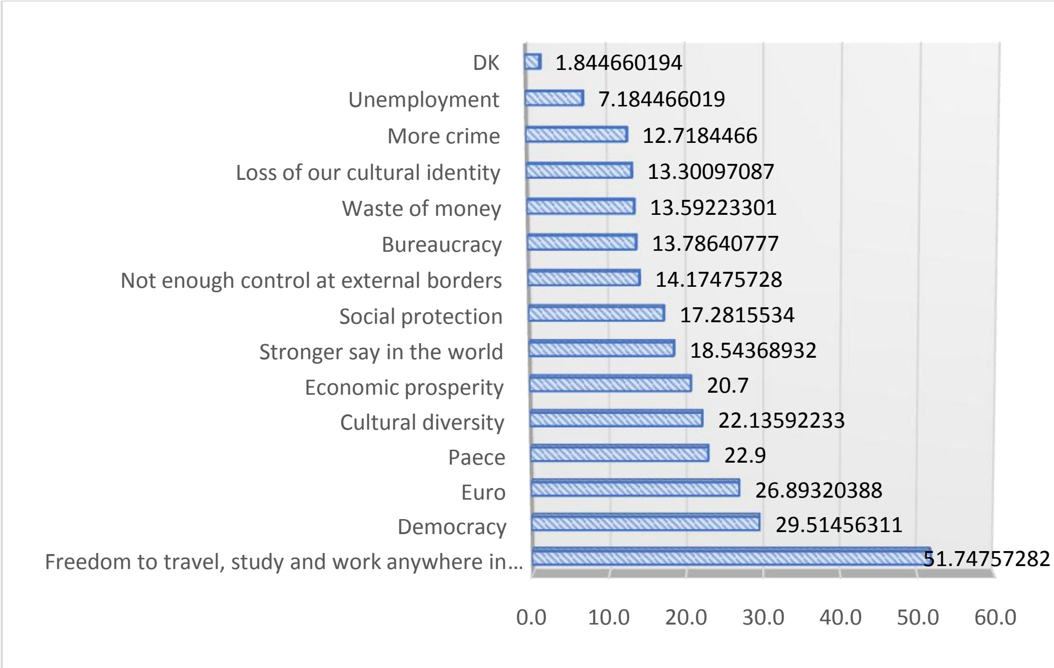
The context of many crisis in Europe is not only financial and economic, but also political, social, mental and even ideological. This is showing need to strengthen dialogue between ethnic groups, even if we are confronted with the trends of returning to certain forms of nationalism and cultural cleavage. Without advocating for one or the other of these trends, we can see that Europe is at a crossroads (Brie, 2011). Interpersonal communication is determinant in dialog between people which belong to the European ethnic groups. In the comprehensive analysis of interpersonal communication, we must take into account the objectives of the communication process, even if these objectives are not usually acknowledged by the participants in the communication. Actually, this is an aspect that makes the difference between interpersonal communication and other forms of communication. In case of mass communication or even public communication, the means of transmitting different messages, as well as their context, are persuasion strategies resulted from a mental construction process, which is based on a good knowledge of the psycho-social context of the target audience. As regards interpersonal communication, the persuasion strategies for message justification and accuracy are more explicable based on intuitive, instinctual dimensions, which are adapted to the context on the spot. There are few situations when people analyse the ways to express different messages, a fact that ensures the spontaneity of interpersonal communication. Spontaneity itself is an argument for message attractiveness, stimulating the participant and maintaining its attention to the issues discussed. We must also state that spontaneity is not a sufficient attribute to communication processes, as it must be adapted to the approximative models of audiences and it must be accompanied by the general interest for issues discussed.

The objectives of interpersonal communication are various, but they can be found either as unique forms or as combined ones. Beyond the need to persuade the participant regarding the debate on which the communication is focused, the interest for self-knowledge or knowledge of the environment is present. All these objectives are manifested in the same communication act. The functional diversity of interpersonal communication conveys the complexity of this psycho-social phenomenon that can be analysed even from the perspective of its objectives that are interpreted through forms of manifestation, context and subjects. The persuasion of the participant is based on a general behavioural model, according to which people have the tendency of imposing their points of view, even in a subconscious manner. This phenomenon is based on the need to sustain an individual’s functional position in the social context to which s/he belongs, which guarantees efficient integration in the group and the appreciation of peers. The phenomenon of persuasion also has a subjective connotation, which is defined as the tendency of individuals to consider their own points of view and interpretations as a personal, original characteristic, based on which the individual builds his/her own identity and develops the feeling of his/her uniqueness in relation to others. The models for the self-definition of identity take place in a comparative cognitive manner, oriented towards the overrating personal experiences and aptitudes, which the individual places instinctively at a superior level of existential meaning, from the perspective of relating to the experiences of aptitudes of others.

On the other hand, the need for self-knowledge is another important quality of humans, with important social valences. Based on the self-knowledge phenomenon, a series of self-evaluation processes takes place, based on which people build professional, familial, socialization strategies that offer them existential meanings and social identities. The need for self-knowledge manifests itself in the context of interpersonal communication by directing communication interactions so that the participant unveils his own conclusions regarding the expressed reactions and points of view. In some situations, people become more aware or they are forced to become aware of their subjectivity, especially when their own analyses are in disagreement with those of the members of the groups of peers. As a result, even the evaluation processes of the self implies the need to be confronted with other points of view, in order to be sure of their objectivity and fidelity. Alternatively, the process of interpersonal communication entails the phenomenon of decodifying the transmitted message, which is a characteristic of all forms of communication. The means of understanding certain messages can be different from the intent of the transmitters and, from this point of view, people need to verify the ways in which their own actions have been received, understood or interpreted. Social reality entails a powerful interpretative, symbolic dimension, which is defined through the perceptions on material dimensions and on relations with others. Due to different cultural dimensions and social contexts, but also due to individual experiences, the perceptions of the same phenomena are often very different and even contradictory. Interpersonal communication generates the possibility to find a common denominator in order to interconnect the ways of interpreting the facts and phenomena that define social reality.

At the same time, our knowledge about the world is due to the contact with different sources, through which the direct exchange of information with members of different reference groups occupies an important place in the hierarchy of possible sources of information. Personal representations of reality are built through interpersonal communication contact whose role is to certify the importance of defining features of different facts and phenomena connected to the existence of individuals.

Graph1. What does the EU mean to you personally? (multiple answers possible, percent)



Almost 52% of Romanians are understanding the European Union like opportunities for freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU. Romanians need these liberties, they need to have an hopeful sentiment for the future of their life. Acest sentiment estemobilizanţşiasigurădorinţa de apartenenţă la spaţiul European. The European identity of Romanians is a positive one, they understand the European context as a possibility of personal evolution, as a path to a better life, as a sure way to civilization. Travel, education and work in the developed countries of the European Union represent the concrete form by which the Romanians understand that they can achieve an evolution in the mentioned directions. From the fourteen items according to which the respondents defined their perceptions about the European Union, seven can be considered positive, six negative and one neutral (euro, although the euro area can also be considered from a positive perspective, as a means of economic development). If we look at graph 1, it is clear that the positive items are forming a separate package in relation with negative items. These two clusters define the desire of the Romanian citizens to become part of the European Union and this is a very valuable feature for the development of the European space. But who are the 52% which want to travel, study and work in developed states of EU?

EU MEANING: TRAVEL/STUDY/WORK ABROAD * age Crosstabulation

		age					
		16 upto 20	21 upto 30	31 upto 40	41 upto 50	over 50	Total
EU MEANING: TRAVEL/STUDY/WORK ABROAD	Notmentioned	55,0%	42,2%	42,5%	49,3%	51,7%	48,0%
	Freedomtotravel, studyandworkanywhere in the EU	45,0%	57,8%	57,5%	50,7%	48,3%	52,0%
Total		100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

We see no big differences between age categories. Of course, the people over 50 years are not so motivate to study and work abroad, they have a stabile socio-economic condition, they know this age category is not so looked up on labor market. But they have children, nephews and friends, they may be hopeful for them. This is significant because it makes the desire to be part of the European space, a homogeneous feature within the Romanian population. This phenomenon further increases the value of the collective mind in Romania, regarding with the development of European Union objectives. Thus the Romanians become a model of good practices in relation with the identity construction of the European social space. Problems related to the construction of European identity can lead to major dysfunctions, which lead to regrettable breaks in the structure of the European Union. Such a case is what happens in British society, because Brexit is nothing more than a negative representation of social identity, from the perspective of belonging to the European space. It is obvious that the motivating factors of the British citizens are very different from those of the Romanian citizens, but the Romanians are a clear example of the fact that the motivating factors exist at the social level and the positive identity of belonging to the European space must be built and maintained, so that it ensures the durability of a social construction characterized by ambition and generosity.

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TRANSFORMING DATA, TALENT AND COMMUNICATIONS INTO IMPACT AT SHERATON OKINAWA SUNMARINA RESORT

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Abstract. *In an effort to transform business operations and to integrate the property into the Sheraton chain of the hotel after a recent acquisition of the Okinawa Sunmarina Resort, the Starwood group was exploring opportunities for revamping talent operations, organizational architecture and internal communications. Shifting from pure intuition and just "doing one's best" to a data-driven business operation was one of the first initiatives the management implemented. Along with this, the Starwood Group introduced a series of new talent operations, geared at hiring and successfully on-boarding international talent needed to provide multi-lingual service to a rapidly diversifying clientele. These initiatives were complemented by a combination of carefully devised data utilization and cognitive architecture techniques, which were meant to induce awe and to create agile employee and customer engagement.*

The main purpose of this article is to analyze the effectiveness of the techniques utilized by the Starwood Group to revamp organizational architecture and to modernize communications and talent operations in order to illustrate the effectiveness of digitalization, built architecture and user engagement initiatives in creating modern organizations, integrated communications, and agile talent operations.

Keywords: *Talent, Communications, Innovation, Culture Organization, Digital, Data.*

Introduction

Revamping talent operations, organizational architecture and internal communications in global businesses are some of the essential debate topics in modern Japanese companies, as such processes represent some of the most critical elements affecting competitive advantage achievement. Accordingly, the main aim of this paper is to explore the effectiveness of the techniques utilized by the Starwood Group to revamp

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organizational architecture and to modernize communications and talent operations.

Since 2014, the Starwood Group has sought to develop a deeper understanding of the concepts of organizational architecture and talent operations, as talent was considered to be a distinctive and authentic capability of the organization (Vlad, 2020).

In recent years, interest in Talent Management theory and methodology has been increasing amid global organizations and increased focus has been placed on discussions on the identification, placement and engagement of human resources (Nishimura, 2018:75). Organizations acquire, maintain, engage and develop talent through a wide range of talent management procedures and corporate communications initiatives. The main objective of talent management is *"to increase individual performance by improving competence with the development of an integrated system to acquire, develop, maintain, and optimize the talent of the organization"* (Rofaida, 2016:615), while orchestrated internal and external communications complement talent operations in an effort to ensure and sustain engagement.

Furthermore, it is essential to note that data is a fundamental underlying piece of modern talent operations. Data and modern talent operations structures together contribute to the construction of sustainable organizational architecture. An important conceptual and practical aspect of modern people operations is the concept of developing an agile, cognitive, Culturally Intelligent (CQ) and data-driven organizational architecture.

According to David Nadler and Michael Tushman, in today's highly interconnected global economy, more and more companies are coming to realize that they cannot hope to compete successfully in the twenty-first century with organizations based on nineteenth-century design. Once again, today more than ever in the past, we see a rapidly emergent need of smart organizational architecture, agile talent operations, emotional engineering and an effective orchestration of communications (Vlad, 2020).

Organizational architecture analytics and research help us define, explain and better understand the structure, behavior, and effectiveness of modern organizations. On one hand, corporate architecture is "a theory of the firm which integrates the human activities and capital resource utilization within a structure of task allocation and coordination to achieve desired outcomes and performance for both the short run and the strategic long run." On the other hand, it is "based on the premise that new theoretical and empirical knowledge can be used to improve organizational functioning and performance" (ICOA, 2019).

Research and practice have indicated that effective organizational architecture has a significant impact on performance. Thus, focusing on these two current issues: *"talent and organizational design"*, and integrating the micro and the macro view of the organization. The Starwood Group found that by understanding the dynamics of corporate architecture, will be able to design better organizational structures, improve change processes, and advance the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations as well as their long-term performance.

The Sheraton Okinawa Sunmarina Resort: A Practical Conceptual Framework

In 2014, the JAL Sun Marina was struggling to break even, operating with an average occupancy rate of 65% and a capacity of 186 rooms, designed to welcome quiet holiday seekers from mainland Japan and to host wedding events. The property was part of the JAL Hotels Company Ltd., a subsidiary of Japan Airlines Co. Ltd., established in 1970, at a period knows as the "Boom" or "Golden Age" of the Japanese economy. The JAL Sun Marina pool of employees consisted of predominantly monolingual Japanese staff, who was trained to cater primarily for Japanese speaking guests seeking a short moment of retreat on the shores of the East China Sea in Okinawa, away from the bustling metropolitan areas from mainland Japan. Most visitors would visit the JAL Sun Marina either for a wedding ceremony or for a longer weekend, of usually two or three nights.

The walls of JAL Sun Marina were decorated primality in white, contrasting with the light blue of the ocean, and giving off a feeling of cleanness, serenity and quietude. Although the hotel was in close proximity to the US military base in Okinawa, the property enjoyed mediocre reputation with the international clientele, most non-Japanese speakers feeling un-catered for and implicitly excluded. Japanese visitors were not a stable source of revenue either. Although the property was popular with wedding participants, the rate of repeat guests from the Japanese market was less than 10% in 2014. Believing that the average Japanese tourist would prefer to visit and discover new places rather than going back to the same facility and location they had visited in the past, the hotel management had placed their bets on new weddings and new visitors from mainland Japan, rather than repeating guests.

With the rapid globalization of the wedding market, holding ceremonies overseas had become a popular practice in Japan too by 2010, many newly weeds seeking options in destinations such as Guam, Saipan, Bali and Hawaii. Along with the globalization of the wedding market, internet promotions and digitalization initiatives in Japan were rapidly creating a new market segment, a new group of a more discerning, globally minded, better informed and digitally savvy young people who were no longer satisfied with the same products and services their parents and great parents had enjoyed.

On September 30, 2010, Japan Airlines decided to sell the majority of JAL Hotels shares to Hotel Okura Co., Ltd.. As a result, Hotel Okura Co., Ltd. became the main owner of the JAL Hotels, with 79.6% shares, while Japan Airlines retained 11.1%, with 9.3% being held by banks and other investors. After the acquisition, Hotel Okura Co., Ltd. decided not to interfere directly in the management of each JAL Hotels property. Rather, they chose a phased approach to the integration of the JAL Hotels, dispatching Hotel Okura Co., Ltd. executives to each JAL Hotels property for a determined period of time, in an effort to support the gradual transformation of operations and to create better connections within the leadership team.

By August 2014, the management of the JAL Sun Marina hotel was already anticipating a very chilly end of the year, as reservations was indicating less than 30% occupancy for the upcoming low season. Back office conversations were centered around the lack of speed in transforming their business, the lack of skills and vision necessary to turn around their business in time.

At the end of 2014, the property was out on the market, hoping to find either new investors or a new owner. In early 2015, the Starwood group indicated interest in the Sun Marina hotel and Mori Trust Hotels and Resorts were appointed to administer the business under the Sheraton brand. In June 2017, General Manager Jean-Raphael Felus was brought in from the InterContinental Hotels Group to turn the hotel around and to transform the business into a truly global operation.

Invested with trust, visibility and authority by both Mori Trust Hotels and Resorts and the Starwood group, Jean-Raphael embarked on a total transformation journey, re-creating the atmosphere of the hotel, revamping marketing, sales and talent operations, and looking at every single opportunity he had to re-define business and turn Sun Marina into an attractive destination for Japanese and international guest alike (Vlad; Felus; Acosta, 2017).

Sheraton Okinawa Sunmarina – From "Hierarchy" to "Wirearchy"

In order to provide a new and relevant experience to guests and employees, Jean-Raphael began by re-defining the existing Customer Value Proposition (CVP) and the Employee Value Proposition (EVP). He observed that the existing Customer Value Proposition (CVP) and Employee Value Proposition (EVP) were not effectively shared within the organization and employees were lacking confidence in talking about their organizational culture to anyone. By introducing cognitive technology, Jean-Raphael committed to redefining culture at the Sheraton Okinawa Sunmarina based on trust, collaboration, continuous innovation and communication. Upon further discussions with the President of the business, he decided to utilize data from both existing and new sources to redesign the structure of the organization and to secure agility and decision making processed based on genuine information and relevant business insights.

Jean-Raphael engaged his talent in a series of ideations sessions, searching for key words and concepts related to the creation and the delivery of a sustainable and ultimate experience for guests and staff alike. As part of this exercise, Jean-Raphael assembled team of internal and external organizational engineers, consisting of existing employees, business consultants and university students and tasked them to collect data on what modern hospitality service users appreciate and desire to experience during a visit to a resort. The task team worked with existing industrial intelligence, emerging from market research, executive interviews and white papers published by consulting firms and academic institutions. Along with this, the team utilized digital and social technology to reach out to potential guests and future Okinawa visitors from mainland Japan and overseas and to engage them in conversations about their expectations of an "ultimate" vacation experience.

Out of the 2,856 key words collected, the words (and their synonyms) "fun", "exciting" and "entertaining" appeared more than 1,000 times, while words such as "culture", "authentic" and "hospitable" appeared more than 800 times. In an effort to develop deeper insights from the data collected, the team clustered the words according to the culture of provenience, analyzed the inter-connectivity between key symbols and generated the taxonomy definitions for the most prominent cultural dimensions, in terms of tactile perception, colors, scents, sounds and emotions. As an immediate result, the team determined that both customers and employees were visually charmed by warm and vivid colors, conducive to the creation of a playful atmosphere and a joyful mindset shared by both guests and the resort crew. As an experiment of how color impacts the subconscious mind of the user, the team chose to analyze how a while grand piano, which had been used for wedding ceremonies during the JAL Hotels days, was impacting the subconsciousness of hotel visitors. The team decided in May 2015 to interview five hundred guests who had spent longer than ten minutes in the main hall, where the white grand piano was displayed, having tea of waiting for check-in in procedures to be completed.

As part of the short interview, as the guests were getting ready to leave the main hall, they were asked to describe the piano on display. A surprising 66% of the visitors declared that they did not even observe that there was a piano in the main hall, while 34% of those who did observe the piano mentioned that they had not been impressed by its presence in the main hall of the resort. When asked about the atmosphere in the main lobby, 68% of the guests interviews described it as "mediocre", while 36% indicated that they were getting either bored or impatient while spending time in this area.

As a test of how the usage of color changes the perceived culture and atmosphere of the build environment, the team decided to have the white piano painted in bright and vivid colors and interview visitors once again about their perception of the atmosphere in the main lobby. This time, all guests interviewed declared that they had observer the piano in the main hall and 89% declared that they were positively impressed by the colors of the piano. Qualitative data further indicated that those who were positively impressed mentioned that the colors of the instrument made them feel joy, well spirited and in a holiday mood. 96% of the guests interviewed described the atmosphere are “joyful” and 85% indicated that they enjoyed their time spent in the main hall.

The colorful grand piano
Copyright Sheraton Okinawa Sunmarina Resort

As a next step, Jean-Raphael invited an existing member from the incumbent HR team to step up to the role of Head of Talent and propose a strategy for revamping talent operations and organizational architecture. Naoko Matsumoto, the newly appointed Head of Talent, worked with her team and put forth a series of initiatives for reforming and restructuring the organization. By utilizing the Operating Model Canvas (OMC) developed by Andrew Campbell in the book with the same name, Mr. Matsumoto created and implemented an efficient operating model that demonstrated the value offered to its internal and external customers and its employees.

According to the information provided by the same author, an operating model is an operational design that makes it possible to deliver a certain business strategy. This program is about the intersection of business strategy and functional design for an organization as a whole, a business unit, a function, or a team. Shortly, it defines how the organization will deliver the capabilities and financial outcomes required by the strategy (Campbell, 2019).

The Operating Model Canvas (OMC) defines how the organization will deliver the capabilities and financial outcomes required by the strategy. A working model covers six elements making up the acronym POLISM:

1. *Processes and activities*: the work that needs to be done;
2. *Organization and people*: the people doing the work and how they are organized;
3. *Locations, buildings, and other assets*: the places where the work is done and the equipment in those places needed to support the work
4. *Information:* the software applications and databases required to support the work;
5. *Sourcing and partners:* those outside the organization sponsoring the work;
6. *Management system:* the planning and performance management of the work (Campbell, Gutierez, Graham, 2019: Hult Ashridhe).

Each element of the operating model designed has contributed to the success of the organization. As a result, the Starwood Group has satisfied customers and beneficiaries and sound financial performance.

As of June 2015, the talent turnover at the Sheraton Okinawa Sunmarina Resort was of 88%, as many monolingual Japanese speaking employees were leaving the resort, mainly due to the change in guest profiles and language ability requirements. Along with a series of new initiatives aimed at re-skilling and up-skilling existing talent with language and Cultural Intelligence (CQ) aptitudes, Naoko proposed utilizing data for talent acquisition, training, and organizational development purposes.

Insofar, hiring decisions had been made mostly based on interviews for newly graduated candidates, and random introductions made by local recruiting agencies, applications ranging from 5 to 8 per month. Upon introducing cognitive technology for talent acquisition, Naoko observed an immediate application increase ranging from 40 to 50 applications per month coming not only from the local area but also from the Asia Pacific region, Latin America and Europe.

It should be noted that Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and an effective implementation of cognitive technology together contribute to the creation of an agile organizational architecture, significantly improving internal communication, contributing to cultural development efforts and creating a platform for sharing, understanding and visualizing core elements of corporate and individual vision and values. There are several definitions and practical explanations through which we can appreciate the Cultural Intelligence (CQ) concept and its significant influence on modern organizational architecture and business evolution. And one of the greatest benefits of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is that it provides organization with a unified view on strategy and skill sets needed for associates to relate to each other efficiently and to work across cultural differences both at home and abroad (Cultural Intelligence Center, 2020). Moreover, Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is a multifaceted construct, which helps people to be better at understanding, appreciating and accounting for imminent differences, while operating in a wide variety of cultures; it is, therefore, an ability necessary in order to manage a global and diverse workforce in an international environment.

At the same time, as a result of rapid digitalization in modern days, Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is a concept that helps organization to discover and subsequently satisfy customers' and employees' needs across cultural boundaries in a world that never sleeps and where constant communication and dialogue with stakeholders from diverse cultural backgrounds is mandatory to succeed (Rüth, 2020: 1-6).

Social scientist Jeanne C. Meister mentions in "The 2020 Workplace" that "organizations translate the will of the epoch not only into the physical spaces that they create, but also into the decisions about the talent they select and the structure they create within the firm. These decisions are crucial because although employees no longer stay at one company for life, the decisions that are made about who is hired, developed, and promoted endure for years" (Meister, 2010 :2).

As we move further into the 21st century, the use of social and digital technology for talent acquisition purposes is nothing new. Naoko's team went one step further, though, utilizing talent related data for annual reviews and training purposes, customizing talent development programs based on individual performance indicators to support each employee in all necessary areas of improvement.

Based on personal data related to individual interests, career goals and aspirations, along with existing organizational needs and management requirements, intelligent communication platforms were developed internally to support employees better connect in a timely manner with each other and with resort guests. Slack was introduced to accelerate business information sharing on all technologies and platforms – personal computers, smart phones, digital displays and television screens. In order to further enhance engagement, Naoko's Talent Operations team worked with local a technology company to develop a social networking service app which provided user instant access to each other personal profiles and allowed instant sharing of digital data. As a result, employee engagement increased 89%, in comparison to the results indicated in pulse survey from the previous year.

The Sheraton Okinawa Sunmarina Resort went further in utilizing data to provide guests with timely information on the weather, resort activities and local cultural events through digital displays located at eight different locations throughout the resort. The implementation of the digital displays supported guests with the acquisition of timely and relevant information and hotel staff in sharing meaningful information not only with guests, but also internally within the organization.

Conclusions

We have argued throughout this paper that effective data utilization supports organizational development efforts and customer integration initiatives alike.

The following main results could be observed throughout the transformation process:

1) User experience can be effectively transformed in a relatively short period of time through the change of the build environment and digitalization;
2) Early implementation of data utilization initiatives contributes to the transformation of perceived culture and user experience;
3) The effective utilization of cultural symbols conveys comfort and is conducive of psychological safety;
4) Data utilization enhances the chances of transformative success and supports an appropriate prediction of upcoming challenges and potential issues;
5) A phased approach to digitalization combined with proper technological support leads to early adoption of the new technologies and the enhancement of creative confidence throughout the organization;
6) Visionary leadership needs to be continuously supported by all stakeholders throughout the business transformation process for change initiatives to be successful, impactful, and sustainable.

In conclusion, data utilization was instrumental in transforming the customer and employee experience at Sheraton Okinawa Sunmarina Resort, as it supported the development of critical cognitive elements necessary for the definition of the built environment, the digital space and the talent operations initiatives which were introduced as part of the business transformation plan after the acquisition. Effective utilization of data leads to the development of platforms, operations, and business intelligence necessary for leaders to make informed decisions and for associates to access whenever reference is needed.

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III. EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

THE RESULTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA WITHIN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP IN THE LIGHT OF THE "EASTERN PARTNERSHIP INDEX" STUDY

Victoria GOREAINOV [*]

Abstract. *This paper is an in-depth analysis of the results of the Republic of Moldova within the Eastern Partnership in the light of the "Eastern Partnership Index" study. For ten years, the Republic of Moldova has had different results in the Eastern Partnership, being considered even the "success story" in a certain period of time, and then giving way to Ukraine and Georgia in certain areas of development.*

Keywords: *Republic of Moldova, Eastern Partnership, Eastern Partnership Index, European Union, cooperation, partnership.*

Since 2009, the Republic of Moldova has been part of the Eastern Partnership Initiative, launched by the European Union. Two years after the launch of the Eastern Partnership, in 2011 a study called "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries" appeared, developed by several experts from Moldova, Ukraine, Gergia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, which was a kind of barometer that measures the state of democracy in the Eastern Partnership states and which included statistical information on the European integration of each EaP state, based on the analysis of the political, economic, civil and security dimension.

After 2014, the name of this study is changed to "Eastern Partnership Index". "Eastern Partnership Index" is conducted with the support of several European institutions being a study that presents the parallel evolution of the European integration agenda in the six countries of the Eastern Partnership.[1]

At the same time, the "Eastern Partnership Index" represents a comprehensive analysis of the progress made by each state in the process of carrying out the reforms and adjusting the internal situation to the requirements of the European Union. This study presents the results of the monitoring of the actions undertaken during a year and is carried out with the participation of over 50 experts from different states, including the members of the EaP.

The publication analyzes over 800 indicators being divided into three dimensions, such as:

1) **Linkage,** which examines the deepening of political, economic and social relations between each state and the European Union;
2) **Approximation**, which seeks to bring the legislation and work of the institutions of the partner states into line with European standards; compliance with the recommendations

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[1] What is EaP Index? https://eap-csf.eu/what-is-eap-index/, accessed 20.04.2020

and requirements submitted by the European Commission;

3) **Management** assesses the evolution of EaP management structures and policies.[2]

It should be mentioned that these three dimensions have several sub-dimensions, which we will analyze separately, in the case of the Republic of Moldova.

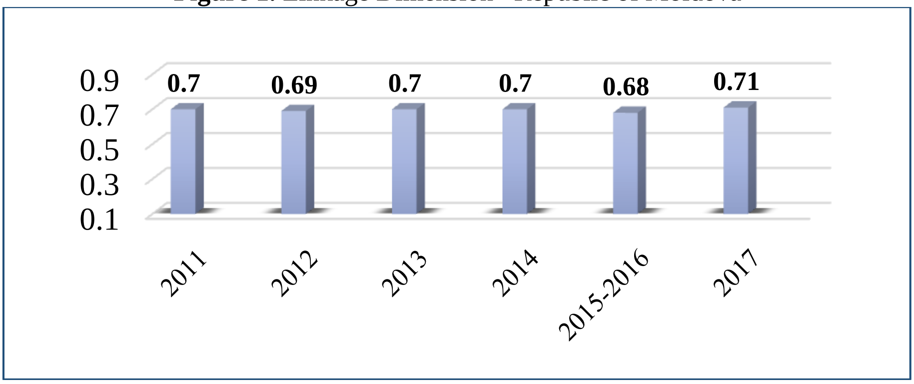
Linkage Dimension

Linkage Dimension includes such components as: political dialogue; trade and economic integration; freedom, security and justice (sectoral cooperation since 2012); energy and transport; education and people-to-people; assistance; international security, political dialogue and cooperation (since 2015); sectoral cooperation and trade flows (since 2015); citizens in Europe (since 2015).

The structure of the Linkage dimension reflects the multisectoral nature of the European integration process. This dimension analyzes the depth and intensity of cooperation between the EU and the EaP states, in particular political dialogue, trade flows, cooperation in various sectors, human mobility and the level of EU assistance for each country.[3]

Analyzing this dimension in the case of the Republic of Moldova, we note that the difference between the main indicators in 2011-2017 is not large, the best result being recorded by Moldova in 2017 – 0.71 (*see* Figure 1).

Figure 1. Linkage Dimension– Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

It should be mentioned that, in the Linkage department, the Republic of Moldova is an absolute leader during these years, having the highest indicator and leaving behind the 5 states in the EaP. In order to understand the progress made by the Republic of Moldova in this regard, we will analyze each category in the linkage dimension separately.

The first and very important category in Linkage Dimension is that of **political dialogue**. The intensity and depth of the political dialogue depends significantly on the institutional structure of each State in the EaP. It should be noted that, since 2015, the category of political dialogue has been included in the category of *"international security,*

[2] Natalia Percinschi, Gheorghe Rîciu. Retrospective asupra Parteneriatului Estic. Revista Științifică "Vector European", №1, 2015.

[3] European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries, 2012, International Renaissance Foundation in cooperation with the Open Society Foundations.

political dialogue and cooperation".

This category measures how governments in the EaP and the EU cooperate in crucial areas of international security, defense, border management. Intergovernmental contacts are conceptualized as part of a "European society". Thus, the extent to which EaP states control their own security as sovereign actors is also taken into account. That category includes the following sub-categories – Political dialogue with the EU; Intergovernmental Co-operation and Engagement in EaP Multilateral Events/Panels; International Security Co-operation; Border Security; EU Funding of Security Projects; Development Assistance from EU and Other Donors.[4]

Analyzing this category, we can highlight the fact that, from 2011 to 2014, the result of the Republic of Moldova was increasing, reaching the highest indicator in 2014 – 0.86 out of 1.00. In these 4 years Moldova was placed on the 2nd place, after Ukraine in terms of areas in this category. In the next 3 years the score of the Republic of Moldova decreased considerably, reaching the lowest and worst indicator in 2017 – 0, 70. Thus, after 2014, Moldova was already ranked 3rd after Ukraine and Georgia. It should be noted that even in 2011 Moldova did not have such a low score in the category of political dialogue as in 2017 (*see* Figure 2).

The second category in the Linkage Dimension is that of **trade and economic integration**, which since 2015 has been included in *"sectoral cooperation and trade flows"*. This category examines the extent to which trade and investment in EaP countries are integrated into the EU. At the same time, the integration of energy sources/markets and the density of transport links is assessed separately, as these two sectors constitute crucial infrastructures for economic integration.[5]

Figure 2. Political dialogue (international security, political dialogue and cooperation) – Linkage Dimension – Republic of Moldova

Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

The results obtained in this category show the efforts made towards improving trade flows, removing barriers to trade in goods and boosting foreign direct investment. This category includes the following subcategories – Trade with EU: Commodities; Investments

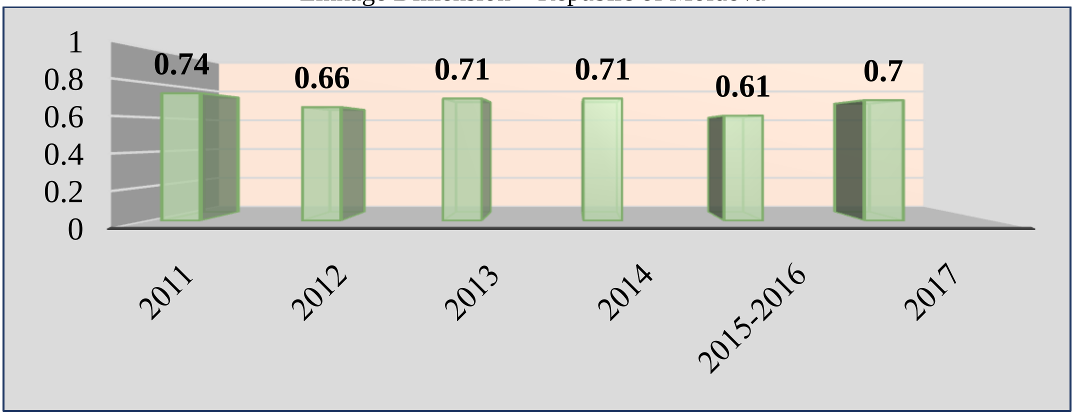
[4] Eastern Partnership Index 2017, Charting Progress in European Integration, Democratic Reforms, and Sustainable Development. Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

[5] Eastern Partnership Index 2017, Charting Progress in European Integration, Democratic Reforms, and Sustainable Development. Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

and Loans from EU; Trade with EU: Services; Trade Defence Instruments; Energy Interdependence; Transport: Integration with Trans-European Networks; Environment.

Performing the analysis of the results of the Republic of Moldova in the category of trade and economic integration in 2011-2017, we observe the following evolution – decrease (2012) – increase (2013) – stagnation (2014) – decrease (2015-2016) – increase (2017). In the period 2011-2016, Moldova occupied the 2nd place in this category, ceding to Ukraine, but in 2017 the situation changed and Moldova was on the 1st place. Even if Moldova occupied the first position in 2017 with the score – 0.70, this result was not a good one, considering that in 2011 the country had the score - 0.74 (*see* Figure 3).

Figure 3. Trade and economic integration (sectoral cooperation and trade flows)– Linkage Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

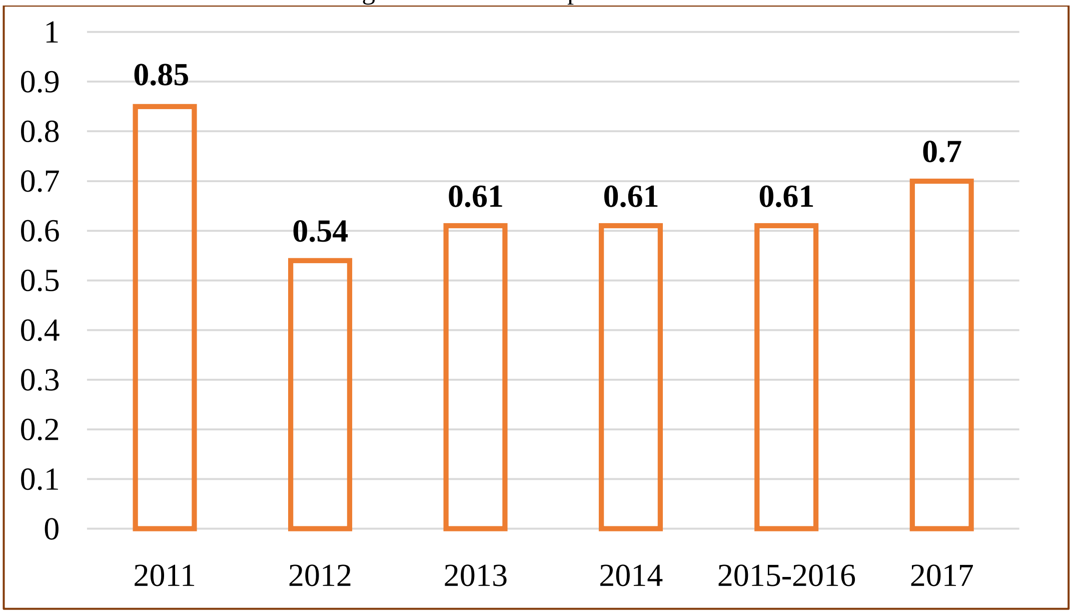
The third category in the Linkage Dimension is that of **freedom, security and justice**, which later since 2012 has been included in *"sectoral cooperation"*, and since 2015 in *"sectoral cooperation and trade flows"*. Cooperation in the area of freedom, security and justice between the EU and EaP countries is a matter of great importance, as it indicates the level of integration/cooperation in the most sensitive areas, which requires high trust between partners. Cooperation in this area is closely linked to the maturity of democratic institutions and the rule of law.

Increasing standards of co-operation in this area can encourage countries to pursue reforms in the fight against corruption and organized crime, the fight against illegal migration and human trafficking, and the promotion of reforms aimed at better protection of human rights, more effective law enforcement and transparent judicial system.[6]

Here we see that in 2011 Moldova had a pretty good score, being on the first place in this category, but in the following years (2012-2016) there was a period of stagnation, in which Moldova gives way to Ukraine, and only in 2017 there was an increase, Moldova again obtaining the first place. At the same time, this result is not better than the initial one in 2011 (*see* Figure 4).

[6] European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries, 2011, International Renaissance Foundation in cooperation with the Open Society Foundations.

Figure 4. Freedom, security and justice (sectoral cooperation and trade flows) – Linkage Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

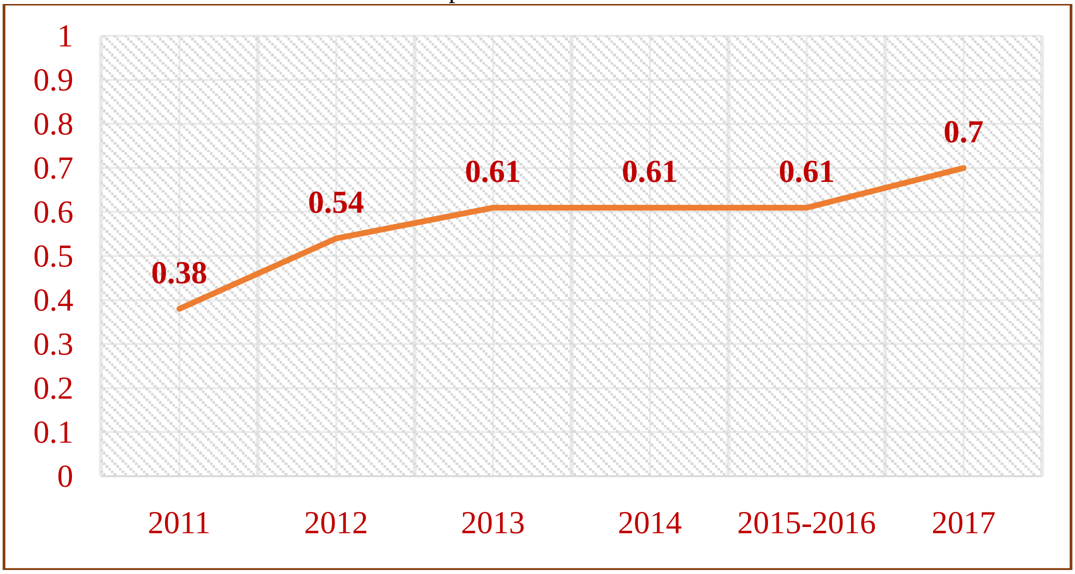
The fourth category in the Linkage Dimension is that of **energy and transport**. This category was initially measured separately, but later in 2012 it was also included in the *"sectoral cooperation"* category, and since 2015 in the *"sectoral cooperation and trade flows"* category.

In terms of energy, the index examines the extent to which the energy markets of the EaP countries are integrated and organized in a similar way to the EU energy markets. As issues related to the energy sector and energy policy receive much attention in the EU policy, the Index examines energy market regulation and market structure in line with EU standards. The energy trade analysis includes mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation. When it comes to transport, the basic idea is that transport connections should be easier, safer for all transport users in the EU and the EaP countries.[7]

Analyzing the results of the Republic of Moldova in the category of energy and transport, we find a modest indicator in 2011, followed by a small increase in 2012, then stagnation for 3 years (2013-2016), and a significant increase in 2017, if we compare with first result from 2011 (*see* Figure 5). Compared to the other EaP states, in this respect, in 2011 and 2017 Moldova was on the first place, and in 2012-2016 on the second place, ceding only to Ukraine.

[7] European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries, 2011, International Renaissance Foundation in cooperation with the Open Society Foundations.

Figure 5. Energy and transport (sectoral cooperation and trade flows) – Linkage Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

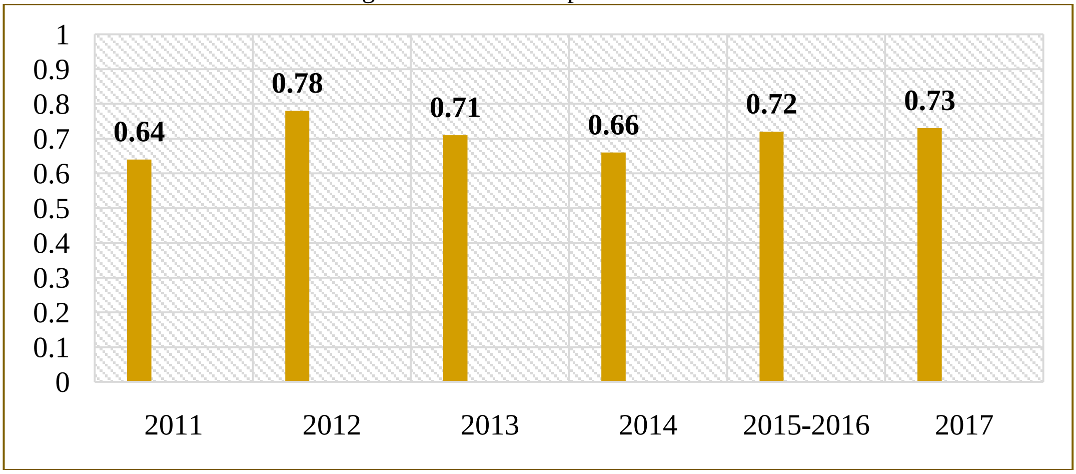
The fifth category in the Linkage Dimension is that of **Education and People to People**. Since 2012 the name of this category changed to *"People to People"*, and since 2015 to *"Citizens in Europe"*. This category analyzes the mobility of people, including students; educational policies, with a focus on the Bologna process; Mobility, including academic and student mobility, policies on culture, youth, information society, media and audiovisual use; and Participation in EU programs and agencies.[8]

"Citizens in Europe" measures the expansion of citizens' mobility, migration and communication flows between EaP and EU countries. The index focuses on migration as a process leading to deeper European integration. Migration is not viewed here as a threat to the EU's internal security or as an EU policy to prevent illegal migration with the help of EU states. At the same time, this category includes cultural exchange and cooperation, affinity with the European Union, cooperation in science and education, mobility, including academic and student mobility, the digital and information society.[9]

Examining the results of the Republic of Moldova in this category, we find the following evolution in this period – a modest result in 2011; growth in 2012; decrease in 2013; decrease in 2014; growth in 2015-2016; growth in 2017 (*see* Figure 6). In terms of Education and Mobility, the Republic of Moldova over the years has been a leader, ranking first, but in 2017 the country ceded this place to Georgia, which achieved a higher result.

[8] Ibidem
[9] Eastern Partnership Index 2017, Charting Progress in European Integration, Democratic Reforms, and Sustainable Development. Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

Figure 6. Education and People to People (People to People, Citizens in Europe) – Linkage Dimension – Republic of Moldova

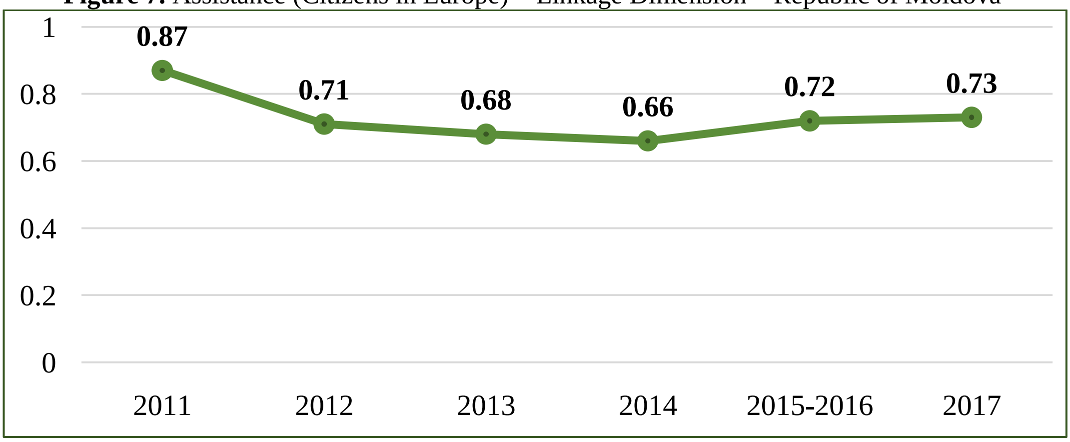


Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

The sixth category in the Linkage Dimension is that of **Assistance**, which since 2015 has fallen into the category *"Citizens in Europe"*. This category measures EU development aid, partnership-specific instruments – national and regional, technical assistance and cooperation with European financial institutions.

In the assistance category, in the results of the Republic of Moldova we observe a decrease from 2011 to 2014, and from 2015 to 2017 an increase in the score (*see* Figure 7). Even if in the period 2011-2014 Moldova's score was decreasing, the country was placed on the first place, and when the score was increasing (2015-2017), Moldova was ranked third and second, giving way to Ukraine and Georgia.

Figure 7. Assistance (Citizens in Europe) – Linkage Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

It is important to mention that, initially the Linkage Dimension included 6 categories, among which – political dialogue; trade and economic integration; freedom, security and justice; energy and transport; education and people-to-people; assistance. After a year, in 2012 they were reduced to 5 categories, and from 2015 to 3 categories with a small change of names - international security, political dialogue and cooperation, sectoral cooperation and trade flows, citizens in Europe.

Approximation Dimension

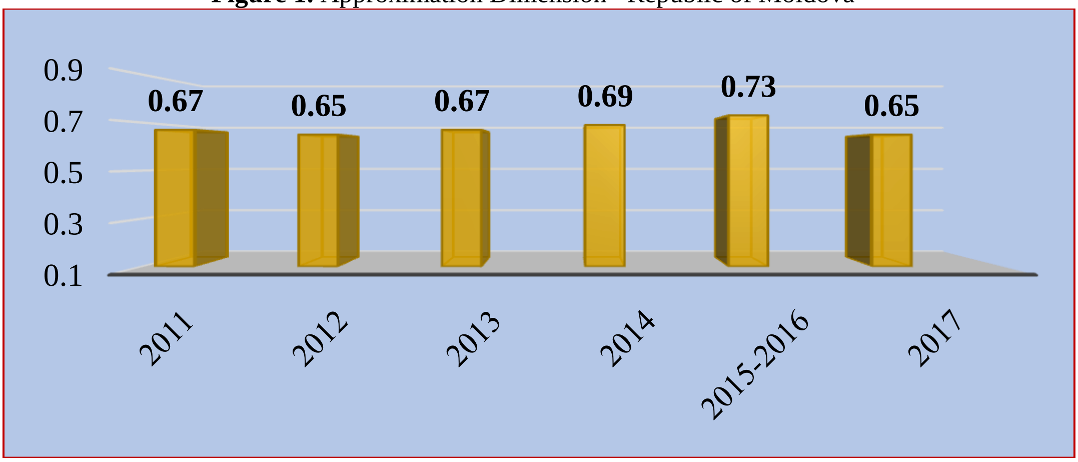
Approximation Dimension aims to evaluate the institutions and policies of the EaP countries and compare them with those typical of EU Member States. The sections on deep and sustainable democracy and the market economy and the DCFTA are not only basic conditions that the EU imposes on the countries concerned for closer relations with it, but are also undisputed political objectives and legitimize general principles in all EaP countries.[10]

This dimension includes the analysis of the following components: legislation, practices and institutions in the EaP countries and their compliance with EU standards in line with EU requirements. We should note that, initially in 2011, the Approximation Dimension was divided into 8 sub-categories such as:Democracy;Rule of Law; Governance Quality; Market Economy; Freedom, security and justice; Energy and transport; Environment; Education and People to People.

Since 2012, these categories have been reduced to 3, such as:Deep and Sustainable Democracy; Market Economy and DCFTA; Sectoral Approximation. At the same time, since 2015 the names of these categories have changed – Deep and Sustainable Democracy; EU Integration and Convergence; Sustainable Development. In order to research the result obtained by the Republic of Moldova in this dimension, we will analyze each category separately.

Analyzing the result obtained by Moldova in this regard, we see a stagnation in 2011-2013, then an increase until 2016, and in 2017 a significant decrease. Thus, in 2017 Moldova obtained a very low score, even lower than initially in 2011 (*see* Figure 1).

Figure 1. Approximation Dimension– Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

[10] European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries, 2011, International Renaissance Foundation in cooperation with the Open Society Foundations.

We should mention that, during the years 2011-2016, the Republic of Moldova obtained the highest score in Approximation, compared to other countries in the EaP, occupying the first place. Everything changed in 2017, when Moldova lost not only the first position, but also the second, ranking third, after Ukraine and Armenia.

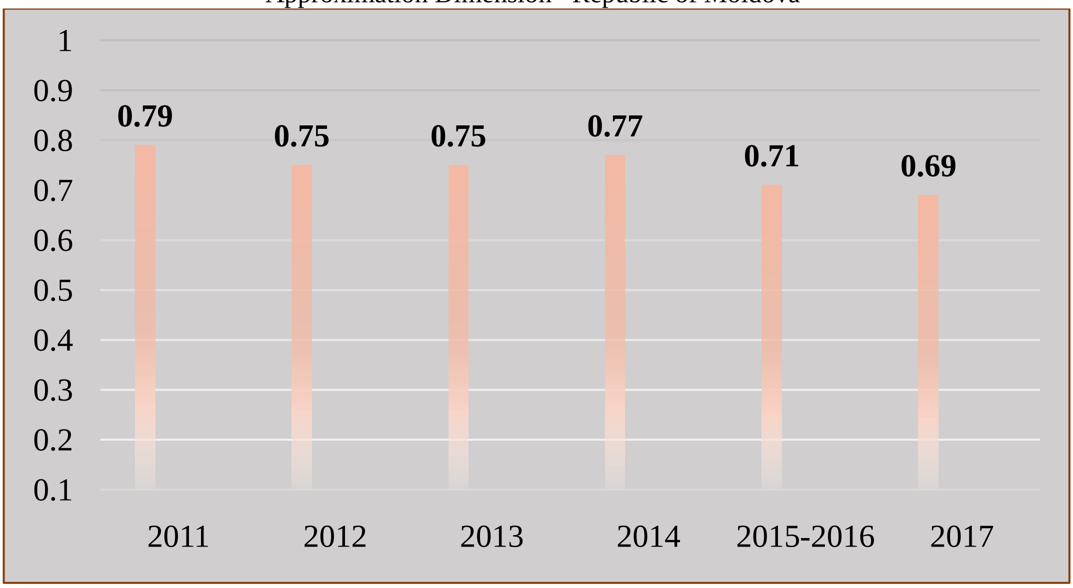
The first categories in the Approximation Dimension that we will analyze will be – *Democracy; Rule of Law and Governance Quality*. We joined these categories because, in 2012, one year after the launch of the Eastern Partnership Indices, they were included in a single category – **Deep and Sustainable Democracy**.

Deep and sustainable democracy measures the adoption and implementation of human rights and democratic principles as defined by the European Convention on Human Rights, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The following indicators are examined in this category: Democratic Rights and Elections, including Political Pluralism; Human Rights and Protection Against Torture; Accountability; Independent Media; Freedom of Speech and Assembly; Independent Judiciary; Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination; Rule of Law and Fighting Corruption; Public Administration.[11]

We can see that the score of the Republic of Moldova in this category was initially increasing (2011), in the next 2 years stagnant (2012-2013), after which it increased again (2014) and then decreased again (2015-2017) having the lowest score of these years in 2017 (*see* Figure 2).

In the period 2011-2016, Moldova had the leading position in this ranking, but in 2017 Ukraine and Georgia showed a better result than Moldova, in terms of deep and sustainable democracy.

Figure 2. Deep and Sustainable Democracy (Democracy; Rule of Law and Governance Quality) – Approximation Dimension– Republic of Moldova



***Source*:** made by the author based on data collected from the reports “European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014” and “Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017”, available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

[11] Eastern Partnership Index 2017, Charting Progress in European Integration, Democratic Reforms, and Sustainable Development. Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

The second category in the Approximation Dimension includes – **Market Economy** and *Freedom, security and justice*, which later in 2012 was included in the *"Market Economy and DCFTA"*, and since 2015 has had the name – *EU Integration and Convergence*. In order to assess the domestic economic performance and market economy status of each EaP state, the quality of the business climate in these countries and the progress of their transition were analyzed in this category. The analysis is based on widely used indicators for international economic comparison, specific factors and short-term shocks.[12]

The EU Integration and Convergence category is a measure of integration and convergence with the EU rules on trade, security, migration, energy, environment, transport, infrastructure. This includes the analysis of the following components: Market Economy and DCFTA; Freedom, Security and Justice; Energy: Legislation Convergence and Energy Policy; Environment and Climate Policy; Transport: Regulatory Policy.[13]

Regarding the Republic of Moldova, here we find an increase from 2011 to 2017, with stagnation in 2011-2012 and 2014-2016. Thus, in this category the evolution of the score of the Republic of Moldova during the years 2011-2017 was a positive one (*see* Figure 3). In the area of market economy, during these years, Moldova ranked second, giving the first position to Georgia, and in 2015-2017 to Ukraine.

Figure 3. Market Economy and DCFTA (EU Integration and Convergence) – Approximation Dimension– Republic of Moldova

***Source*:** made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

The third category of the Approximation Dimension includes: *Freedom, security*

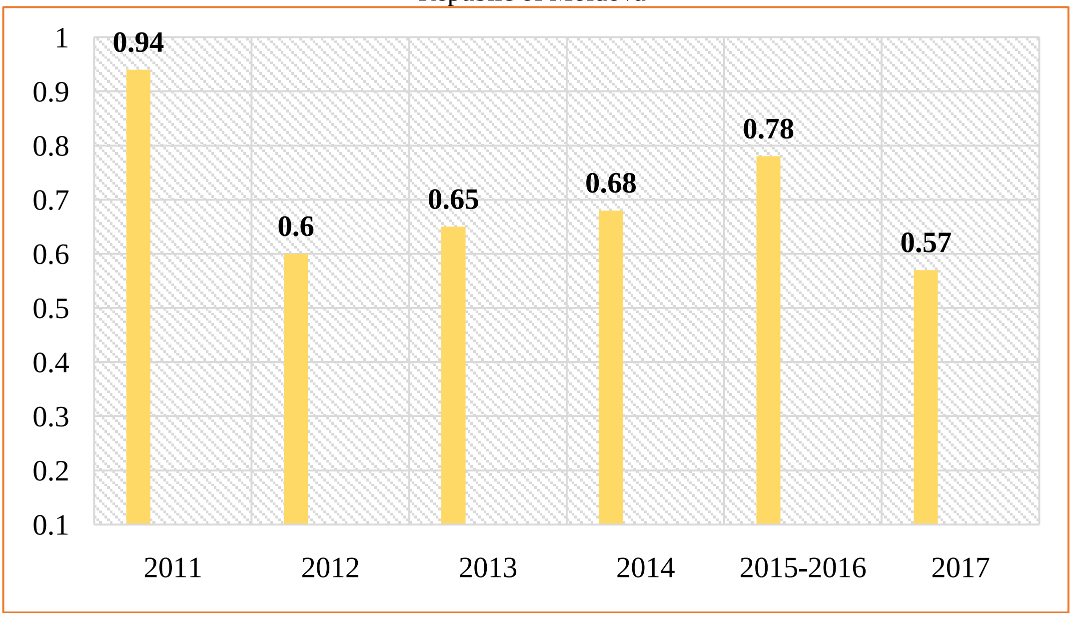
[12] European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries, 2013, International Renaissance Foundation in cooperation with the Open Society Foundations.

[13] Eastern Partnership Index 2017, Charting Progress in European Integration, Democratic Reforms, and Sustainable Development. Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

and justice; Energy and transport; Environment; Education and People to People, and since 2012 they have been united in a single category*„Sectoral approximation”*, and since 2015 it has become **„Sustainable Development”.** Sustainable Development measures the sustainable development policies of EaP countries and analyzes the extent to which they have achieved the sustainable development goals defined by the UNO. This category includes: Sustainable Development Policy; Sustainable Development Goals; Education and life-long learning opportunities.

In this category, Moldova experienced a significant increase in 2011, a decrease in 2012, an increase in 2013-2016 and a decrease in 2017, with the lowest score (*see* Figure 4). In the period 2011-2014, Moldova was placed on the first place in this ranking, in 2015-2016 on the second place, and in 2017 Moldova obtained a very low score, placing on the last place together with Georgia.

Figure 4. Sustainable Development (Sectoral approximation) – Approximation Dimension– Republic of Moldova



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Management Dimension

Management Dimension represents the evolution of management structures and policies in the Eastern Partnership countries, which aim at European integration in the EU. Management analyzes the institutional structures and coordination, management of European integration. This dimension reflects the level of commitment to European integration and the ability to meet the growing EU agenda in each EaP country.[14]

Initially, Management Dimension included four categories: Coordination Mechanism; Legal Approximation Mechanism; Participation of civil society; Management of EU Assistance. Since 2012 we already have six categories: Institutional Arrangements

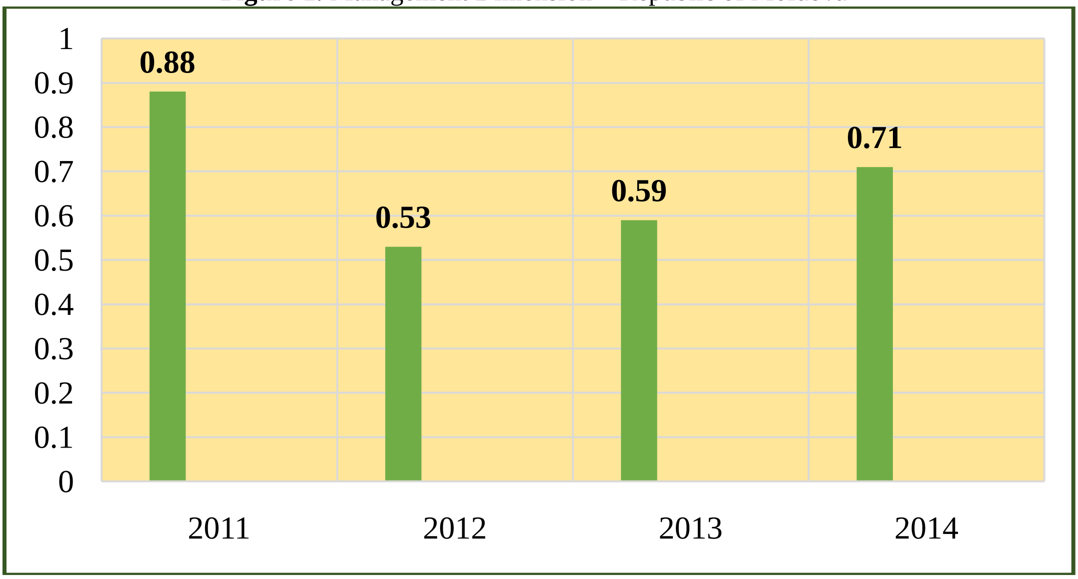
[14] European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries, 2013, International Renaissance Foundation in cooperation with the Open Society Foundations.

for European Integration; Legal Approximation Mechanism; Management of EU Assistance; Training in the field of European Integration; Awareness Raising about European Integration; Participation of civil society.

The analysis of the Management Dimension gives us an image of only four time intervals 2011-2014, this being subsequently analyzed as part of the other two dimensions of the EaP Index.

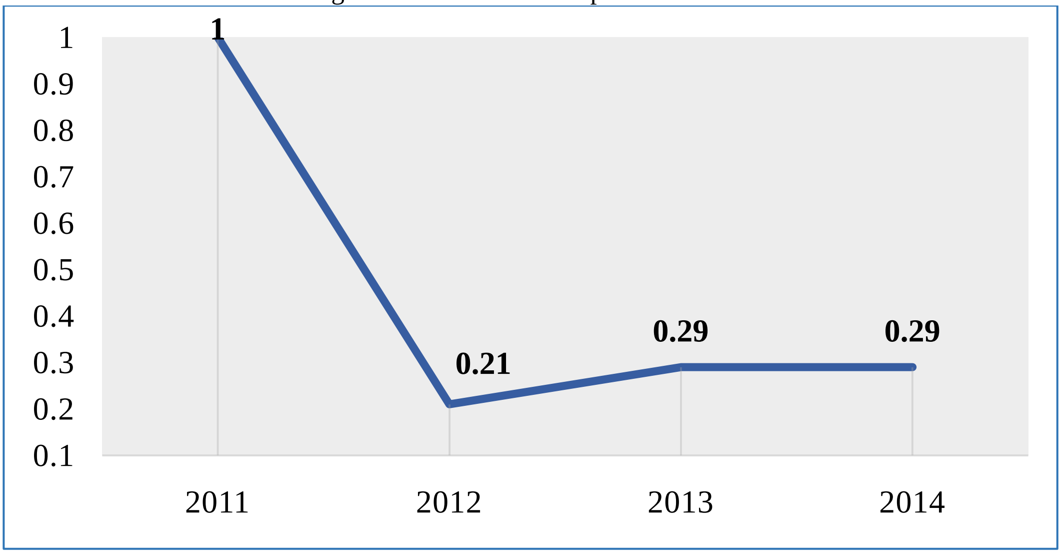
Initially in terms of Management, the Republic of Moldova had a good result, but in 2012 the situation suddenly changed to decrease, and in 2013-2014 the score began to increase, but it still did not reach the same indicator as in 2011 (*see* Figure 1). If in 2011 Moldova was placed second in this ranking, after Georgia, in 2012-2013, the country improved the score, placing first, but in 2014 Moldova lost to Georgia again.

Figure 1. Management Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

Figure 2. Coordination Mechanism (Institutional Arrangements for European Integration) – Management Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

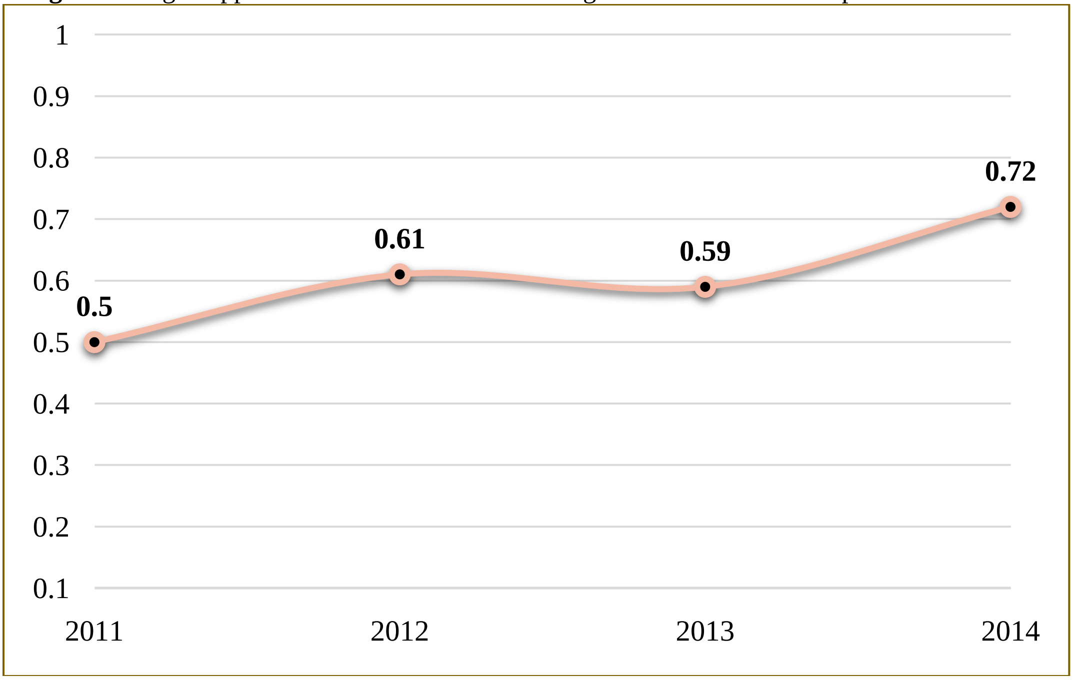
The first category in the Management Dimension is that of **Coordination Mechanism**, which since 2012 has changed into "*Institutional Arrangements for European Integration*". The results of the Republic of Moldova in this category show a maximum score in 2011, then in 2012 a decrease, after which in 2013-2014 an insignificant increase and stagnation (*see* Figure 2). In the period 2011-2012 the Republic of Moldova was placed on the first place, together with Georgia, and in 2013-2014 the result of the Republic of Moldova was better than that of Georgia, the country being placed on the first place.

The second category in the Management Dimension is that of **Legal Approximation Mechanism**.

In this compartment, the result of the Republic of Moldova was one of continuous growth, only in one year (2013), the country registered a small decrease, but in 2014, the score was increasing again (*see* Figure 3).

In the period 2011-2012, the Republic of Moldova was ranked third, ceding to Ukraine and Georgia. In 2013 Moldova shared the second place with Georgia, and in 2014 obtaining the best results, Moldova and Georgia received the first place.

Figure 3. Legal Approximation Mechanism – Management Dimension – Republic of Moldova



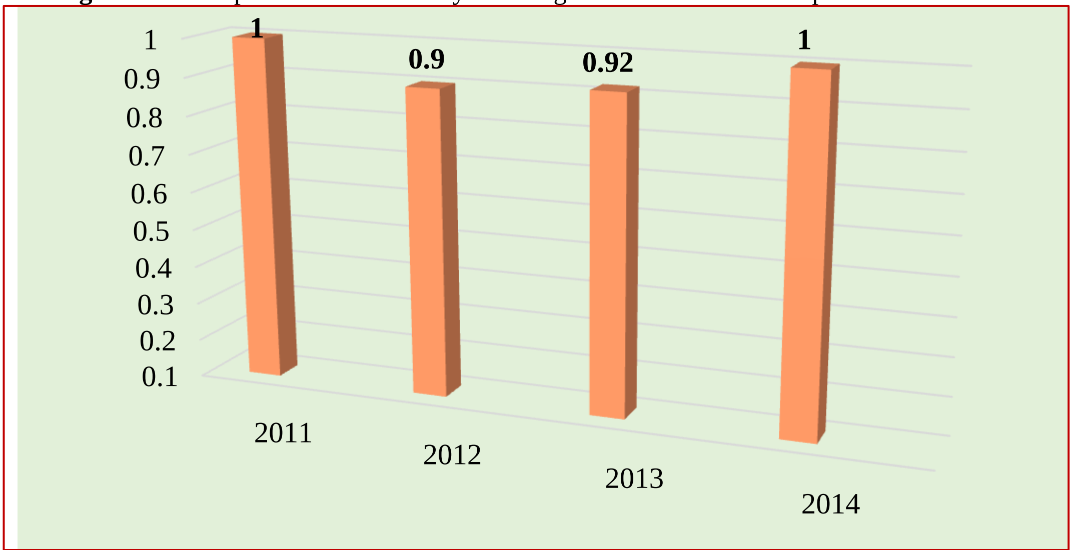
Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

The third category in the Management Dimension is that of **Participation of civil society.**

In terms of civil society participation, the Republic of Moldova had a rather good result, obtaining the highest scores. Having a maximum score in 2011, over a year, in 2012 followed a decrease, then again an increase, reaching the maximum score in 2017 (*see* Figure 4).

In the period 2011-2013, Moldova was placed on the first place together with Georgia, in terms of civil society participation. At the same time, in 2014, Georgia lost the first position, Moldova being an undisputed leader in this category.

Figure 4. Participation of civil society – Management Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

The fourth category in the Management Dimension is that of **Management of EU Assistance.**

Initially obtaining the highest indicator in 2011, in the EU assistance management department, the score of the Republic of Moldova started to fall in the following years and only in 2014 there was an increase (*see* Figure 5).

In 2011, Moldova and Georgia were placed first. One year later, in 2012, Moldova was the only leader in this category, ranking first. In 2013, Moldova ceded the first position to Belarus, ranking second. In 2014, the result of the Republic of Moldova reached the one that Belarus also had, both obtaining the first place.

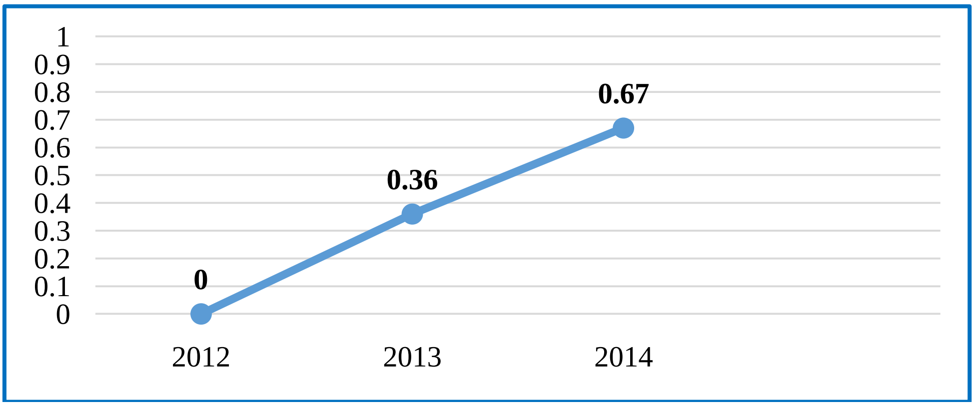
Figure 5. Management of EU Assistance – Management Dimension – Republic of Moldova

Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

The fifth category in the Management Dimension is that of **Awareness Raising about European Integration**, which has been introduced since 2012.

In the case of the Republic of Moldova, during this period we notice an increase in the score (*see* Figure 6).

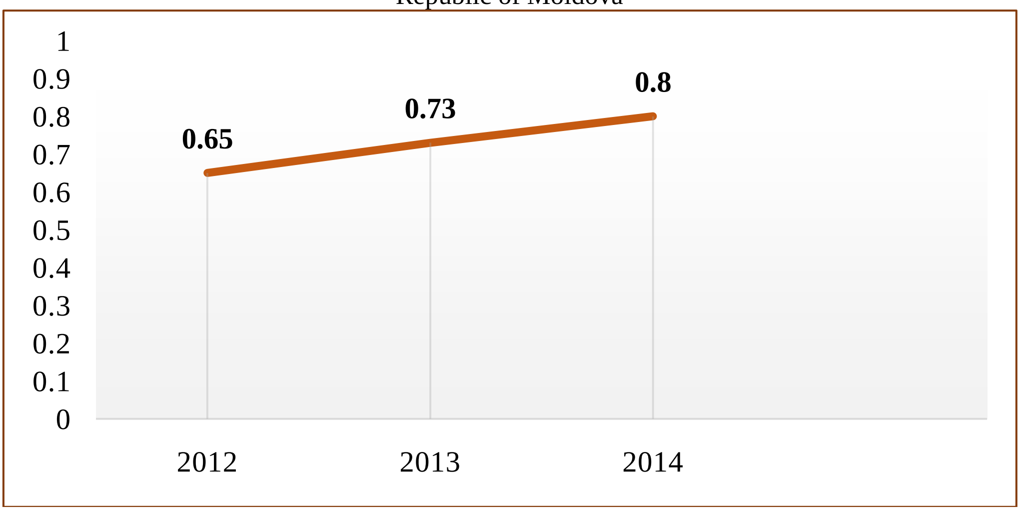
Figure 6. Awareness Raising about European Integration – Management Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

In 2013, Moldova was on the third place, ceding to Georgia and Armenia, and in 2014 it was on the second place, after Georgia.

Figure 7. Institutional Arrangements for European Integration – Management Dimension – Republic of Moldova



Source: made by the author based on data collected from the reports "European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014" and "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016, 2017", available online https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/, accessed April 30, 2020.

The sixth category in the Management Dimension is that of **Institutional Arrangements for European Integration**, which has been introduced since 2012.

In this respect, in the period 2012-2014, the Republic of Moldova registered an increase (*see* Figure 7). In these years, Moldova took the first place, leaving behind its EaP colleagues.

In conclusion, we can mention that the "Eastern Partnership Index" is a very important study, which offers a comprehensive analysis of the progress made by each state participating in the Eastern Partnership, in the process of carrying out reforms and adjusting the internal situation to the European Union requirements. For ten years, the Republic of Moldova has had different results in the Eastern Partnership, being considered even the "success story" in a certain period of time, and then giving way to Ukraine and Georgia in certain areas of development.

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CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT OF ROMANIA IN EUROPEAN CONTEXT

*Simona BĂLAN**

Abstract. *Waters cross national and administrative borders, so the states must cooperate for an integrated and sustainable management of water resources. Joint management of transboundary water issues has a long tradition in Europe. There's an obvious growing concern for the protection and improvement of water quality at the global level, especially in the context of climate change and population growth. In Europe, the current water policy (the Water Framework Directive and the Floods Directive) accelerated the process of integrated management of transboundary waters. Thus, cross-border cooperations appears to be an essential component with the need of defining common principles for EU's Member States in order to improve water protection and the management of cross-border water issues. The paper presents Romania's cooperation in the field of water management with the neighboring countries, mainly bilateral cooperation, but also in European context (with member states and non-member states), with the possibility of financing joint projects through the various Europena Territorial cooperation programmes.*

Keywords: *cross-border, cross-border cooperation, water management, transboundary waters, bilateral cooperation, cross-border cooperation programmes, European Territorial Cooperation*

Introduction

In recent decades, in the context of climate change and population growth, there has been a growing concern for the protection, conservation and improvement of the quality of water resources at the global level. Sustainable management of water resources thus becomes imperative for optimal benefits.

Water knows no administrative boundaries, so for an integrated and sustainable management of water resources, there is an obvious need for a real cooperation between states. The most appropriate way to find common solutions to common problems is through managing water resources issues at river basins level or river districts level.

The European Union is a territory characterized by transboundary waters, about 60% of its surface being represented by river basins that cross at least one national border. Regional and cross-border cooperation is therefore a useful mechanism for solving complex water problems and managing natural resources across administrative borders between two or more countries.

At European level, joint management of water issues has a long and long tradition. The Water Framework Directive has accelerated and intensified this process, just as the financial stimulation of cross-border cooperation actions intensified it through the

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European Union's territorial cooperation programs, dedicated to cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation.

1. Cross-border cooperation - conceptual presentation

1.1 Cross-border cooperation - definition, history and legal framework

Borders and border areas are diverse, they can separate or unite the two neighboring regions or their communities, depending on the existing political regime and on the regions desire for cooperation or separation.

The concept of cross-border cooperation describes exactly this opportunity for cooperation of neighboring regions through joint collaboration, actions and strategies, motivated by similar cross-border pressures, collaboration achievable both in an institutionalized framework and as a form of direct cooperation.

Perkmann defines cross-border cooperation as "more or less institutionalized collaboration between contigous subnational authorities across national borders" (Perkmann, 2003: 3)

In Europe, especially after the Second World War, in the 1950s, when new borders and divided communities appeared, in the border areas of some of the Western European countries, there began to arise the issue of cross-border cooperation with the purpose of eliminating the negative effects of the administrative separation.

Border regions face specific difficulties related to their peripheral nature, low population density, natural constraints (mountainous or coastal regions), as well as poor transport infrastructure and lack of coherence in the management of transboundary ecosystems (air, water, which do not have as a limit one border or another).

The successive enlargement of the of European Union has had the effect of widening economic and social disparities between the states of the Union, which has led to a clear need of adopting a regional and cohesion policy, with the purpose of supporting the reduction of disparities between the more developed and less developed regions and Member States of the European Union.

Also, with the successive enlargement rounds of the European Union, cross-border areas have become more numerous, becoming an integral part of the European Union's regional and cohesion policy, as well as European integration, requiring real cooperation for common regional development and the integration of the Member States into a European community.

The phenomenon of Euroregional cooperation does not imply the elimination or erasure of national borders, but consists of connections between the regions on both sides of the borders, in order to be able to jointly face the common problems. The elimination of economic barriers within the European Union and the freedom of movement have provided new opportunities for these regions on both sides of the border, leading to the limitation of the "border effect" and laying the foundations for strong cooperation.

Chronologically, the institutional legal basis for cross-border cooperation at European level is considered to be the Madrid Convention of 21 May 1980, also called the "European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities" (Consiliul Europei, 1980).

This Convention is an international treaty adopted at the initiative of the Council of Europe by 20 states, which provides a legal framework for cross-border cooperation and for the creation of bilateral or multilateral cooperation agreements. „For the purpose of this Convention, transfrontier cooperation shall mean any concerted action designed to reinforce and foster neighbourly relations between territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of two or more Contracting Parties and the conclusion of any agreement and arrangement necessary for this purpose" (art.2; Consiliul Europei, 1980: 1).

Over time, the number and variety of types of cross-border agreements (treaties, conventions, agreements) has increased significantly, most of Europe's border regions being currently part of a cross-border association.

The main purpose of cross-border cooperation at that time was to remove barriers imposed by the border, restrictions, and other factors that contributed to the separation of communities from cross-border regions. However, it was soon noticed that due to the absence of legal and administrative powers, the proposed goals can only be achieved to a limited extent. Thus, between 1970-1980, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and national governments supported cross-border cooperation policies through a number of associations, such as the Association of European Border Regions - AEBR. This association participated in the creation of local associative structures in the countries interested in this type of cooperation. AEBR defines cross-border cooperation as being: „directly neighbourly cooperation in all areas of life between regional and local authorities along the border and involving all actors" (AEBR, 2000: 15).

Among the first cross-border cooperation are those in the border regions between the Netherlands-Germany and France-Germany-Sweden, when they began to look for solutions to their common problems. Euregio, on the Netherlands-Germany border, was the first true cross-border structure, established in 1958. On the same border, the Rhein-Waal, Maas-Rhein, Rhein Maas-Nord and Ems-Dollart Euroregions also appeared in 1970. As defined by the Madrid Framework Convention, the goals of Euroregions are to increase trust and tolerance as premises for a good neighborly relationship in border territories comprising national minorities, to improve public services across borders, and to manage issues beyond states such as be the environmental ones, and the coordination of the common interest policies (Consiliul Europei, 1980).

In the 1990s, after the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, a growing number of cooperation structures known as Euroregions emerged. This euroregional model was followed also by Romania, ratifying in 1998 the Madrid Framework Convention and participating in the establishment and development of cooperation in the form of 11 Euroregions.

The good results of cooperation within Euregio have been an example that has driven the continuation of cooperation initiatives in border regions, so that, in addition to the legal framework provided by the Council of Europe through the Madrid Convention, the European Union has launched financial programs for supporting cross-border cooperation. The first such instrument was the *INTERREG Community Initiative*, which was launched in 1990 for the EU border regions, thus recognizing the growing importance of border regions and cross-border cooperation in the overall European integration process. Over time, INTERREG has undergone successive transformations related to multi-annual programming, and continues today.

By EC Regulation no. 1082/2006, the European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) were formed (Regulament GECT 1082, 2006).

A European grouping of territorial cooperation is a structure with legal personality, which can act on behalf of its members. EGTC members must be located in the territory of at least two EU Member States, and other non-EU entities may join the grouping, if the national law of that State allows such association. The EGTC may initiate and manage cross-border cooperation activities funded or not by the European Union.

Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) has established the following principles for cross-border cooperation:

• partnership;
• subsidiarity;
• the existence of a common concept or program of cross-border development;
• common structures at regional / local level and independent sources of funding,

principles that also represent the fundamental requirements of European assistance programs (AEBR, 2000: 15).

Not all cross-border cooperation initiatives or projects require their own cross-border structure, such as Euroregions or working groups, to be developed and implemented. They can also be carried out by existing bodies on both sides of the border, but can benefit from cross-border structures created for cooperation.

The success and effectiveness of cross-border cooperation depends on the involvement and cooperation at all levels, both vertically and horizontally, not only of states but also of all actors involved (local or regional public administration or private actors in government or business), the dysfunctions of one of the levels leading to the reduction of the efficiency and success of the cooperation (Bărbulescu & Brie & Toderaș, 2015: 16).

At European Union level, cross-border cooperation can be seen differently at its internal and external borders. Within its territory, cooperation between Member States at the Union's internal borders thas the purpose of reducing regional disparities, as an accelerator of European integration, in the light of EU’s regional and cohesion policy. At the external borders of the European Union, between Member States and non-member states (potential candidates or not), cross-border cooperation is an important component of the European Neighborhood Policy, in order to maintain and develop good neighborly relations, to ensure the stability of external borders, but also for socio-economic development and the promotion of European values.

The image of borders, whether internal or external to the European Union, reflects "the stage, depth and honesty of cross-border cooperation” (Bărbulescu & Brie & Toderaș, 2015: 26).

The European Union supports cross-border cooperation through a multitude of financial programs and instruments, but cooperation should not only be conditioned by these financial rewards, although they can be a stimulating factor, but to be a natural and spontaneous process for the development of both sides of the border.

1.2 The need for cross-border cooperation in water resources management

According to the European concepts of sustainable water resources management and the new strategies and policies in the field of water management at European level, water “is not a commercial product like any other, but, rather, a heritage which must be protected, defended and treated as such” (Directiva Cadru Apă, 2000: 2).

According to Article 1 of the Water Law, harmonized with the European concepts of water resources management, water is a "renewable natural resource, vulnerable and limited, an indispensable element for life and society, raw material for productive activities, energy source and transport route, a determining factor in maintaining the ecological balance" (art.1; Legea Apelor, 1996: 1).

Over time, people, including those on both sides of state borders or barriers, have been forced to jointly manage water resources to meet the needs for water, irrigation, trade or communication and transport, as well as to prevent the destructive effects of water. Often, water has also been a source of conflict, due to either deficit or excess or pollution.

In accordance with the requirements of water policies, agreed at European and international level, water management issues are approached at the level of river basins. The surface of the European Union, as a geographical area, is represented by river basins that cross at least one national border. Cooperation, including cross-border cooperation, is therefore an important part in the field of water management, as waters do not stop at the administrative borders, crossing the state border, some of them even forming part of the borders. Waters know no borders, which means that the problems are common, they do not stop at the border, but continue on both sides of the border between two or more states, and for which common solutions must be found through good cooperation and collaboration between institutions on each side of the border, solutions that will both prevent natural disasters such as floods or accidental water pollution, and also monitor hydrological or quality water parameters.

Water cooperation has a long history, but in recent decades, in the context of climate change, population growth and pollution, there has been a growing concern for the protection, conservation and quality of water resources globally. It has thus become clear the need for more careful and sustainable management of water resources through integrated river basin management and cooperation, which requires collaboration and cooperation between all countries in the river basin.

The joint management of transboundary water resources has historically been done long before the states crossed by common watercourses became members of the European Union, through common agreements at state level. Also, where river basins cross the Union's borders, EU Member States cooperate on transboundary waters and with non-EU or neighboring countries.

Current European water policy is based on two legislative pillars: the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Flood Risk Assessment and Management Directive (2007/60/EC), which have been transposed into the national legislation of the Member States. For the states of the European Union, cross-border cooperation appears to be an essential component, with the need of defining common principles for all Member States in order to improve water protection and control cross-border water issues. All principles and measures must be established and coordinated at river basin level, and where river basins extend beyond the borders of the Union, Member States must extend their efforts and ensure appropriate cooperation and coordination with the third countries concerned (Directiva Cadru Apă, 2000: 5-7).

The EU Council Conclusions underline "the importance of strengthening cross-border cooperation in the field of water on the basis of subsidiarity, proportionality and reciprocity both within the EU and between third countries, as well as between river or river basin and maritime commissions, and with other relevant actors dealing with the sustainable use and management of water, water scarcity, floods and droughts” (Consiliul UE, 2016: 7).

2. Water management in Romania in the context of bilateral, regional and European cooperation

Romania is a country located in the Danube river basin, with watercourses that cross or form borders with other states. Water management in our country must be associated with both international and European issues.

Romania's international cooperation in water management is done at European and global level, at regional level (Danube and Black Sea basin) and bilaterally, with neighboring countries.

2.1 Water management in Romania - a brief history

The emergence, development and evolution of water management in Romania was influenced by the variability of the hydrological regime of water resources. The need for water does not always coincide in time and space with the natural availability of water resources. Increased water requirements for the population, especially in urban areas, the development of industry and irrigation systems, as well as the need to protect against floods, have outlined over time the need for a real management of water resources.

According to the Water Law, water management is based on scientific, complex, quantitative and qualitative knowledge of the country's water resources, carried out through a unitary and permanent activity of monitoring, observations and measurements on hydrometeorological phenomena and water resources, including the prediction of their natural and anthropically influenced evolution, as well as through multidisciplinary research (art.35 alin.1; Legea Apelor, 1996).

The institutional and legislative framework of water management in Romania is clearer only towards the middle of the twentieth century. Water management was first included in the text of a law in 1924, when the Water Regime Law was adopted (Pintilie, 2013a: 3).

Water management in Romania went through three stages (Bădăluță – Minda & Crețu, 2010: 14):

- The *first stage* - until 1970, when the emphasis was on quantitative water management and control. During this period, the law on water regime appeared in 1924, which provided both the need for quantitative water management and the adoption of measures for the arrangement of watercourses. It is the period when the first dams and hydropower plants were built.
- The *second stage* - from 1970 to 2000, when in addition to quantitative control, driven by the effects of floods in 1970, the qualitative control of water also began to be important.
- The *third stage* - after the year 2000, in which the emphasis is placed both on quantitative and qualitative control of water, as well as on sustainable development, healthy ecosystems and biodiversity, in accordance with the European provisions on water management.

During these years, water management was organized institutionally in various forms, influenced by the complexity of the political, social and economic situation.

After 1989, water management issues came under the coordination of the Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection, coordination continued until present under the various organizations and structures of the Ministry. The transition to a market economy system required a rethinking of the entire vision of water management, so that in 1996 the Law no. 107 (Water Law) was approved, which, in turn, was amended and supplemented by subsequent regulations.

Currently, water management in Romania is coordinated by the National Administration “Apele Române”, established in this form in 2005, due to the need to adapt to the requirements of the European Water Framework Directive - 60/EC/2000, according to the principle of river basin organization (not county or regional). The National Administration “Apele Române” comprises eleven subordinated Water Basin

Administrations (Someș-Tisa, Crișuri, Mureș, Banat, Jiu, Olt, Argeș-Vedea, Buzău-Ialomița, Dobrogea-Litoral, Prut and Siret) organized at the level of river basin districts, as public institutions with legal personality, as well as the National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management.

The National Administration "Apele Române" administrates the waters from the public domain of the state and the afferent infrastructure: 78,905 km of watercourses, 295.6 thousand ha surface of land with waters, 270 reservoirs with a total volume of 14.5 billion cubic meters, of which 114 lakes with non-permanent accumulation, 7100 km dams for the protection of localities and agricultural lands, 6600 km river regularizations constructions and 1320 km bank protection and consolidation works, 157 adduction channels with a length of 1100 km, 59 water pumping stations with a installed flow of 237 m3/s, 49 water intakes and hydrotechnical nodes with a total installed flow of 249 m3/s, 178 other hydrotechnical works, 122 natural lakes (site AN ”Apele Române”).

2.2 Cooperation in the field of water resources management in the European context - the European legislative framework

Romania's accession to the European Union imposed a series of actions and orientations of national environmental policies in the field of water management towards compliance with European strategies and policies. Thus, Romanians must benefit from the same facilities as other European citizens, that is to have water services at the same standards, good quality drinking water and sufficient quantity, to be protected from the risks and effects of floods and droughts (Giurma & Crăciun, 2010: 7-8).

Along with the fundamental principles of water management, which have remained valid over the years, new principles and concepts have emerged and developed, especially after the adoption of European Directives on water issues, such as sustainable water management, integrated water management and ecosystemic approach.

Sustainable management of water resources is based on an integrated management that ensures and meets the objectives and needs of the present society and generation without compromising the system's ability to meet the objectives and needs of future generations, while maintaining a clean environment (Giurma & Crăciun, 2010: 7).

According to the principle of integrated water management, water is an integral part of ecosystems, therefore, the various categories of water issues must be managed in a unitary whole, and not strictly on sectoral domains (e.g. only water quality, water supply, hydropower, transport, etc.), all being connected with social and environmental issues.

Integrated management is both a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to water resources management, involving resource assessment, cost analysis, environmental considerations, participation of the decision-makers and the public (Bădăluță – Minda & Crețu, 2010: 23).

The ecosystem approach must take into account the fact that water is a component of natural systems, requiring compliance with the functioning laws of these systems. Both ecological, social and economic aspects are seen as of equal importance (Pintilie, 2013b: 48).

With the development of environmental protection policy in the European Union, there has been an awareness of the need to protect water resources. Thus, a number of European laws, called directives, have been addressed and adopted, which Member States must comply with and implement.

The *two legislative pillars* on which the current European Union water policy is based on, are the *Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)* and the *EU's Floods*

Directive (2007/60/EC). These have been transposed into the national legislation of the Member States, in Romania by amending and supplementing the Water Law.

The EU *Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC*) is an innovative directive that has for the first time comprehensively addressed all the challenges that the European Union waters are facing.

The Directive establishes a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwaters. Its overall objective is to achieve good ecological status for all waters, by preventing and reducing pollution, promoting sustainable water use, protecting and improving the aquatic environment and mitigating the effects of floods and droughts (Parlamentul European, 2019).

This Directive creates a legal and operational framework for integrated water resources management at river basin level. Member States are therefore required to write so-called river basin management plans on the basis of natural geographical river basins, as well as specific programs of measures to achieve the objectives. The instrument for implementing the Water Framework Directive is represented by the Management Plan of the river basin or district. Based on the state assessement of water bodies, the Management Plans are made for a period of six years, comprising a list of objectives to be fulfilled and a proposed program of measures in order to achieve the good water status.

The provisions of the Water Framework Directive require both internal and cross-border cooperation, so stakeholders and those responsible for water resources management must work closely together to establish the best measures and decisions.

The Directive gives all those involved, Member States, candidate countries and the European Union in general "an unprecedented chance to create a new partnership to coordinate the process and ensure a coherent and effective implementation" (Giurma & Crăciun, 2010: 23).

EU's Floods Directive - Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks has as its general objective the establishment of the framework for action on flood risk management in order to reduce the major negative consequences for the environment in general, and for human health and activities.

According to this Directive, Member States must assess their flood risk, draw up flood hazard maps, flood risk maps and flood risk management plan.

The principle of solidarity and cooperation is also very important in the context of flood risk management. Member States should be encouraged to find a fair sharing of responsibilities when measures are agreed upon for the common benefit of flood risk management along watercourses.

Article 7 (4) of this Directive emphasizes once again the importance of cooperation and solidarity in flood management, by pointing out that flood risk management plans created in a Member State do not include measures which, by their size and impact, increase significantly the risk of flooding upstream or downstream of other countries in the same river basin or sub-basin, unless these measures have been coordinated and a solution agreed between the Member States concerned (art.7 (4); Directiva Inundații, 2007).

At European level, collaboration and cooperation on water resources management also take place within the Danube river basin in which many current European Union countries are included. After the last waves of EU enlargement, the Danube region has changed, the river basin now being largely an area of the European Union.

Cooperation at the level of the Danube river basin has been done over time within various institutionalized forms and regional or international bodies.

In 1856, the European Commission of the Danube was established, an international body that in its eight decades of existence has contributed to the development of the lower course of the Danube and to the socio-economic development of the region. In 1938, this Commission was abolished and replaced until 1940 by the Lower Danube Administration, and after the Second World War by the Danube Commission, an intergovernmental body. The Danube Commission is also developing close cooperation with the European Commission and the UN Economic Commission. The Declaration of Bucharest from 1985, as well as the Sofia Convention from 1994, highlighted the need to intensify cooperation between the Danube countries, both bilaterally and multilaterally, to ensure the protection and management of international waters (site-ul ICPDR, 2020).

Based on the Sofia Convention, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) was created, composed of representatives of riparian countries. ICPDR ensures cooperation in fundamental water management issues and takes legal, administrative and technical measures to maintain and improve the water quality of the Danube River.

Map 1. Danube River Basin District

***Source*:** ICPDR website , www.icpdr.org

The Commission consists of 15 Contracting Parties: 14 countries (Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia, Ukraine) and the European Commission (site-ul ICPDR, 2020). The Contracting Parties decided in 2002 that the ICPDR should be the platform for coordinating the implementation of the Water Framework Directive for the implementation of management plans in the Danube river basin district.

The European Union Strategy for the Danube Region extends the approach of specific issues by the cooperation bodies (Danube Commission and ICPDR) to address priorities in an integrated way. Geographically, this strategy concerns mainly, but not exclusively: Germany (Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria), Austria, the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria within the EU, and Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (regions along the Danube), outside the Union. The strategy remains open to other partners in the region. As the Danube flows into the Black Sea, the strategy should be consistent with the prospects of the Black Sea (Comisia Europeană, 2010: 3).

The European Union has a financing program dedicated to the Danube region, Interreg Danube Transnational Program, complementary and geographically overlapped with the Danube Strategy, through 3 types of funds: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance II (IPA II), European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) (Interreg Danube, 2020).

2.3 Romania's cooperation with neighboring countries in the field of border waters - legal and institutional framework, legal bases of cooperation

Romania's bilateral and regional cooperation in the field of water is based on the location of over 97% of Romania's territory in the lower part of the Danube river basin.

On the Romanian territory there are the upper and middle courses of several rivers that cross the state border, some of them, such as the Tisza, the Prut and the Danube form a good part of the Romanian borders.

Map 2. Bilateral cooperation Romania – neighbouring countries

Source: www.harta.infoturism.ro, modified

Due to its geographical location and varied relief, Romania has a radial hydrographic network that starts from the Carpathian Mountains, the rivers flowing from west to east in Moldova, from east to west in Transylvania and from north to south in Muntenia and the Moldavian Plateau. This makes Romania to be considered an upstream country for Hungary, Serbia and Ukraine, but also a downstream country for Ukraine, Serbia and Moldova.

The necessity to manage the dangerous phenomena generated by the surplus or deficit of water, as well as by accidental pollution, phenomena that propagate from upstream to downstream, has led to the development of cooperation between neighboring states. Cooperation and joint management of transboundary waters is a necessity both for solving specific water-related problems and for sustainable management of water resources in transboundary areas.

In this regard, Romania has concluded bilateral governmental agreements with neighboring countries since the 1950s, paying increased attention to cooperation in the field of transboundary waters.

The bilateral cooperation between Romania and Hungary in the field of border waters has an older history, the first agreement being concluded in 1924, followed by different stages of cooperation. Thus, the collaboration is currently based on the *Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Government of the Republic of Hungary on cooperation for the protection and sustainable use of border waters*, signed in Budapest on 15 September 2003.

The Agreement is implemented by a Romanian-Hungarian hydrotechnical commission for the following rivers: Tur, Someș, Crasna, Barcău, Ier, Crișul Repede, Crișul Negru, Crișul Alb and Mureș. The tasks of the Agreement are fulfilled through the following subcommittees: coordination and development of collaboration, water management and hydrometeorology, water quality, flood protection (Acord România - Ungaria, 2003).

Romania-Ukraine bilateral cooperation has as its legal framework *the Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Government of Ukraine on cooperation in the field of border water management*, signed in Galați on September 30, 1997.

The tasks and activities of the Agreement are implemented in three working groups, one for each major river (Acord România - Ucraina, 1997):

- working group on solving problems related to the Tisza River and tributaries in the border area;
- working group on solving problems related to the Siret and Prut rivers and tributaries in the border area;
- working group for solving problems related to the Danube River in the common border area.

The Romania-Serbia bilateral cooperation was carried out, until 2019, on the basis of the *"Agreement between the Romanian People's Republic and the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia on hydrotechnical problems from hydrotechnical systems and watercourses on the border or intersected by the state border"*, signed at Bucharest on April 7, 1955.

Due to the organizational changes that took place in Serbia, the collaboration between the two countries continued with delays after 1998, but some of the problems of water management were however solved. Throughout this period, negotiations have taken place for the conclusion of a new Agreement. Thus, on June 5, 2019, the *Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Government of the Republic of Serbia on cooperation in the field of sustainable management of transboundary waters* was signed in Bucharest.

The Agreement applies to the following rivers: Danube, Bârzava, Moravița, Aranca, Bega Veche, Bega Navigabil Canal, Timiș, Caraș and Nera. The tasks of the Agreement are fulfilled by the Romanian-Serbian Hydrotechnical Commission, through three subcommittees: for quality, for hydrometeorology and quantitative water management, for protection against floods and ice (Acord România – Serbia, 2019).

The Romania-Bulgaria bilateral cooperation is made according to the *Agreement between the Romanian Ministry of Environment and Water Management and the Ministry of Environment and Waters of the Republic of Bulgaria on cooperation in the field of water management*, signed in Bucharest on November 12, 2004.

The Romanian-Bulgarian Joint Commission applies this agreement through three working groups: the working group for river basin management, the working group for the Danube and the working group for the Black Sea (Acord România – Bulgaria, 2004).

The Romania-Moldova bilateral cooperation is carried out based on the provisions of the *Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on cooperation for the protection and sustainable use of Prut and Danube waters*, signed in Chișinău on June 28, 2010. The Agreement stipulates that this collaboration to be carried out in the following areas of activity, through specific subcommittees: flood risk management, exchange of data and information, water monitoring, protection and sustainable use of water (Acord România – Moldova, 2010).

These bilateral cooperation agreements in the field of transboundary waters are also based on the provisions of the following international laws:

- Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, Helsinki, 1992;
- Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, Bucharest, 1992;
- Convention on Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the Danube River, Sofia, 1994.

The agreements signed between Romania and Hungary, Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova and Serbia contain provisions in accordance with the Water Framework Directive, being concluded after the publication of the Directive in the official documents of the European Union.

These bilateral cooperation agreements in the field of transboundary waters are based on the principles of integrated water management, a concept promoted by the Water Framework Directive and other European regulations. Their purpose, according to the Directive, is to achieve the established environmental objectives, the agreements also including important aspects related to water resources management in times of floods and droughts, exchange of data and information on integrated water resources management, promotion and development of projects which are equally applied on both sides of the border.

3. European programmes and instruments for financing and stimulating cross-border cooperation in the field of border waters in the period 2014-2020

In the 2014-2020 programming period, cross-border cooperation in the field of border waters is funded by the European Union under programmes specific to the European territorial cooperation goal.

In this sense, Romania participates in this programming period in twelve European territorial cooperation programmes. European territorial cooperation programmes encourage cross-border cooperation (between regions in neighboring countries), transnational cooperation (between regions in a given geographical area) and interregional cooperation (between regions in any EU Member State).

These programmes receive European funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF - for cooperation between EU Member States), the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA - for the Romania - Serbia Programme) and the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI - for cooperation with non-EU countries) (Reglementări Programe CTE, 2015).

Regarding cross-border cooperation in the field of water resources management, concrete actions can be financed through the priority axes dedicated to this field within the cooperation programmes.

In general, the priority axes dedicated to the field of water are found within those of risk management, natural disasters and emergencies, conservation and protection of natural heritage, restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems, protection of the environment and protection of natural resources, adaptation to climate change.

Thus, in this field of transboundary waters, Romania's cooperation with neighboring countries can be financed from the funds mentioned above within the following programmes:

- With *Hungary*, within the following programmes:
  - *Interreg V-A Romania - Hungary Programme 2014-2020* – financed by the European Regional Development Fund;

The eligible area of the programme is represented by four counties on each side of the border: in Romania - Satu Mare, Bihor, Arad and Timiş, and in Hungary - Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg, Hajdu-Bihar, Bekes and Csongrad (Interreg V-A RO-HU, 2020).

  - *The Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020* – financed by the European Neighborhood Instrument;

The eligible area of the programme is as follows: Romania - 3 counties, Maramureş, Satu Mare and Suceava, Hungary - 2 counties, Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg and Borsod-Abauj-Zemplen, Slovakia - 2 regions, Presovsky and Kosicky, Ukraine - 3 regions, Zakarpatska, Ivan-Frankivska and Chernivetska (HU-SK-RO-UA Programme, 2020).

- With *Bulgaria*, within:
  - *Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme 2014-2020* – financed by the European Regional Development Fund;

The eligible area of the programme is: Romania - 7 counties, Mehedinți, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Călărași, Constanța; Bulgaria - 8 districts, Vidin, Vratsa, Montana, Pleven, Veliko Tarnovo, Ruse, Silistra, Dobrich (Interreg V-A RO-BG, 2020).

- with *Ukraine*, within the following programmes:
  - *Joint Operational Programme Romania - Ukraine 2014 – 2020* – financed by the European Neighborhood Instrument;

The eligible area of the programme is: Romania, counties: Botoşani, Suceava, Tulcea, Maramureş, Satu-Mare and Ukraine, counties: Odessa, Ivano-Frankivsk, Zakarpatska, Chernivtsi oblasts (Programul RO-UA, 2020).

  - *The Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020* – financed by the European Neighborhood Instrument;

The eligible area of the programme is as follows: Romania - 3 counties, Maramureş, Satu Mare and Suceava, Hungary - 2 counties, Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg and Borsod-Abauj-Zemplen, Slovakia - 2 regions, Presovsky and Kosicky, Ukraine - 3 regions, Zakarpatska, Ivan-Frankivska and Chernivetska (HU-SK-RO-UA Programme, 2020).

- with *Serbia*, within:
  - *Romania – Republic of Serbia IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020* – financed by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance II;

The eligible area of the program is: Romania - 3 counties, Timiş, Caraş-Severin, Mehedinţi, Republic of Serbia - 6 districts, Severnobanatski, Srednjebanatski, Juznobanatski, Branicevski, Borski, Podunavski (Interreg IPA RO-Serbia, 2020).

- with *Republic of Moldova,* within:
  - *Romania – Republic of Moldova Joint Operational Programme 2014-2020* – financed by the European Neighborhood Instrument;

Eligible area: Romania - Botoșani, Iași, Vaslui, Galați counties and the Republic of Moldova - the entire territory (Programul Romania-Moldova, 2020).

The cooperation programmes between the Member States of the European Union, at its internal borders (Romania - Hungary and Romania - Bulgaria) are financed from the European Regional Development Fund. Cooperation between Member States is done with the purpose of reducing regional disparities, as an accelerating factor in European integration, in the light of the European Union's regional and cohesion policy.

Cooperation programmes with the candidate countries of the European Union, in this case with Serbia, are funded by IPA II - Instrument for Pre-Accession II.

The cooperation programmes with the non-member states of the European Union, in this case, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, are financed from the European Neighborhood Instrument. The two countries are part of the European Neighborhood Policy, the cooperation being carried out in order to maintain and develop good neighborly relations, to ensure the stability of external borders, but also for socio-economic development and the promotion of European values.

Conclusions

Cooperation between regions on both sides of the border is a difficult and a rarely spontaneous process. For a long time, the authorities at different levels of government, in this case those responsible for water management, have not been used to working together and even if some mutual problems inherited from the past have been resolved, there are still many major obstacles which must be overcome. These refer to the differences between political institutions, between administrative systems and procedures, legal structures, technical and environmental standards, to which are added, of course, the cultural and linguistic differences, as well as the physical obstacles between these regions.

An integrated and efficient management of water resources in cross-border areas is done through proper communication and cooperation of the factors responsible or involved in the management of water issues. Cooperation must be based on reciprocity, exchange of experience, information and good practice in order to identify and implement appropriate common measures to protect water resources and prevent the negative impacts of dangerous hydrological phenomena.

In the European context, this cooperation can be financed through the development and implementation of joint projects that meet common needs on both sides of the borders.

Effective cooperation would result in common benefits from the management of transboundary water resources, eliminating possible sources of conflict.

However, there are difficulties in defining common strategies and in achieving common coordination, especially at the level of financial or legal aspects.

In this regard, European territorial cooperation programmes contribute to overcoming these obstacles, their basic idea being to work in partnership in order to find solutions to common problems, through integrated cooperation structures for the management of programmes developed and implemented together. These programmes should only address issues that cannot be overcome through national operational programmes, issues that are cross-border in nature, requiring cooperation to address them, and it is not enough to identify problems and solutions that impact only one side of the border.

The essential features of any territorial cooperation programme are partnerships, without which common problems cannot be solved, and their cross-border nature meaning that the results have an effect on both sides of the borders.

Cross-border cooperation helps to reduce the disadvantages of borders, to reduce their image of marginalized regions, and to improve the living conditions of the population in those areas.

The variety of problems, but also of opportunities, valid for both sides of the border makes cross-border cooperation in Europe indispensable. The European Union policy takes this into account, considering all border regions, both internal and external, as a priority for which funds are allocated.

Cross-border cooperation should not take the form of individual programmes, priorities or projects of actors on one side of the border, who then would contact partners on the other side of the border to involve them. All this must be done jointly, through a real and pertinent partnership.

Also, this territorial and cross-border cooperation should not be achieved only as a kind of obligation based on spending available European (or external) sources of funding, although this is a stimulating and accelerating factor of cooperation, but also to be performed as a natural, spontaneous and absolutely necessary process to ensure the development of both sides of the borders.

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THE REFORM OF THE EU NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICIES AND INSTRUMENTS IN THE POST-2020 PERIOD

Mircea BRIE[*]

Abstract. *This study aims at a synthesis of European policies, programs, mechanisms and instruments directed at developing a special good neighbourly relationship at the borders of the European Union. Methodologically, we aim to identify the main reforming guidelines concerning primarily the neighbourhood policies and instruments in the post-2020 period. The new multiannual financial framework is thus taken into account. In order to capture the main changes to these policies and instruments, we purpose to diachronically capture their evolution from the launch of the European Neighbourhood Policy until the beginning of 2020.*

The reform of the European Neighbourhood Policy has been a complex process imposed by the internal realities of the EU, but, naturally, it was marked both by the position of the partners or by the global geopolitical and macroeconomic context. During the period since the launch of the ENP (2004) the context has changed. Some neighbours have since become members of the EU. Then, in 2008 and 2009, the two partnerships aimed at the southern dimension (Union for the Mediterranean) and the eastern dimension (Eastern Partnership) are launched. The instruments are updated, reformed and resized through a constantly increasing allocation for each multiannual financial framework. Moreover, these instruments with which the EU operates in relation to its partners have been diversified to respond to the context, but also to stimulate both the partner state and the society, the population as a whole.

The European policy implementation framework has been shaped by the internal and external context. The multilateral dimension of cooperation has increasingly been replaced by the bilateral dimension. The more for more principle applied in this context was intended as a stimulus for partners. This incentive must be understood not only in the sense that a state that reforms more, that integrates more, gets more support, including financially. The process is more complex and includes, as has become increasingly evident after 2015, a sectoral dimension of integration and differentiation. Thus, within the same state, some sectors have received additional support to the detriment of others. The differentiation was made starting from the same principle (more for more).

Keywords: *Neighbourhood Policies, European Instruments, Eastern Partnership, European Union, cooperation, partnership*

Introduction

This study aims at a synthesis of European policies, programs, mechanisms and instruments directed at developing a special good neighbourly relationship at the borders of the European Union. Methodologically, we aim to identify the main **reforming guidelines** concerning primarily the neighbourhood policies and instruments in the post-2020 period. The new **multiannual financial framework** is thus taken into account. In

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order to capture the main changes to these policies and instruments, we purpose to diachronically capture their evolution from the launch of the European Neighbourhood Policy until the beginning of 2020.[1]

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was initiated in 2003 and officially launched in May 2004 (European Commission, 2004). This policy represents the European Union's perspective on its relations with its neighbours. The European Union aims to avoid the emergence of a new dividing line between the EU and its neighbours (Pop, 2006: 8). In this regard, the EU aims, through privileged relations with its neighbours, to harmonize all levels of cooperation, including by the implementation of common standards. The **areas of cooperation** at the external borders are diverse: from politics to economics, from culture to security (Pop, 2006: 9). The European Commission (2007) and later the Parliament and the Council of the European Union have reported the results of the European Neighbourhood Policy from the first years of its implementation. "The ENP has strengthened relations with partner countries and brought concrete benefits to both the Union and its partners, including the launch of regional initiatives and support for democratization in the European neighbourhood" (OJEU, 2014). Furthermore, these **desiderata** of the European Union can also be found in the **ENP Strategy Paper** (the act attesting the creation of the new ENP, as well as its scope). EU's desire to be surrounded by countries that are prosperous and strengthened in terms of peace and security is brought into focus. Thus, the EU could ensure its own security only by expanding economic, political and security cooperation with these states and transforming them into more prosperous, more democratic ones and more able to ensure their own security (Lynch, 2005). The main instruments of the European Union for the implementation of the ENP are Country Reports, Action Plans, European Neighbourhood Agreements and, very importantly, the financial instruments dedicated to these programs carried out in cooperation with neighbouring partners.

Following the European enlargement in 2004 and 2007, the European neighbourhood has also expanded. The new neighbouring area has become more challenging in the context of the many crises that the European Union and its neighbouring partners have had to deal with. The ENP has been constantly reformed. In 2008 the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) appeared in Paris, and in 2009 the Eastern Partnership (EaP) was launched in Prague. There was a need for a differentiated approach to the neighbouring area. Moreover, over the last decade, it has become increasingly clear that the two projects for the southern and eastern neighbourhoods could not be viewed and managed strictly at a multilateral level, either. The bilateral and sectorial dimension has become increasingly clear. We are therefore talking about a new, differentiated approach to integration, in line with theever-present principle of *more for more* imposed as an incentive to get partner states to choose a stronger partnership with the EU.

In line with the EU priorities, cross-border cooperation at the EU's external borders has become increasingly consistent concerning the programs and tools it provides.[2] The EU budget allocated to the neighbourhood, in particular to cross-border cooperation, has steadily

[1] We mention that at the time of writing this paper, the negotiation process regarding the EU's multiannual budget hasn't been completed; the options which are under discussion and which have been made available to the public may suffer considerable changes.

[2] One of the priorities of ENP is cross-border cooperation with the neighbours. The European Union aims to promote, first and foremost, the development of common border regions, as well as the security at the EU's external borders, encouraging cooperation at a regional and local level (EUR-Lex, 2007).

increased throughout this period, as a result of the involvement and determination to make the border more flexible and open, a border which needs to become softer and more permissive for the "good" neighbourliness. From this perspective, the favourable, good neighbourliness becomes a space that ensures the security of the EU borders (Brie, 2017: 56; Matuszewicz, 2007: 109). The good neighbourliness develops and takes cooperation to a higher level of expression. The European Union is interested in the success of this neighbourhood policy, which it has sought to reform as concerns both instruments and programs. In view of the new concepts, EU support is used for the benefit of partner countries and areas involved in cross-border cooperation, through a separate approach, but also for the common benefit of the Union and partner countries (Bărbulescu et. Al. 2016: 70). By implementing European instruments designed for good neighbourliness or cross-border cooperation, there is a tendency to move “the real border outwards by building a new, symbolic one, including a privileged peripheral area that benefits from the advantages of the neighbourhood” (Brie & Horga, 2009: 7- 8; Bărbulescu et al. 2016: 65).

The European Neighbourhood has not proved to be a challenge-free space for the EU. From North Africa to Syria and Ukraine, numerous conflicts have generated considerable crises and pressures which have dictated the reform of EU policies and instruments. Many analysts see all these crises as a sign of failure from the part of the EU and the EaP, as these forms of cooperation have failed to constantly provide adequate answers to those crises, or to satisfy the changing aspirations of the Eastern partners, "this being (...) as well, to the detriment of the EU’s interests”(European Commission, 2015a: 2). Then, some states in the EU's immediate neighbourhood tried to adapt their relations with the EU to the need not to "upset" other actors involved at regional level. We mention here Russia, as well as Turkey (for additional reading, see Berbec, 2010: 7; Shapovalova, 2010: 70-71; Sasse, 2019; Korosteleva, 2017: 167-176; Marciacq & Flessenkemper, 2018; Kobzar & Paul, 2017; Naumescu & Dungaciu, 2015; Nixey, 2019; Freyburg et al., 2009, pp. 916-934; Kostanyan, 2017). All of these posed major challenges for the EU, which was forced to respond through appropriate policies to the new needs and geopolitical realities present at its borders.

EU financial instruments for the neighbourhood in the period of 2007-2020

The financial assistance of the European Union intended to implement the European Neighbourhood Policy is directed towards the financing of the following categories of programs (MFA Romania, 2020):

- bilateral (intended for the bilateral relationship between the EU and each partner state and representing the largest part of the funds);
- ENI Inter-regional (Erasmus for All, Neighbourhood Investment Facility-NIF, Umbrella programs, etc.);
- ENI Regional East and ENI Regional South (dedicated to regional projects);
- ENI-CBC (intended to finance cross-border cooperation programs).

In the case of the EU financial period 2007-2013, the implementation of the ENP in the Eastern Neighbourhood area, including the European Union's cross-border cooperation with neighbouring Eastern States, was in line with the ***European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument*** (ENPI). The importance given to the ENP has increased during its implementation and also in the context of new challenges and needs in evidence at a regional level. The ENPI is the financial instrument of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). It is intended for ENP partner countries and Russia, providing co-financing for the process of strengthening governance and equitable economic and social development. The ENPI also supports cross-border and cross-regional cooperation.

According to *Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument* (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006: 164), ENPI supports, inter alia:

- political reforms: creation and adaptation of institutional and administrative capacities, good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights, participation of civil society, multicultural dialogue, as well as the fight against fraud, corruption, organized crime, and terrorism;
- economic reforms: economic development, the market economy, intensification of trade and compliance of the regulatory framework to that of the EU in areas of common interest, with a view to progressive economic integration on the internal market;
- social reforms: integration, employment, non-discrimination, the fight against poverty;
- sectorial cooperation, especially in sectors of common interest: environment, sustainable development, energy, transport, telecommunications, health, food security, education and training, research and innovation;
- regional and local development, along with regional (Euro-Mediterranean and Eastern European regions) and subregional integration;
- participation in community programs and agencies.

The budget allocated to the ENPI was EUR 11.181 billion for the period 2007–2013. Of these funds, 95% were directed to national and multinational programs, and 5% to cross-border cooperation programs (EU Neighbours 2020). Multinational programs may also provide for transregional cooperation between Member States and partner countries on matters of common interest without geographical restrictions. Thus, the allocation for cross-border cooperation has increased considerably. In the period 2007-2013, for the 15 *cross-border cooperation programs*, both for the southern and eastern areas, the EU finally allocated more than EUR 1.1 billion through ENPI (AEBR 2007).

During the implementation of this European policy supporting good neighbourliness, there were times when financial allocations were supplemented. One such moment was the launch of the Eastern Partnership (EaP), when funds for cooperation with the partner states were substantially supplemented. Thus, the Joint Declaration also contained a commitment "complementary to the macro-financial assistance provided by relevant international instruments" (European Commission, 2009). The European Commission allocated EUR 600 million for the period 2010-2013, including 350 million for new funds (European Moldova, 2019). It can, therefore, be seen that the Eastern Partnership was supported both by the amounts which had already been allocated and were specific to the ENPI and by the additional allocations for this special purpose. For the period 2010-2013, the total value of ENPI funds, including the additional amounts allocated through the EaP, intended for Eastern partners amounted to EUR 1.9 billion (Bocková & Lenč 2014: 162). This European policy supporting the consolidation of political and economic relations with neighbouring states continued to be a priority, and it was included in the plans for “cooperation, association and partnership” (European Commission, 2015c: 2). This was in line with the text of the Treaty on European Union which states that "the Union shall develop privileged relations with neighbouring countries aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterized by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation". (art. 8 para. (1); European Commission 2015c: 2).

ENPI Cross-Border Cooperation
Indicative allocations per programme, 2007-2013

	2007-10	2010-13	Total 2007-13
Land-Border Programmes			
Kolarctic/Russia	14.728	13.513	28.241
Karelia/Russia	12.101	11.102	23.203
SE Finland/Russia	18.871	17.314	36.185
Estonia/Latvia/Russia	24.915	22.859	47.775
Latvia/Lithuania/Belarus	21.766	19.970	41.737
Lithuania/ Poland /Russia	68.908	63.222	132.130
Poland/Belarus/Ukraine	97.107	89.094	186.201
Hungary/Slovakia/Ukraine/Romania	35.796	32.842	68.638
Romania/Moldova/Ukraine	66.086	60.632	126.718
Sea-Crossing Programmes			
Spain/Morocco	81.738	74.993	156.732
CBC Atlantic Programme	16.773	15.389	32.162
Italy/Tunisia	13.138	12.054	25.191
Sea-Basin Programmes			
Black Sea	9.025	8.281	17.306
Mediterranean	90.539	83.068	173.607
Baltic Sea Region (ENPI contribution to the integrated Baltic Sea programme)	11.791	10.818	22.608
Total	**583.283**	**535.152**	**1.118.434**

Surse: European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument, *Cross-Border Cooperation. Strategy Paper 2007-2013* (2007), http://www.enpicbcmed.eu/documenti/29_38_20090108121312.pdf, accessed on 05.05.2020.

The multiannual financial framework for the period 2014-2020 contains a review of instruments and policies for the support of good neighbourliness. European neighbourhood policies are reformed. The multilateral dimension of the approach is increasingly accompanied by a bilateral perspective of cooperation in the border area and in the neighbourhood in general. In this context, along with the bilateral or regional programs for East and South, a new European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) is proposed to succeed the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument rethought in the spirit of the new policies of the European Union (EU Neighbours, 2014). According to this new instrument, which funds the implementation of the ENP, EU support for its neighbours becomes faster and more flexible, allowing for increased differentiation and incentives ("more for more" – a principle that includes both differentiation among states and the stimulation of the best-performing ones) granted to states that are most committed to the adoption of reforms and that have made progress in strengthening a deep and lasting democracy.

Despite the financial crisis and the reduction of the EU's overall budget, the level of funding reserved for the European Neighbourhood Instrument amounts to EUR 15.4 billion (EU Neighbours, 2020), which highlights the fact that the EU considers its neighbourhood a priority. Up to 5% of the total value of the financial package shall be allocated to cross-border cooperation programs. The European Neighbourhood Instrument, which replaced the ENPI, provides support for the implementation of policy initiatives aimed at shaping the ENP, including the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean. Neighbour assistance is reformed, reducing the complexity and duration of the programming process, so as not to undermine the relevance of assistance (European Moldova, 2014).

Through the European Neighbourhood Instrument, the European Union aims to "create an area of shared prosperity and good neighbourliness between EU countries and partner countries". In this regard, the following are pursued (EUR-Lex, 2014a):

- the promotion of human rights, the rule of law, sustainable democracy and citizen participation;
- sustainable and inclusive economic, social and territorial growth and development, including through progressive integration in the EU internal market;
- mobility and interpersonal contacts, including student exchanges;
- regional integration, including cross-border cooperation programs.

Regarding *cross-border cooperation programs*, 17 programs, including the maritime ones, were developed and promoted for the period 2014-2020. The total amounts allocated to these programs was EUR 1,052,650,355 (EEAS 2014: 18; Annex 2, Table 2: 1-2).

ENI Cross-Border Cooperation
Indicative total allocations per programme, 2014-2020

Land border programmes (Figures in EUR)	TOTAL 2014-2017	TOTAL 2018-2020	TOTAL 2014-2020	2018-2020 Additional ERDF[10]
Kolarctic/Russia	16,451,819	8,266,271	24,718,090	10,355,241
Karelia/Russia	13,938,222	7,562,832	21,501,054	8,106,616
SE Finland/Russia	21,665,925	14,480,857	36,146,782	9,355,180
Estonia/Russia	9,030,972	7,776,552	16,807,524	1,826,238
Latvia/Russia	11,191,052	4,683,976	15,875,028	8,162,486
Lithuania/Russia	10,865,846	8,149,384	19,015,230	13,492,385
Poland/Russia	33,681,960	14,902,154	48,584,114	23,608,291
Latvia/Lithuania/Belarus	36,437,715	37,562,285	74,000,000	
Poland/Belarus Ukraine	86,563,853	89,235,451	175,799,304	
Hungary/Slovakia/Romania/Ukraine	36,414,080	37,537,920	73,952,000	
Romania/Ukraine	29,544,094	30,455,906	60,000,000	
Romania/Moldova	39,884,526	41,115,474	81,000,000	
Sea crossings programme				
Italy/Tunisia	16,423,966	16,930,854	33,354,820	
Sea basin programmes				
Baltic Sea Region	5,028,571	3,771,429	8,800,000	
Black Sea	19,977,347	19,061,250	39,038,597	
Mediterranean	102,940,394	106,117,418	209,057,812	
Mid-Atlantic	69,854,564	30,145,436	100,000,000	49,868,589
Programme Support	8,571,429	6,428,571	15,000,000	
TOTAL	568,466,335	484,184,020	1,052,650,355	124,775,026

Surse: SEAE, 2014, Annex 2, Table 2: 1-2

The European Union has also promoted other instruments or programs designed to implement and finance the European Neighbourhood Policy. Among these, we mention: ***Challenge Facility for Civil Society*** with a special component addressed to the EaP states (EaP-CSF 2017b). At the same time, Brussels provides financial support through grants to partners, and the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development complement this support with loans. In parallel, other new instruments have been created within the ENP in order to promote market access, in particular through the negotiation, initialling and implementation of ***Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements***. In order to improve mobility and manage migration, the European Commission proposed the conclusion of mobility partnerships and the facilitation/liberalization of visas (signed with some of the Eastern partners). In this regard, after2016 the EU provided a specific financial instrument – ***the Mobility Partnership Instrument*** (European Parliament 2019d). In the southern region, a number of regional and bilateral initiatives on migration and mobility are funded under the ***EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa***, the "North Africa" component.

ENI was created with the purpose of differentiating the levels of support for partner countries according to the needs and progress of each partner country. Another purpose is to "strengthen the links between EU citizens and citizens of partner countries", by encouraging these states to participate in other EU internal programs, such as ***Horizon 2020***, ***Erasmus +*** and ***COSME*** (EUR-Lex, 2013a; EUR-Lex, 2013b; EUR-Lex, 2014a; EUR-Lex, 2014b).

The European Union has proven to be a major financial supporter of the neighbourhood not only through the European Neighbourhood Instrument. The neighbourhood could also be supported by other ***programs and instruments*** which, together with the ENI, amount to an allocated budget for the period 2014-2020 of over EUR 51.41 billion, as follows: The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance – IPA (EU Neighbours, 2020) – EUR 11.69 billion; The Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) – EUR 19.66 billion; The European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) – EUR 15.43 billion; The Partnership Instrument for cooperation with third countries (PI) – EUR 0.95 billion; The EU Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP): EUR 2.33 billion; The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR): EUR 1.33 billion.

A new approach to the neighbourhood in the post-2020 period

A new reform of the neighbourhood policies and instruments has become increasingly necessary in the context of the new internal and geopolitical realities, both globally and in the immediate vicinity. The political and security instability that characterizes a large part of the southern and eastern space of the borders of the European Union is associated with phenomena such as increasing migratory pressure, major socio-economic imbalances, increasing organized crime, etc. All this calls for an appropriate EU response. Our debate cannot be complete without presenting the general framework of the Union's internal context. The need for reform has primarily internal, institutional and structural arguments. Brexit is just one of the elements that require a major rethinking of policies and instruments. The health crisis caused by the spread of COVID-19, associated with a deep economic and social crisis (possibly generating political crises in the weaker statesin the European neighbourhood), calls for the EU to take appropriate measures and decisions that must keep it relevant on the global stage, and particularly in the neighbourhood area. The EU's response must be clearly instrumented, including financially, given the very high need for assistance that its partners have during this period.

This complicated period overlaps and over the discussions within the EU around the construction of the multiannual financial framework for the 2021-2027 cycle. The EU, through its institutions, and the Member States as well, aim to redesign the architecture and functionality of the EU financial instruments in the field of foreign policy, including those pertaining to the European Neighbourhood Policy. We, therefore, expect a revision of the ENP instruments, including the European Neighbourhood Instrument as the main financial instrument. Flexibilization and differentiation, accompanied by a quantitative and qualitative increase in financial support, can be elements of the new directions of expression of neighbourhood policies and instruments.

Having as main declared objective the revision of the ENP instruments in the post-2020 period, the European Parliament adopted on 18 April 2018 a report on the implementation of EU external financing instruments, including the future post-2020 architecture (European Parliament, 2018). With regard to the ENI, the text of the resolution calls for more flexibility, a better use of the "more for more" approach and the incentive-based approach and a better coordination between regional and bilateral programs (European Parliament, 2019). In this document, Parliament calls for "funding of external relations instruments to reflect ambitious external actions, and for the budget for the EU as a global player" (European Parliament, 2018, point 114), accompanied by a reform of the current instrument architecture in order to provide more accountability, transparency and public oversight, and also to increase efficiency, coherence and responsiveness (European Parliament, 2018, point 116). The EU's commitment to issues such as human rights, democracy, support for civil society, as well as the various goals, objectives and the specific political and strategic value of current instruments stresses that the reform should not undermine the political objectives of each instrument; understands the specificity of the objectives and the implementation of the ENI (European Parliament, 2018, point 118). Parliament also calls for improved requirements for faster decision-making in order to increase the EU's capacity to respond to rapidly evolving events (European Parliament, 2018, point 133), but also for EU delegations to play a key role in local programming and oversight of programming and eventual disbursement of funds, and identification of beneficiaries, particularly in the case of human rights defenders and civil society organizations active in sensitive areas (European Parliament, 2018, point 135). The programming of instruments must closely involve the civil society in the respective countries in order to establish strong and long-lasting partnerships, to meet the specific needs of the population and take the social realities of the population into account (European Parliament, 2018, point 136).

The text proposed by the European Parliament emphasizes the importance *of increasing the visibility and raising awareness of the EU's external action* – including through the utilisation of the EU's Strategic Communication Task Force – *and its influence around the world*. Moreover, it is expressly requested that it be considered as a "policy objective" (European Parliament, 2018, point 134).

The resolution emphasizes that stronger conditionality mechanisms should be set up whereby direct budget support to state authorities, government bodies or non-state actors can be suspended or, when possible, redirected to civil society, in cases where such institutions do not adhere to or comply with the need to meet the objectives of the dispersed funding, or do not comply with them, or violate the rule of law and human rights (European Parliament, 2018, § 138). In view of a proper implementation, it is necessary "to ensure transparency, accountability, scrutiny, development additionally, as well as respect for aid/development effectiveness principles and strong environmental, human rights and social safeguards (European Parliament, 2018, pt. 139).

In the same direction of reforming EU neighbourhood instruments, the European Commission published on 14 June 2018 a *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the* ***Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument*** *(NDICI)* (European Commission, 2018). This Commission proposal seeks to help simplify funding mechanisms and procedures for the European Neighbourhood, external action in general. Thus, in the new multiannual financial framework, the EU aims to integrate more financial instruments into the new NDICI format.

This new instrument will integrate the following instruments from the previous multiannual financial framework (European Commission, 2018c):

- the European Development Fund (EDF), currently out of budget;
- the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI);
- the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI);
- the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR);
- the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP);
- the Partnership Instrument for cooperation with third countries (PI);
- the Guarantee Fund for External Actions.

This global instrument will be complemented by other instruments, such as (European Commission, 2018c):

- the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA);
- Humanitarian aid;
- the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP);
- Overseas countries and territories (including Greenland);
- the European Instrument for Nuclear Safety.

On 27 March 2019, Parliament adopted a position at first reading on this proposal from the European Commission. Parliament called for additional funding, but also for suspension of assistance in cases of human rights violations (European Commission, 2018).

The overall objective of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument is to support and promote the values and interests of the Union throughout the world, in order to pursue the objectives and principles of its external action (European Commission, 2018). With regard to the EaP States, the specific objectives of the NDICI are supporting and promoting dialogue and cooperation with partner countries; strengthening and supporting democracy, the rule of law and human rights, supporting civil society organizations, contributing to stability and peace and addressing other global challenges such as migration and mobility; providing a rapid response in the following cases: situations of crisis, instability and conflict; resilience issues and providing the link between humanitarian aid and development actions and responding to the needs and priorities of foreign policy (European Commission, 2018).

The financial allocations envisaged in the current discussions for the EU's external action are: NDICI (EUR 89.2 billion) plus a European instrument for nuclear safety (EUR 300 million). Moreover, consideration is given to a pre-accession assistance instrument (EUR 14.5 billion), a humanitarian aid instrument (EUR 11 billion), a EUR 3 billion budget for the common foreign and security policy and for cooperation with overseas countries and territories, including Greenland (EUR 500 million). In addition, the High Representative, supported by the Commission, proposes the establishment, outside the EU budget, of the European Instrument for Peace, which is to have a budget of EUR 10.5 billion.

The multiannual financial framework proposed for financing the EU external action 2021-2027 (EUR million) (current price commitments)

1. Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument	**89,500**
1.1 Geographic programmes	**68,000**
Neighbourhood	22,000
Sub-Saharan Africa	32,000
Asia and the Pacific	10,000
Americas and Caribbean	4,000
1.2 Thematic programmes	**7,000**
Human Rights and Democracy	1,500
Civil Society Organisations	1,500
Stability and Peace	1,000
Global Challenges	3,000
1.3 Rapid response	**4,000**
1.4 Emerging challenges and priorities cushion	**10,200**
2. Complementary European Instrument for Nuclear Safety	**300**
3. Instrument for Pre-accession	**14,500**
4. Humanitarian aid	**11,000**
5. Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)	**3,000**
6. Overseas countries and territories (incl. Greenland)	**500**
7. Other	**1,070**
8. Decentralised agencies	**149**
9. Margin	**3,283**
TOTAL	**123,002**

Surse: European Commission, 2018c

Specifically, neighbourhood and international cooperation policies are supported, in accordance with the Commission Communication of 2 May 2018, by an allocation for the implementation of the NDICI amounting to approximately EUR 89.2 billion for the period 2021-2027[3] (European Commission, 2018). Of this amount, EUR 22 billion is earmarked exclusively for the EU's neighbourhood. Other amounts can also be accessed by EU neighbouring states. In this regard, we recall the allocation of EUR 7 billion for thematic programs (EUR 1.5 billion for human rights and democracy; EUR 1.5 billion for civil society organizations; EUR 1 billion for stability and peace, and EUR 3 billion for global challenges). EUR 4 billion has been allocated to rapid response actions, and EUR 10.2 billion is a reserve for emerging challenges and priorities (European Commission, 2018).

[3] Negotiations on the multiannual financial framework for the 2021-2027 cycle were not completed until the end of April 2020, as they were also complicated by the health crisis generated by the spread of COVID-19. Most likely, the financial dimension of support for NDICI will undergo adjustments, as well.

In order to increase the efficiency and speed of the response of European support to the needs identified at the level of external action, in particular at the level of supporting good neighbourliness, the simplification of procedures and the flexibilization of financial intervention, of instruments in general, are considered. In this regard, it will be possible to utilise and reutilise on a multi-annual basis all the allocated amounts that have not been used, and, through the funds from the rapid reaction pillar (EUR 4 billion), immediate actions will be considered for crisis or emergency situations. This flexibilization is possible primarily due to the reserve set up for this purpose (EUR 10.2 billion) through which the EU will intervene in the context of unforeseen situations. The EU will call on this reserve fund to address some priorities identified during the implementation of the multiannual financial framework that have not been allocated or have insufficient budgets.

The size and nature of the financial support that the EU provides to geographical programs in the EU neighbourhood is different in form and amounts allocated, according to (European Commission, 2018):

- the needs of the partner country, determined on the basis of indicators such as population and level of development;
- the commitment of the partner country to the mutually agreed objectives of political, economic and social reform and the progress made in their implementation;
- the commitment of the partner country to building a solid and sustainable democracy and the progress made in this process;
- the country's partnership with the Union, including the level of ambition of that partnership;
- the absorption capacity of the partner country and the potential impact of Union support provided under this Regulation.

Regarding the legal format of implementation, at a general level, but also particularly regarding the support of the neighbourhood, NDICI will be able to be implemented in accordance with the general framework of Association Agreements, Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, Multilateral Agreements and other agreements establishing a legally binding relation with partner countries. Furthermore, the same general regulatory framework for European instruments shall also include the conclusions of the European Council and the conclusions of the Council, the summit declarations or the conclusions of high-level meetings with partner countries, relevant European Parliament resolutions, Commission communications or joint communications of the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (European Commission, 2018).

Funding will be provided through *multi-annual indicative programs*. These shall be based on internationally agreed results and objectives, in particular those set for sustainable development goals. The European Parliament and the Council participate, together with the Member States, in the process of adopting these programs (European Commission 2018c). For EaP countries, association agendas, partnership priorities and other equivalent documents agreed upon are key benchmarks for setting EU support priorities for neighbouring countries (European Commission, 2018c).

As mentioned, the NDICI contains a chapter on the neighbourhood, with specific provisions applicable exclusively to countries in the eastern (but also southern) neighbourhood. “These specificities and key principles are maintained and strengthened, particularly the performance-based approach ('more for more'), the differentiation-based approach, thus stimulating the implementation of mutually agreed political and economic reforms. Given the very good results achieved so far, cross-border cooperation between EU Member States and partner countries will also continue, both in the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods” (European Commission, 2018c).

Conclusions

The reform of the European Neighbourhood Policy has been a complex process imposed by the internal realities of the EU, but, naturally, it was marked both by the position of the partners or by the global geopolitical and macroeconomic context. During the period since the launch of the ENP (2004) the context has changed. Some neighbours have since become members of the EU. Then, in 2008 and 2009, the two partnerships aimed at the southern dimension (Union for the Mediterranean) and the eastern dimension (Eastern Partnership) are launched. The instruments are updated, reformed and resized through a constantly increasing allocation for each multiannual financial framework. Moreover, these instruments with which the EU operates in relation to its partners have been diversified to respond to the context, but also to stimulate both the partner state and the society, the population as a whole.

The European policy implementation framework has been shaped by the internal and external context. The multilateral dimension of cooperation has increasingly been replaced by the bilateral dimension. The *more for more* principle applied in this context was intended as a stimulus for partners. This incentive must be understood not only in the sense that a state that reforms more, that integrates more, gets more support, including financially. The process is more complex and includes, as has become increasingly evident after 2015, a sectoral dimension of integration and differentiation. Thus, within the same state, some sectors have received additional support to the detriment of others. The differentiation was made starting from the same principle (more for more).

The process of implementing the external action and the European neighbourhood policy in particular, has become more complex through the range of instruments. At the same time, the EU has proposed simplified and more flexible mechanisms, by refining them and by stimulating the achievement of the objectives set out.

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PROCESS OF ACCESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION - CONTENT AND IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract. *At the current stage, for the successful European accession and integration of the Republic of Moldova, it becomes essential to study this process in terms of given dimensions, because the expected result depends on their effective implementation. It should be noted that the accession process has registered both successes and failures on the path of Europeanization of the Republic of Moldova, there are impediments at the institutional level, although in terms of legislative connection to European standards Moldova has only successes. The purpose of the research is to study the process of European integration and to identify the institutional impediments in the way of Euro integration of the Republic of Moldova. In order to achieve this goal, the following objectives were formulated: conceptual identification of the integration process of the Republic of Moldova; appreciation of the evolution and involution of the stages of accomplishment of the European integration process of the Republic of Moldova; estimating and evaluating the perspectives in the process of European integration of the Republic of Moldova in the current national and international equation.*

Keywords: *European integration, association agreement, Europeanization, European Neighbourhood Policy Eastern Partnership*

The process of European integration is a topic of major importance thanks to multiple approaches from experts, politicians, civil society representatives, on the grounds that its implementation in practice has an impact on all spheres of society, from educational to social, economic and political, but and on all the exponents directly involved in this process, such as the European Union (represented by the neighboring state Romania, as rapporteur for the country), such as state institutions, Parliament, Government and Presidency of the Republic of Moldova, such as major regional and international geopolitical actors , like the United States of America and the Russian Federation and, of course, the population of the Republic of Moldova.

In this context, it is necessary to identify and analyze external and internal aspects in the process of European integration. But the process of European integration is not limited to the instruments of foreign policy, such as official meetings, consultations, negotiations, signing agreements, but also involves essential internal transformations in the political-legal, economic-social and cultural fields. The experience of European integration of European Union (EU) member states, such as the Baltic States, Poland,

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Romania, but also those of the Western Balkans, shows the role of the external factor of the European Union on the transformation and modernization to European standards of those states. Respectively, the experience of Europeanization of these countries is a benchmark for studies and analyzes, which would be useful and applicable for the Republic of Moldova.

At the current stage, for the successful European accession and integration of the Republic of Moldova, it becomes essential to study this process in terms of given dimensions, because their effective implementation depends on the expected result. It should be noted that the accession process has registered both successes and failures on the path of Europeanization of the Republic of Moldova, there are impediments at the institutional level, although on the dimension of legislative connection to European standards Moldova has only successes.

Therefore, the importance of the analyzed topic is as current as possible in the conditions, when in the last two years the Moldovan state is going through profound political changes, from a regime declared "oligarchic" in 2019 (the year, when five years have passed since implementation of the Moldova-EU Association Agreement) towards a coalition one, with a pronounced pro-European orientation, so that later, the political division Russian, which generates a split of the Moldovan society according to the geopolitical criterion. This research emerges from the need to analyze the real prospects of Moldova's accession to the European Union, given that part of the population wants this, but political changes have removed Moldova from the EU.

The purpose of the research consists in studying the process of European integration and identifying the institutional impediments in the way of Eurointegration of the Republic of Moldova. In order to achieve this goal, the following objectives were formulated: conceptual identification of the integration process of the Republic of Moldova; appreciation of the evolution and involution of the stages of accomplishment of the European integration process of the Republic of Moldova; estimating and evaluating the perspectives in the process of European integration of the republic in the current national and international equation. Our research is intended to be a qualitative one, based on analysis and comparison, respectively a dialectical approach, in the order of the sequence of facts.

The article focuses on an assessment of the commitments made by the Government of the Republic of Moldova to ensure its participation in the common foreign and security policy of the European Union. An important component of the Association Agreement - the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, which provides the Republic of Moldova with the necessary framework for the modernization of its trade relations and a solid basis for a new market, is also analyzed.

Political and Economic Dimensions of the Association Agreement

With the declaration of the independence of the Moldovan state, the notion of European integration was already voiced by the political class in the Republic of Moldova. Starting from the historical, cultural, geographical, but also political considerations, it is imprinted in the consciousness and aspirations of the population as a rather natural thing. Moreover, drawing as a strategic objective the creation of a rule of law, based on democratic values, the aspiration of the Republic of Moldova to join and integrate in this structure is very well founded, because the European Union is an example of democracy, social welfare and economic, political stability. Thus, the advantages of Moldova's proximity to the European Union (EU) are related to the sphere of politics, economy and social life. In terms of the political approach, it means continuing the process of democratization, increasing the security of the country and its citizens; from an economic point of view, this would mean access to the European market, investments and new technologies, access to European development funds; from a social point of view - approximation to European standards of education, occupational safety and security, pensions and other social benefits.

Therefore, the European Union is attractive by the standards of civilization achieved, by the degree of economic development, by the standard of living of the population, as well as by the possibility of exercising human rights and freedoms. However, Moldova's relations with the European Union are developing very slowly, a situation created, including, due to the very low level of political culture, the dispersion of Moldovan society based on political sympathy, the modest information of the population about the phenomenon "European Union ”, Especially in the southern and eastern regions of the republic, of the insufficient knowledge by the society of the complex process of accession and integration in this structure, as well as of the pendulous change of the internal political regime of the Republic of Moldova, especially during the years after signing of the Association Agreement Moldova - European Union of 2014.

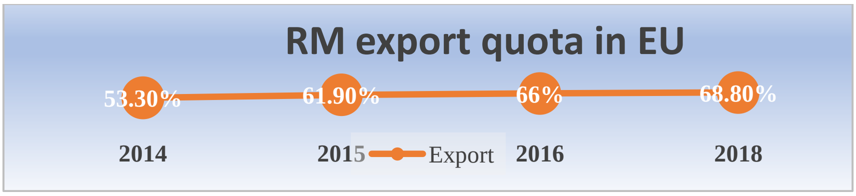
The integration of the Republic of Moldova into the European Union is a very difficult process, which requires a deep and multidimensional approach to pre-accession. This process involves two actors, the European Union and the Republic of Moldova, respectively it is necessary to take into account the availability, efforts and position of both parties on this vector. If we refer to the Republic of Moldova, European integration has become a constant element of the country's political vocabulary, either by expressing adherence to European values and the perspective of European integration, or by challenging the opportunity for European integration (Klipii, 2001). The real state of affairs, the confirmation or denial of the desire to adhere to or, more precisely, to be a part of what we call "European values" in general, and the European Union in particular, can be deduced from the analysis of government programs, of the documents for the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova, as well as of the official declarations of the state dignitaries.

The political class must draw on its agenda a clear and complex vision of the country's European integration process, its internal preparation for accession, to proceed to the gradual institutional changes, to the implementation of policies for coordination and implementation of this process, such as and the actual interaction with the EU. The realization of the accession process of the Republic of Moldova requires coordinated actions, based on appropriate programs and normative foundations. Coordination and interaction with the EU is achieved, at the pre-accession stage, through the exchange of information, consultations, negotiations and bilateral agreements concluded with European structures. At the same time, it is necessary to monitor the quality of the adjustment to the European requirements of the internal policy of European integration, these being the so-called conditionalities of the EU.

The evolution of Moldova's relations with the European Union can be divided into two basic stages, 2009-2014 and 2014-2019:

The next stage, normally, had to start with 2019, aiming at maintaining the continuity of reforms and the transition to European standards. However, against the background of the political crisis in the summer of 2019 (when the Filip Government fell), but also the compromise of the European development vector caused by several "political slippages" of the then government, the prospect of negotiating the next agreement is bleak.

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the Association Agreement has generated some processes with an impact for the Republic of Moldova. The EU has become the main trading partner of the republic, about 70% of Moldovan exports are destined for the Community market. According to the expert Alexandru Fală, in the period 2006-2014, the share of the European Union in the export of goods varied around the level of 50%. After the creation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with the EU, the share of exports to the EU has been steadily increasing from 53.3% in 2014 to 68.8% in 2018 (Agora.md, 2019).



On June 5, 2008, the Republic of Moldova signed the Joint Declaration on the Republic of Moldova-EU Mobility Partnership, being one of the first pilot states in this program (MAEIE, Parteneriatul de mobilitate). The Mobility Partnership is an instrument based on political dialogue, designed for an indefinite period of time, through which the EU provides a flexible and balanced framework for carrying out the 3-dimensional actions of the Global Approach to Migration:

The aim of this program is to facilitate the reintegration of Moldovan migrants returning, voluntarily or forcibly, from the EU into the internal labor market and to encourage those wishing to migrate to the EU to use legal means. 12 years after its implementation, the Republic of Moldova has implemented over 100 projects through the Mobility Partnership program.

As of April 28, 2014, citizens of the Republic of Moldova, holders of biometric passports, received the right to travel without visas to the EU. The Republic of Moldova has achieved this achievement following the implementation of the conditionalities of the Action Plan on the liberalization of the regime by the Republic of Moldova. Six years after the entry into force of the visa liberalization regime, more than 2 million Moldovan citizens traveled to the Schengen area, and the total number of state border crossings in the European area during this period was over 6 million, for a period of up to at 90 days, without the right to work. The Republic of Moldova has begun a profound process of societal and institutional modernization. However, arrears were also registered in the implementation of the Association Agreement.

For now, the positive effects of this unrestricted travel opportunity are not palpable compared to the expectations of society, but also of the country's leadership. The main impediment in the qualitative and multidimensional advancement of the implementation of the Association Agreement is the insufficiency of the political will of the governments in Chisinau, the political instability characterized by the change of three governments within a year (Filip Government - 2018-2019, Sandu Government - 2019, Chicu Government - 2019-present).

In May 2009, the Republic of Moldova was included by the European Union, along with 5 other post-Soviet states (Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan), in the European Neighbourhood Policy Eastern Partnership (MAEIE, Ce este parteneriatul estic). The aim of the Eastern Partnership is to strengthen the political association and economic integration with the EU of the six post-Soviet states in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus.

The Government set up on 25 September 2009 (Alliance for European Integration) decided on 13 November 2009 to start negotiations with the EU on the Association Agreement. The dialogue between the Republic of Moldova and the EU included three dimensions of negotiations:

1. The framework document of the Association Agreement;
2. Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area;
3. The liberalized visa regime.

Due to the involved commitment of both parties, the technical negotiations on the Association Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the EU took place dynamically, being completed in 2013 on all three levels. An important aspect of the negotiations was the insistence of the Republic of Moldova to obtain from the EU the offer of a clear European perspective by mentioning in agreement the possibility of obtaining the candidate state. Despite all the efforts made by the Moldovan diplomacy, Chisinau failed to obtain from Brussels the guarantee of the subsequent political integration of the Republic of Moldova in the EU by stipulating in the text of the Association Agreement a possible status of candidate state in the future. At the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius on November 28-29, 2013, the Republic of Moldova initialed the text of the Association Agreement with the EU (After fulfilling a number of conditions required by the EU, such as the adoption of the law on ensuring equality in society ("anti-discrimination law"), the Republic of Moldova was the first Eastern Partnership state to meet all the criteria of the Action Plan. on Visa Liberalization. On 28 April 2014, the Council of the European Union amended the EU Regulation on the abolition of the visa requirement for short-stay travel for Moldovan citizens holding a biometric passport in the Schengen area (Regulamentul UE nr.259/2014 al Parlamentului European).

On June 27, 2014, in Brussels, together with Ukraine and Georgia, the Republic of Moldova signed the Association Agreement with the EU. The Moldovan Parliament ratified the Association Agreement on 2 July 2014, which officially entered into force on 1 January 2016, after being ratified by all EU states. From the beginning of the negotiations until the signing of the Agreement, the Republic of Moldova has undergone difficult institutional reforms, achieving a series of legislative transformations and changes that have brought the country closer to EU institutional standards. The Association Agreement has replaced the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, advancing to a higher level in the institutional relationship with the EU. Unlike the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the Association Agreement is a more complex document, which regulates the republic's relations with the EU in various fields, the implementation of which will aim at modernizing and democratizing the country.

The priorities for the implementation of the Association Agreement are established through the Association Agenda negotiated by the Government of the Republic of Moldova with the European Commission. On June 26, 2014, the EU-Moldova Association Agenda for 2014-2016 was adopted. The Second Moldova-EU Association Agenda for the years 2017-2019 was adopted on August 19, 2017.

Being a complex and multidimensional document, the Association Agreement contains binding provisions, regulatory rules and cooperation arrangements. At the internal level, the instrument for implementing in practice the provisions of the Agreement is the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Moldova-EU Association Agreement (PNAAA). On October 7, 2014, the Government approved this National Action Plan for the years 2014-2016, and on December 30, 2016 - PNAAA for 2017-2019[1] (Raportul PNAA 2017-2019).

The PNAAA indicates the deadlines for fulfilling the commitments by the Republic of Moldova in accordance with the Association Agreement and the institutions responsible for the implementation of the actions. Moldova-EU institutional cooperation takes place on several platforms, the EU-Republic of Moldova Association Council being the hierarchically-superior Moldovan-community institution. In June 2019, the Government of the Republic of Moldova presented the Report on the implementation of the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Moldova-EU Association Agreement 2017-2019.

As mentioned, the signing of the Association Agreement opened a new stage in the development of Moldova's relations with the EU based on the main areas of cooperation, such as:

- **foreign and security policy**
- **trade and other trade-related issues**
- **justice, freedom and security**

but also on sectoral cooperation in a wide range of fields, such as public administration, business, employment, social policy and equal opportunities, consumer protection, energy sector, transport, agriculture and rural development, environment , climate policies, the information society, public health, audiovisual policy and culture.

The acquis in the field of the common foreign and security policy of the European Union is related to intergovernmental cooperation. In this respect, the Association Agreement provides for the intensification of the EU-Moldova political dialogue and the cooperation for the gradual convergence in the sectors covered by the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Uniunea Europeană, Politica Externă și de Securitate)[2].

Thus, the Republic of Moldova is committed to providing active and unconditional support for the implementation of the common foreign and security policy, in the spirit of solidarity and mutual loyalty. The perspective of the Republic of Moldova's participation in the common foreign and security policy of the European Union represents a contribution to ensuring international security.

In the area of justice, freedom and security, the agreement places particular emphasis on the rule of law and the strengthening of judicial institutions and practices. The agreement establishes the framework for cooperation on the protection of personal data; preventing and combating various offenses affecting the cooperation of the parties; mobility of citizens (entry and residence regime, migration, asylum, border management).

An important aspect is the harmonization of the legislation on the retention of information traffic data by electronic communications operators for a period between 6

[1] See https://mfa.gov.md/sites/default/files/raportul_pnaaa_2017-2019_-_semestrul_i_2019.pdf, (accesat la 03.03.2020)

[2] See https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/foreign-security-policy_ro (accesat la 04.03.2020)

months and 2 years. Cooperation for the protection of personal data will ensure an adequate level of protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual and in particular the right to privacy with regard to the processing of personal data, and in the context of this assurance, the free movement of personal data. personal character between the Republic of Moldova and the EU member states.

The gradual approximation of the Republic of Moldova to the EU will ensure the observance of migrants' rights according to international principles, admission rules, rights and status of admitted persons, fair treatment and integration of foreign citizens.

With regard to sectoral cooperation, through the Association Agreement, the Republic of Moldova aims to determine the creation of an efficient, accountable, credible, transparent and open public administration in relation to the beneficiaries of its services, thus contributing to increasing institutional capacities and human resources. of the central and local public administration in order to improve the efficiency of their activity. But also on sectoral cooperation in a wide range of fields, such as public administration, business, employment, social policy and equal opportunities, consumer protection, energy sector, transport, agriculture and rural development, environment , climate policies, the information society, public health, audiovisual policy and culture (Creangă, Bostan, 2019:15-16).

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The transposition of the acquis communautaire in the field of health and safety at work will change the mentality of employers and workers, who must become conscious actors in the prevention of accidents at work and occupational diseases. The employer will be obliged to ensure the health and safety of workers in all aspects related to work.

The policies to be implemented in the field of consumer law will ensure the placing on the market of safe products which do not constitute a threat or a reduced threat according to the nature of its use and which is acceptable in order to maintain a high level of protection for health and safety. people. Another advantage is to increase the protection of the consumer's economic interests as a result of accurate, transparent and clear information on the prices of the products offered to them, ensuring protection against unfair commercial practices.

At the same time, any consumer in the country will be able to file complaints in Moldova for products purchased in the EU and vice versa, any European consumer will be able to file complaints in the EU for products purchased in Moldova.

The Association Agreement of the Republic of Moldova with the EU offers a possibility to modernize the energy sector by implementing the third package for the electricity and gas market, which involves the separation of activities of production, transmission and distribution of electricity and natural gas, free contracting of suppliers by consumers and infrastructure integration into the EU energy market. The Association Agreement also includes the application of national legislation on renewable energy, in order to increase the share of renewable energy sources in total energy consumption to 17% by 2020, as well as the adoption of laws transposing EU Directives on energy efficiency, in particular on the energy performance of buildings and on standard product labeling and information, including data on energy consumption and other resources, for products with an energy impact (Parlamentul European. Fişe descriptive despre Uniunea Europeană).[3]

The transposition of the EU acquis in the field of energy efficiency will be able to make a significant contribution to reducing the increase in energy consumption and moderating the adverse effects on the environment caused by energy production and consumption. In addition, it could encourage the development, marketing and sale of energy efficient products, while supporting the Moldovan authorities to promote key policy objectives, such as providing energy-efficient services and improving the living conditions of low-income families.

The overall objective of transport policy is to strike a balance between economic development on the one hand and the quality and safety requirements of society on the other, in order to develop a modern and sustainable transport system.

The aim of the Association Agreement in the field of road transport of goods and passengers is to promote an efficient transport system by liberalizing the market as much as possible, ensuring a level playing field. The further implementation of the proposed reform agenda will lead to improved road safety, improved quality of transport services.

The agricultural field is a key sector for the economy of the Republic of Moldova, and the Association Agreement brings amendments designed to promote agriculture and rural development by adopting existing practices in the European Union. Firstly, it will be ensured that the quality of products is improved by protecting geographical indications, designations of origin and traditional specialties guaranteed. We mention that the quality of some products is conferred both by the place where they were produced and by the production methods used.

[3] See https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/ro/sheet/69/eficienta-energetica (accesat la 04.03.2020)

Greater emphasis will be placed on the continued development of organic farming. Farmers will use techniques that help maintain ecosystems and reduce pollution.

The implementation of the European Environmental Acquis benefits EU and Moldovan citizens and businesses, including by improving public health, conserving natural resources, increasing economic and environmental efficiency, integrating the environment into other policy areas, and using of modern, cleaner technologies that contribute to more sustainable production models. Special attention will be paid to improving the transparency of decision-making, as well as to raising awareness, informing, consulting and involving all citizens in environmental decision-making.

The result of the adjustment of the state policy in the field of adaptation to climate change will succeed in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, will progressively eliminate substances that deplete the ozone layer, will reduce pollutant emissions of vehicles through changes in fuel composition, and will ban production, introduction on the market and the use of fluorinated greenhouse gases or products and equipment containing these substances (CCE, Ghidul privind aproximarea legislației de mediu a UE).[4]

Full harmonization of national legislation with the acquis in the field of information society will promote the development of online public services with personal data protection, the development of national administrative capacities in the field of communications and information technologies through the exchange of information, best practices and experience, as well as accelerating the development of broadband communications services. From the point of view of the types of effects, we consider that the benefits of broadband communications will be felt in a number of areas such as education, research, economics, public health, public administration, etc.

The alignment of the Republic of Moldova with EU policies and activities aims to achieve a high level of health protection by preventing diseases and health threats, as well as by promoting a healthy lifestyle by addressing issues related to alcohol, smoking and alcohol consumption. drugs, environmental risks and injuries.

Regarding the audiovisual sector, the Republic of Moldova will take over the fundamental regulations of the acquis, represented by Directive 2007/65 of December 11, 2007 (Directiva 2007/65/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 11 decembrie 2007). [5] The implementation of this Directive will contribute to the approximation of the conditions of activity in the field of audiovisual services in the Republic of Moldova to those existing in the European Union, ensuring conditions for fair competition in the common market and strengthening the role of audiovisual media services in meeting public interests.

An important component of the Association Agreement is the creation of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).[6] DCFTA provides the Republic of Moldova with the necessary framework for the modernization of its trade relations and a solid basis for economic development through the progressive elimination of customs tariffs and quotas and through an extensive harmonization of laws, norms and regulations in various trade sectors.

First, the Agreement implies a gradual liberalization of trade (within 10 years from the time of signing), depending on the level of sensitivity of the products to competition with foreign producers. Liberalization will not be complete, the Republic of Moldova limits duty-free imports of meat and meat products, dairy products and sugar,

[4] See https://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/guide/trans/rom.pdf (accesat la 04.03.2020)
[5] See https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32007L0065 (accesat la 04.03.2020)
[6]. See http://mei.gov.md/ro/dcfta (accesat la 04.03.2020)

and quantitative quotas are set. The release of barriers to import and export will provide direct access to the Republic of Moldova to the European single market and will also increase competition in the internal market, which will ultimately help reduce prices and increase product diversity and quality. However, the potential of the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area remains to be realized. The key to progress in this regard remains the existence of a clear and consistent political will in achieving all the provisions of the Association Agreement. And this means that the results of the transformations must contribute to the sustainable development of the country, bring more visible benefits to the citizens and help the continuous integration of the Republic of Moldova with the European Union.

Reminiscences of the old regime vs. Advocacy for the defense of fundamental freedoms

Lately, the issue of integration into the European Union is being discussed more and more often. This is determined by several phenomena that have accentuated the importance of this perspective: the inefficiency of cooperation within the CIS, EU enlargement policy, the prospect of isolating the Republic of Moldova on all levels, the issue of promoting foreign trade given that Moldova is not part of any truly viable regional integration group, the split of Moldovan society on geopolitical criteria and the absence of political maturity of the ruling class, etc.

The European Union is currently experiencing two development trends: deepening European integration within the EU and enlarging the EU. The deepening of European integration, represented by the creation of the Monetary Economic Union, was necessary to strengthen the position of the European Union worldwide, as well as to solve several existing development problems in Europe. The enlargement of the European Union will also contribute to the consolidation of Europe, being associated with the perspective of ensuring security, cooperation and sustainable development in a unified Europe. In addition, the enlargement of the European Union is absolutely necessary to limit the redistribution of Europe into different blocs.

But with the departure of Great Britain (a process also known as BREXIT), it ends and the era of the enlargement of the European Union, but also of NATO, at least for a while. The European Commission is set to present a new enlargement strategy, which will make the integration process even more complicated and difficult, especially for the countries of the Western Balkans. Northern Macedonia has become the 30th NATO member state, which, in fact, is the last "enlargement" for a long time to come, because in the near future, both the European Union and the Alliance will focus on strengthening internal structures.

Although there are several views on the incompatibility of current trends in Europe, the EU is strong enough to deal with these virtually parallel development trends over time. The perspective of the new members of the European Union is to become members of the Monetary Economic Union later. Strengthening Europe is the right response to changing circumstances and meets the interests of all participating countries.

In the created situation, the Republic of Moldova must decide if it wants to participate in the European construction. Analyzing the results obtained by the candidate countries in the European Union, it was observed that the accession perspective is the strongest stimulus of the reforms, so necessary in the Republic of Moldova. Preparations for accession to Central and Eastern Europe have certainly contributed to building and consolidating democracy, ensuring respect for human rights, the efficient transition from a planned to a market economy, and ensuring important economic and social development.

The deepening of European integration also results in widening the development gap between the members of the European Union and the states outside it. Thus, for the Republic of Moldova, integration into the European Union is the only viable alternative that would ensure the satisfaction of our national, economic, political, cultural interests and needs, etc. If we continue to hesitate in the face of this option, we risk becoming an isolated state, which is very unfavorable given the current development of the world economy.

The process of European integration of the Republic of Moldova continues to be largely influenced by the conditionality of the EU, and the achievement of internal transformations has been and is dictated by the requirements and community initiatives. This is determined by the slow awareness of the true trajectory in the foreign and domestic policy of the Republic of Moldova, but also by the EU's interest in having a cooperation with economically competent partners and enjoying a viable rule of law. As a result, the integration process of the Republic of Moldova is characterized by a close interdependence of external and internal dimensions, being based on the achievement of European requirements, especially in EU initiatives, and being evaluated by progress reports of European structures. .

Also, obtaining visa liberalization was considered a priority of both the foreign and domestic policy of the Republic of Moldova. It should be noted that in this regard also the Republic of Moldova received the Action Plan on visa liberalization from the EU in 2011. As a result, in the context of the negotiation process on visa liberalization, the working group for coordinating the visa process was created. visa liberalization with the European Union and approved the National Program for the implementation of the Action Plan on visa liberalization (March 2011) and the Additional Measures of the National Program for the implementation of the Action Plan on visa liberalization (February 2012).

For the Republic of Moldova, the Association Agreement can be considered as the cementing of the European course of the country, which involves initiating essential changes in the country, and once the door of the European Union continues to be opened to the Republic of Moldova, its main action plan is Europeanization, democratization and implementation. effective implementation of reforms to adopt European standards. The signing of the agreement has certainly strengthened the desire to opt for the prospect of EU membership following the good faith implementation of the commitments made in it. In this regard, among the priorities submitted to the Government of the Republic of Moldova was the creation of functional institutions at the service of citizens, the effective fight against corruption, ensuring a viable justice and a truly market economy.

The Moldovan authorities should be aware that the signing of this document is not a finality, but only the beginning of a new period, probably long and difficult, of considerable efforts to obtain the status of candidate state. In other words, if in the period 2010-2014 the process of European integration was dictated primarily by the external dimensions, starting with 2014 the emphasis must be transferred to the internal dimensions.

In this context, the Association Agenda between the Republic of Moldova and the EU7 was adopted, which replaces the Moldova-EU Action Plan and provides a list of priorities for joint work planned for 2016-2018, and presents a good example of the interdependence of external dimensions. and internal ones in the process of European integration of the Republic of Moldova. According to the document, the EU supports the

[7] See https://www.mfa.gov.md/img/docs/Agenda-de-Asociere-RO.pdf (accesat la 25.04.2020)

Republic of Moldova in achieving the objectives and priorities set out in the Association Agenda. The EU does this by using all available sources of support, as well as by experience, advice, best practices and know-how, by exchanging information, by supporting capacity building and institutional strengthening.

2019 was the year, when five years have passed since the signing of the Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova - a period marked by expectations, transformations, successes, but also pressures, disappointments, blockages. However, after the EU cooled relations in recent years due to the decisions of the government in Chisinau, in June 2019, with the change of power in the Republic of Moldova, officials in Brussels changed their rhetoric, saying they would offer full support to the new government.

The Association Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement have brought a superior quality in cooperation relations, as well as in achieving the purpose and objectives of relations in political association and economic integration. In these 5 years of implementation of the Association Agreement we see a very large increase in cooperation, especially in the economic and trade field. Thus, 70% of Moldovan exports reach the European market, the strongest and safest market, where Moldovan products have found many consumers. Of course, there has been a lack of progress in some sectors. For example, in the field of justice reform, but also regresses in terms of the standards of democracy and the rule of law.

It is true that until June 2019 the implementation of the Association Agreement has not been achieved and a strong will is needed to comply with the standards related to democracy, the rule of law, justice. This was highlighted in several moments, starting with the lack of will in the investigation of bank fraud, the adoption of the uninominal electoral system, which was against the decision of the Venice Commission, but also of external partners. In the same vein, we are talking about the invalidation of the local elections in Chisinau in 2018, when after the free and fair elections, the people of Chisinau did not have the mayor they voted for, because the result was annulled - and this raised many questions about independence , both justice and other institutions. These were the moments when the European Union could not go further in cooperation with the Republic of Moldova. In November 2017, the EU could not provide budget support for the justice sector because the reform did not take place. The following year, he was also unable to provide the agreed macro-financial assistance because the Republic of Moldova had failed to meet its commitments. This assistance has been put on hold, and the annual cooperation programs for 2017-2018 have been reduced.

Thus, the European Union has been in a stand-by position, rather wanting to understand the extent to which the current Chicu Government assumes and wants the real implementation of key reforms in the justice sector and good governance. In this sense, in 2019 the signals were not positive. And this shows us the absence of the European Union's decision to provide the second tranche of macro-financial assistance, although the technical conditions are largely met. Or, this proves that the political situation in Chisinau is important for the European partners as well.

In the first eleven months of 2019, the assistance provided by the European Commission in the form of grants was about 1.2 billion lei, so over 20% of the amount of external assistance expected for 2020.[8] This means that a series of reforms are needed to

[8] See. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_6117 (accesat la 25.04.2020)

win the support of European partners, also taking into account the fact that 2020 is the election year (presidential elections are expected in November).

Also, in 2020, the government must focus on unblocking the last two tranches of 100 million euro macro-financial assistance and increasing budget support for the Republic of Moldova. According to the corrections (against the background of the pandemic) to the state budget for 2020, the cost of implementing projects financed from external sources will be 5.7 billion lei, increasing by 3.1 billion lei compared to 2019.[9]

A priority for the Government of the Republic of Moldova remains to negotiate a new Association Agenda for the coming years, in which to draw the objects for the partnership with the European Union.[10] Under the current conditions, the objectives of the new Agenda are to be set on the development of bilateral trade with the EU and the gradual increase in the coming years of export quotas for some categories of products that are exempt from customs duties, such as grapes or plums, but also cereals or wine. It will also rely on the support and technical assistance of the European Union for local public administration reform, which has been intensely discussed in recent years, but without notable results. Moreover, the Association Agenda could include some mutually agreed objectives after the Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels, scheduled for June 2020, given that the pandemic situation in the region will allow.

Undoubtedly, the Association Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement have proved to be an extraordinary tool for the Republic of Moldova. After five years of implementing the Association Agreement, cooperation between the EU and Moldova has become more strengthened, especially in the fields of research, innovation and education, and beyond. And if we refer to the four freedoms guaranteed by the European single market, namely: the free movement of goods, capital, services and labor we can conclude that the Republic of Moldova, but also its population had only benefits from following the Agreement.

Specifically, if we refer to the free movement of goods, then the Free Trade Area (DCFTA) opened up European markets and helped national producers to promote their production beyond national borders. Thus, 2/3 of all Moldovan exports reach the EU, and their net growth reached 367 million euros in 2015-2017. This increase has led to the creation of at least 15,000 new jobs in our country. And in the absence of DCFTA, the state budget would have lost over 7 billion lei in revenue, and the private sector would have lost at least 320 million euros in fixed capital investments.[11]

Another example is that of the agri-food sector, which was then thought to be affected by free trade. In reality, this sector is the biggest beneficiary. Thus, the Free Trade Agreement brought 7 billion lei to the republic's budget. It's also about jobs. More than 15,000 new jobs were created, more than 5,000 companies were supported with various instruments, loans, grants. At the same time, the Republic of Moldova received support for the strengthening of state structures and institutions dealing with certification, business. This means that the standards in the Republic of Moldova will be the same as in

[9] See https://mf.gov.md/ro/content/parlamentul-votat-proiectul-de-modificare-legii-bugetului-de-stat-pentru-anul-2020 (accesat la 25.04.2020)

[10] La sfârșitul anului 2019 s-a încheiat perioada de implementare a Agendei de Asociere dintre Uniunea Europeană și Republica Moldova 2017 - 2019, dar și a Planului național de acțiuni pentru implementarea Acordului de Asociere 2017 - 2019.

[11] Acordul de Liber Schimb cu Uniunea Europeană. 4 ani de DCFTA / Ce s-a schimbat de când RM a semnat Acordul de Asociere cu UE. https://dcfta.md/4-ani-de-dcfta-ce-s-a-schimbat-de-cand-rm-a-semnat-acordul-de-asociere-cu-ue (accesat la 24.04.2020)

the EU. This level of modernization is unprecedented and an extraordinary opportunity for the future of the country.

If we refer to the free movement of persons, then we can mention that a major advantage for the citizens of the Republic of Moldova was the visa-free regime with the EU, launched on April 28, 2014. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI), in 2014- In 2019, over 2 million Moldovan citizens benefited from the right to free movement in Europe, registering over 6 million crossings of the state border. The Republic of Moldova was the first Eastern Partnership country to obtain a visa-free regime with the European Union. According to statistics, young people aged 26-35 were among the top people who chose to leave the European Union, with a number of 502,609 young people.[12]

However, the potential of the Association Agreement has not yet been realized. Here, too, we refer to the functioning of democratic institutions, the strengthening of the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, which have not undergone significant changes. For example, the prevention and fight against high-level corruption has been largely characterized by selective justice practices or lack of purpose, despite the strengthening of the normative and institutional framework by creating the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office and reforming the integrity system. Several efforts were made to reform police, including with the support of development partners. However, the depoliticization of legal institutions and their proximity to citizens remains a backlog. Corruption is still perceived as the main problem of society, and the corruption perception index has worsened, although some have been successful. All these affected the EU-Moldova dialogue, implicitly the full capitalization of the support from the European Union.

The former Democratic Party government has left behind a long-lasting negative legacy: politically subordinate state institutions, a corrupt or controlled judiciary, a financial deficit, state resource embezzlement schemes, enslaved media, tracing political. The new governing coalition is divided into several topics, especially in guiding the country's foreign policy.

The Socialist Party has often supported the initiatives and interests of the PD leader, among which the most reasonable being the mixed voting system, citizenship by investment, non-transparent sale of the only (strategic) airport in Moldova with international routes, mimicking the bank fraud investigation, accepting the investigation "Kroll", which, in the end, proved to be a "ticket" (the statement of the head of the National Anticorruption Center, Viorel Chetraru) during the hearings in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.

In addition, the agreement between the main international players, which helped to achieve a non-violent power transition, proved to be short-lived. Russia is expected to strive to make the Socialists the dominant political force in Moldova.

While the acute phase of the crisis has been overcome, Moldova should remain at the center of the European Union. The EU, Moldova's most influential international partner, has the opportunity to act. While the Republic of Moldova is a small and poor state, it is on the borders of the EU and has an association agreement with the EU. Moreover, the EU has a substantial influence on the country, given its dependence on exports and aid from the EU and international financial institutions.

[12] See https://www.jurnal.md/ro/news/2cff619e42b84ac3/peste-2-milioane-de-moldoveni-au-calatorit- liber-in-ue-timp-de-5-ani-cate-cazuri-de-refuz-au-fost-inregistrate.html la 24.04.2020

Thus, the EU can play a decisive role in helping Moldova's reform in the light of recent developments. This would matter not only for Moldova and she EU, but stability in Moldova would also serve the interests of another of the EU's and Moldova's neighbors - Ukraine.

Moldova is highly dependent on international donors. As the Democrats did not meet a number of EU and IMF conditions, Moldova missed important state budget entries from international partners. This puts the government in a difficult situation.

In order to contribute to the country's financial stability and to support the new government's clear reform commitments, the EU and international institutions are likely to need to mobilize macro-financial assistance. The EU should pay special attention to the banking sector and consider sending advisers to help Moldova resume reforms to this system. Thus, investments in independent state institutions, especially in the justice system, and support for a clean and competitive political system would be essential for Moldova's development. Given that the Constitutional Court has lost its credibility in not maintaining its independent role, the EU could start by implementing an EUJUST mission to support Moldova in reforming the institution. The creation of anti-corruption courts, composed of judges selected with the participation of international donors, could also be considered. Plahotniuc's Democratic Party forced participation in the major Moldovan diaspora in politics and violated party finance rules. As the videos show, Russia has provided illegal funds to Moldovan parties.

The EU should consider measures to support the Moldovan authorities in ensuring the next elections in compliance with the highest electoral standards. This would include insisting on and supporting the strengthening of the transparency of political party funding, investigating illegal party funding and expanding opportunities for the diaspora to participate in the country's political life.

The European Union has a direct interest in the peaceful development of the Republic of Moldova, but also the opportunity to support a neighboring country that is going through a difficult and sensitive period. While the most tense phase of the political crisis has passed, reconstruction is still in its early stages and Moldova will need its international partners on its side.

The advancement of the Moldova-EU dialogue depends on the political will in Chisinau. But this requires governmental, legal and administrative stability. The main focus of the government must remain on meeting the needs and expectations of the citizens of the Republic of Moldova. In this sense, the key to progress remains in clear and consistent policy in the desire to further implement the provisions of the new Agreement. And this means that the results of the transformations must contribute to the sustainable development of the country and bring more visible benefits to the citizens.

Indeed, a priority declared by the Chicu Government (technocratic government, from democrats and socialists) for 2020 is "the European vector of development of the Republic of Moldova". This involves negotiating a new Association Agenda, which, at the level of the ruling party's electoral program and pro-Eastern tendencies, will correspond to the Government's work program. In other words, the Association Agenda cannot be an ambitious one as long as the government undertakes narrow reforms, such as the small justice reform.

In the same vein, the principle of conditionality remains the instrument of relations between the EU and the Republic of Moldova. The European Union constantly provides the Republic of Moldova with conditionalities, and only after their realization provides the necessary financial assistance to be able to maintain the required reform course. The EU has always assessed the state of affairs and the changes that will be made in terms of reforms. This process presupposes a long-term change and will require difficult, sometimes very complex, decisions on the part of the Moldovan authorities.

Unfortunately, the precarious relations between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union were largely caused by the "political myopia" of the elites, who did not know how to effectively manage modernization processes through reform, but also by serving the interests of the Kremlin or a group of oligarchs in the country.

One of the priorities of achieving the European path is access to the four freedoms of movement, including people, this value is nothing more than an expression of human dignity in the context of globalization processes. But the realization of the European path of the Republic of Moldova is not only related to the political-legal, commercial-economic and financial-investment spheres, a rather important role belongs to the Europeanization of society, the acquisition and implementation of values and norms that prove able to ensure the European vocation. Republic of Moldova.

Conclusions and recommendations

In 2009, the Republic of Moldova started the process of political association and economic integration in the European Union within the institutional policy of the Eastern Partnership. After 10 from this community dialogue from which 5 years of implementation of the Association Agreement can be drawn the following conclusions:

1. Political dialogue has evolved and evolved. The developments were caused by the lack of political will of the Moldovan authorities to carry out reforms that would lead to the functioning of state institutions, in particular, the reform of the judiciary and the fight against corruption.
2. Despite the regrets of European officials about the European course of the country and the suspension of macro-financing, the Republic of Moldova remains involved in the process of economic integration into the Community through the DCFTA instrument, which 5 years after its implementation has strongly connected Moldova to the EU, including the Transnistrian region.
3. The liberalized visa regime with the European Union and programs in various fields offer Moldovan citizens many perspectives to connect to the European circuit, but also to bring the experience gained in the EU in the Moldovan society. For the next years, commitments are required from Moldova to increase political association in the EU and to integrate economically into the community space, but also to increase the well-being of citizens.
4. Strengthen the continuous growth of trade volumes of Moldovan exports to the EU market by diversifying goods and removing technical barriers by increasing the technological level in the production process.
5. To increase the degree of internal democratization of the Republic of Moldova by involving civil society in the decision-making process, ensuring freedom of expression and media pluralism.
6. In the less favorable international and regional context (low EU interest in new enlargements; strained relations between the EU and the Russian Federation; the role of the Russian factor in the European integration process of the Republic of Moldova), there is a need to strengthen internal dimensions in the process of European integration of the Republic of Moldova.
7. The cohesion of all political forces and actors in society to achieve major goals. At the same time, the integration policy promoted by the Government of the Republic of

Modova is often represented as a speculative and demagogic one, the tasks of European integration being transformed into electoral platforms, without being implemented in practice. In this sense, we opt for a competent leadership and a stable political will, ensured by the support of the population to promote the goal of European integration of the country.

For this, as a recommendation, the following actions are a priority:

1. To reforming the justice system by ensuring the independence, efficiency, transparency and accountability of the judiciary and anti-corruption institutions. Prosecutor's office reform and the fight against corruption are priority measures in reforming the judiciary. The promotion of judges must be based on merit and transparent recruitment.
2. Demonstration of political will in the impartial investigation of the 2014 bank fraud that affected the stability of the banking system. The purpose of the investigation should be to hold those responsible for fraud accountable and to recover the misappropriated funds. Securing money laundering prevention legislation in line with European legislation will create the necessary legal framework to avoid such situations in the future.
3. Depoliticization of state institutions based on the functioning of laws and observance of procedural norms and appointment of apolitical persons or those who do not serve the interests of the party at the head of state institutions.
4. Annulment of the provisions of the electoral legislation regarding the mixed vote and return to the previous practice, that of proportional voting.
5. To develop an efficient and transparent regulatory framework for the business environment, by guaranteeing equal rights for businesses and business people and improve the transparency of the public procurement sector by implementing the law in force.
6. Energy connection of the Republic of Moldova to the EU through the connection to the gas and electricity systems of Romania; Liberalization of the energy market in the Republic of Moldova by demonopolizing it; Implementation of the new laws in the energy field and realization of the commitments, assumed by the Republic of Moldova within the European Energy Community.
7. To carrying out public administration reform to improve public services and public finance management and to create more employment opportunities at local and regional level to increase the living standards of citizens.
8. Increasing the completeness of Moldovan exports to the EU and expanding the geographical area of their spread in the Community by creating mechanisms for the development of the processing industry (including primary) and increasing the degree of technologicalization of the Moldovan economy. Achieving quality standards in accordance with EU requirements and organizing campaigns to promote Moldovan products on European markets.
9. Increasing the degree of transparency of the decision-making act through the involvement of civil society. Demonopolizing the media market and creating the conditions for the development of the independence of media institutions, which would contribute to ensuring pluralism of opinion and to the correct and equidistant information of Moldovan citizens.

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IV. EUROPEAN SOCIETY: DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION

Analele Universității din Oradea, Seria Relații Internaționale și Studii Europene, TOM XI, pag. 165-177

ROMANIAN COMMUNITY IN AUSTRIA SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Marian-Ionel CUTOI [*]

Abstract. *Migration is a social phenomenon that has profoundly affected Romanian society for the last three decades. Due to migration, in some receiving states, more representative communities of Romanians began to develop. One of these communities is that of the Romanians in Austria, which in recent years has developed steadily, becoming the second-largest minority community in this country. The influencing factors and the contextual environment influenced both the immigration and the socio-economic integration of the Romanians into the Austrian society. Evidence of this integration is given by a high rate of engagement in the labour market, entrepreneurship and the school system. Romanians are not only a well-integrated community, but also human capital that plays a particularly important role in certain areas of socio-economic life in Austria.*

Keywords: *Emigration, Community, Social, Romanian, Integration*

Introduction

Through this study I would like to highlight the real situation of the effective integration of the Romanian community into the Austrian social-economic environment. The methodology used in the research consists of an analysis, processing and personal interpretation of statistical data prepared by the competent profile institutions and the annual analysis reports published by the official agencies of Austria on topics specific to the fields analysed in this study. Another point of research is the review of rules and legislative provisions that legislate the issues that are the subject of the study. Personal observation and experimentation brought an additional contribution to this study due to membership in the community since 2009, by going through all stages of integration in Austrian society, starting from the receipt of the right of residence, study and the effective integration into socio-economic life.

1. Socio-economic and demographic contextual realities

1.1. Austria - contextual presentation

Austria is a central European country with a population of 8.9 million at the beginning of 2020 (Federal Statistic Office Austria, Population, https://www.statistik.at/web de/statistiken/menschen _und_ gesellschaft bevoelkerung/, accesed in 25.04.2020). The democratic governmental republic proclaimed its independence and neutrality in 1955, and it is divided into nine administrative regions called Land or Bundesland (Confederation Law, Articles 1 and 2). Each region/Land/Bundesland has limited autonomy, regional decision-making forums and a local administrative organisation. The most representative administrative region is Land Wien, which is also the capital of the country. With its 1.9 million inhabitants (Statitstic

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Office Vienna, https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/bevoelkerung/bevoelkerungsstand/, accesed in 25.04.2020) it accounts for a fifth of the country's population, and manages to generate a quarter of Austria's total GDP, being the richest region alongside Salzburg . The official language of the country is German, but in certain areas of eastern and southeastern regions, Hungarian, Croatian and Slovenian are recognized as official languages as well. Austria has joined European values and the community, being a member of the European Union since 1 January 1995. It adopted the Euro currency four years later and joined the Schengen area in 2007 (Official website of the European Union, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/austria_en, accesed in 9.05.2020).

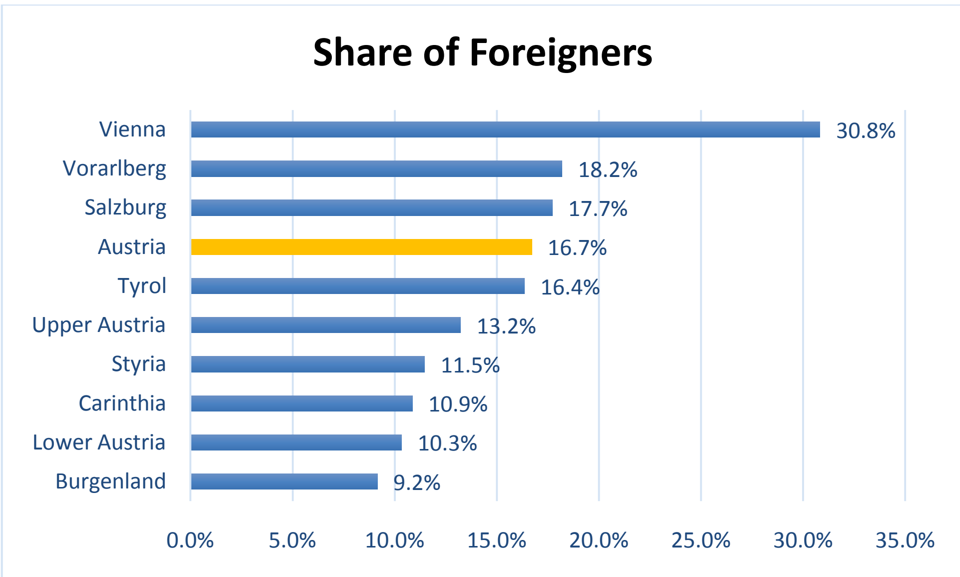
1.2. Domestic socio–economic Context

According to the World Bank classification, Austria is included in the category of countries with developed economies and high income. With a GDP / capita of 44,900 euros and 128% of the EU(27) average, it is among the top performing economies in the European Union. The country's wealth is not evenly distributed, with significant differences in economic performance and development between regions. Burgenland, the weakest developed region, accounts for only half of the welfare of the most productive regions, Vienna and Salzburg (Federal Statistic Office Austria, GDP, 2019, https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/wirtschaft, accesed in 9.05.2020). This uneven development has a significant impact in terms of social phenomenon, the eastern and southern regions with the lowest incomes and fewer jobs available becoming a source of internal migration and a factor of influence for external migration. Austria does not have a minimum wage set by law. Instead, minimum wage is negotiated between the Austrian Economic Chamber (WKO) and the Trade Union (ÖGB), and regulated in collective bargaining agreements, for 2020 it has been negotiated at the level of 1500 euros gross. For each field or group of activities, a collective labour contract that specifies the mandatory minimum wage level is provided (Austrian Economic Chamber Website, Employments contracts, https://www.arbeiterkammer.at/beratung/arbeitundrecht/Arbeitsvertraege/Kollektivvertrag, accesed in 10.05.2020). This method of establishing the minimum wage and contractual regulation ensures the protection of over 99% of the employed persons against remuneration below the assumed level. The social system is a complex product of the social democratic party that was at the helm of Austria for a long time. The most important component of social system is the Minimum Income for basic needs (bedarfsorientierte Mindestsicherung) restructured in 2019 and renamed as social assistance. This minimum income is established by law. It can be granted to citizens of Austria, the European Union as well as to those who enjoy refugee status (Consolidated Federal Law, Basic Social Welfare Law, paragraph 4). The applicants have the obligation to be registered in the database of the Office of Labour. This social assistance also includes medical insurance for each beneficiary. The amount of income varies from one region to another. It is established by law at national level and finalized via local laws by the administration of each region. This income was designed to reduce poverty, facilitate the integration of people into the labour market and to ensure a normal social life.

1.3 Ethno-national structure of the population, demographic realities

Austria is recognised as a state with a high openness and acceptance in terms of the treatment and integration of persons of another nationality, particularly those coming from different conflict zones of the world or from countries with totalitarian political regimes. Currently, there are people of different nationalities coming from almost 200 (own preparation, data provided by Federal Statistic Office Austria) countries living in Austria. 16.7% of Austria's population is made up of people of other nationalities, born abroad, representing the first generation, placing Austria into the top of the countries of the European Union in terms of the share of foreign population. The percentage reaches 25% if the second-generation people are included (Federal Chancellery, Expert Council for Integration, *Integration Report 2019*, s. 18). About half of non-native people consist of citizens of the European Union. The share of foreigners in Austria has evolved positively thanks to government policies, starting from a share of only 1.4% in 1960, following an increasing trend in the 1970s to 4%, due to the invitation and integration of the Turkish and Yugoslav peoples into the labour market. The growth trend continued after the 1990s and increased significantly after 2004 with the admission of the eastern states to the European Union, at that time the foreign population representing less than 9%, 754,216 in 2004 versus 1,487,000 in 2020 (own preparation, data provided by Federal Statistic Office Austria). The share of people from EU countries in the foreign population of Austria increased from 35% to over 50% in the same time frame. The largest national minority communities are German (200,000), Romanians (123,451) and Serbs (122,364) (Federal Statistic Office Austria, Population by Nationality, https://www.statistik.at/web_de/ statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bevoelkerung/ bevoelkerungsstruktur, accesed in 10.05.2020).

The territorial spread of foreign population can be seen in the graph below. It is mainly concentrated in Vienna, where over 800,000 foreigners live, representing 30% of the population of the city.



Own preparation, data provided by Federal Statistic Office Austria

2. Factors influencing migration, the institutional and legislative framework in Austria

2.1 Legal framework and competent institutions

The main regulations regarding migration and the rights of foreigners in Austria are: the asylum law, the police for foreigners law, the right of residence law, the law on establishing and acquiring nationality, the labour rights regulation of foreigners law and the law on primary care. These normative acts also bring under regulation the organization and functioning of public institutions responsible for migration and foreigners, as well the subordinated organisations and agencies.

The institutions responsible for migration and integration are usually the ministries, which deal with a certain aspect of the migration, asylum and integration process.

With regard to migration, the main responsibility for the phenomenon lies with the Ministry of Interior and its subordinate structures, namely the Service for Foreigners and Asylum (BFA), which is the first instance for processing data on migration and asylum, respectively confirming the status of foreigners in Austria.

The responsibility for integration lies with the Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, which, through its subordinate agencies, has the integration of foreigners as its main objective.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection is responsible for labour market regulations and for the integration into the labour market of persons of foreign origin.

The most important institution representing the interests of foreigners is the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF), which is under the Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. Through its activity, Integration Funds are facilitated for foreigners' linguistic, professional and social integration. Also, through publications and organised events, it has the role to facilitate access to information and establish the first contact between foreigners and the business and institutional environment in Austria.

2.2 The Status of Foreigners in Austria

Foreigners residing in Austria can be classified into four categories (Settlement and Residence Law, paragraph 8):

- People with mobility: citizens of the European Union who enjoy the status of European citizen and have full rights and obligations, like the natives. They may establish and carry out activities without restrictions within Austrian territory.
- Persons with the right of long-term residence: persons outside the European Community who wish to reside in Austria for a period of time longer than 6 months. In order to benefit from this status, a person must apply for the Red-White-Red pass, which is awarded through a scoring system based on different criteria. This pass is granted for various fields of activity such as work, highly qualified people or those that are a necessity to cover key sectors, as well as graduates or founders of start-ups.
- Persons with a right of temporary residence: persons from outside the Community who do not intend to settle in Austria for a long time, their presence being due to temporary activities such as study, research, projects, temporary work, etc.
- Fixed-term employees: persons who have the right to stay for a limited period of time in order to carry out defined activities. This category includes seasonal workers, persons seconded by temporary parent companies or the fulfillment of various contractual obligations.

2.3 Integration programs

The path of integration of foreigners into Austrian society depends on nationality and purpose of residence, with easier access for people from European Community countries. For working-age adults who want to temporarily settle in Austria, the main institution that opens the process is the Labour Agency (Arbeitsmarktservice). Every person that is not directly employed has the obligation to register with the territorial agency before receiving any material or financial support. In the next stage they will be offered support for integration into the labour market. Those who cannot be integrated into the labour market right away can partake in projects for the assimilation of German language skills and qualification in certain areas agreed upon with the personal adviser.

For those interested in the academic path, regardless of nationality, the educational institution they choose will provide them with the necessary information and the process they must go through in order to study in the Austrian education system.

As regards third-country nationals, the integration process is largely similar from the time of registration in the Employment Agency's database. Until this condition is met, people must go through several stages in order to obtain the rights of asylum, residence and work.

The main institution that aims to integrate immigrants and asylum seekers is the Austrian Integration Fund, which coordinates all support work on linguistic, professional and social integration. The Employment Agency and the Austrian Integration Fund decide and recommend the optimal personalized solution that most effectively meets the personal integration needs of each foreign person, facilitating the takeover of the person in one of the specialized programs offered by the state through subordinate agencies or those offered by NGOs.

The multitude and diversity of integration programs offered is mainly due to the involvement of different institutions and organizations. Among the providers of integrative programs are: Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Economic Chamber, Chamber of Labour, Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, Minister of Labour, Social, Health and Consumer Protection, Ministry of Digitization and Business Location, Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign, the Ministry of Women, Family and Youth, as well as a multitude of NGOs such as: Caritas, Diakonie, Volkshilfe, Rotes Kreuz (Federal Ministry of European and International Opportunity, Data base Integration Projects, https://www.bmeia.gv.at /integration/datenbank-integrationsprojekte, accesed in 16.05.2020).

Integration programs are offered at national level, the costs being fully supported by the state or associations.

2.4 Social - economic factors

The socio-economic environment in Austria has been an important factor in favouring migration in general, Austria being one of the countries preferred by emigrants due to its generous social system, 109.3 billion euros, respectively 28.3% of the Gross Domestic Product represents total social expenditures in 2018. (Federal Statistic Office Austria, Welfare expenses 2018, https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/soziales/sozialschutz_nach_eu_konzept/sozialausgaben, accesed in 9.05.2020)

Aspects of the social system that exert a positive influence on the formation of the Romanian community in Austria can be structured as follows:

a) ***Labour***. The right to work and protection against discrimination stipulate that every person, regardless of nationality, colour, religion, sexual orientation or disability, is guaranteed and facilitated access to the labour market (Equal Treatment Law, paragraphs 16, 17 and 18). The primary purpose of state institutions, especially the Labour Office, is to get involved in the occupational activity of each person who has received the right of residence as soon as possible, paying special attention to each person.

b) ***Social services to guarantee minimum income***. They are offered for disadvantaged groups or those who are temporarily in professional inactivity. The minimum income insurance is well-regulated and granted to all categories of people with needments such as pensioners, the unemployed, people with disabilities, those with low incomes or asylum seekers. Their income is supplemented up to the level of the legal minimum ceiling (Basic Social Benefits Law, paragraph 1). The minimum income is established by law and mandatory for all regions, but its amount varies from one region to another due to being regulated by regional governments. For 2020 it has been set at between 838 euros in Burgenland (Burgenland Basic Social Benefits Law p.9) and 917 euros in Vienna (Vienna Basic Social Benefits Law p.5,6). Beneficiaries of minimum income (Mindestsicherung or Sozialhilfe from 2019) are granted not only financial aid, but depending on their needs can also benefit from social housing, coverage of utility costs, discounts and free food, means of public transport, sports activities and medical services fully covered.

c) ***Social services for family and children***. Austria accords special attention to families and children, offering financial incentives and services to encourage natality. Among the measures to support family are: flexible maternity leave, ensuring the preservation of the job during the maternity leave, financial assistance for childcare, child allowance, financial bonus for the family (from 2019, the amount of 1500 euros for each child per year for the working parents deducted from taxes), covering the costs of education and training etc. Due to family support measures, the birth rate increased from 77,752 to 85,535 children between 2008 and 2018 (*Ibidem*, natality, https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bevoelkerung/ geborene/, accesed in 25.05.2020).. While the number of newborns of Austrian nationality remained constant, the number of newborns from non-Austrian families increased continuously, rising from a share of 13.4% in the total number of newborns to 20.4% (own preparation, data provided by Federal Statistic Office Austria), confirming that the measures of social support for families has become a factor that generates migration.

d) ***The health insurance system and the care of people with temporary disabilities, elderly and disabilities.***

The Austrian health insurance system is solidarity system, which means that all persons with the right of residence, regardless of age, gender, origin, social status or income, have equal and barrier-free access to adequate medical care. The employed persons are automatically registered in the insurance system. Other categories of persons must personally apply for registration. At the end of 2018, 99% of the country's population was insured (Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer protection, *Welfare State Austria-Expenses and Funding 2018*, s.28). Austria pays special attention to health and care by investing more than 10.4% of GDP in the health system annually, placing it alongside France, Germany and Sweden among the EU member states that give the largest share of GDP to the health system (Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer protection, *Austrian Healthcare System, Numbers, Data, Facts*, Edition 2019, s.5). This investment has started to produce results in the form of increased life expectancy. In the last 10 years, life expectancy has gone up by 2 years for men (to 79.3) and by 1.1 for women (to 83.9). Another positive effect is the improvement of the life period classified as a good health level. In the same time interval it has gone up by 2.7 years for men from 63.2 to 65.9 and by 4.9 years for women from 61.7 to 66.6 years (*Ibidem*, s.13).

Special attention is also paid to people with disabilities, temporary or permanent, and the elderly. Depending on the classification in one of the 7 health categories following an evaluation, a specialist doctor recommends the necessary care, at home or in specialized centres financed entirely by the state. Persons in these categories are offered either financial assistance, ranging from 160.10 euro for the persons classified in group 1 of care, to 1719.30 for those in group 7 (fully immobilised persons) to cover the costs of care, or specialised assistance from the responsible state or private agencies for these needs (Federal Allowence Care Law, p.4).

From an economic point of view, the factors that can have a positive influence on migration are:

a) Average monthly net income above the European Union average and four times the value of net earnings in Romania, 2,664 euros in Austria (Federal Statistic Office Austria, Incomes, https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/soziales/personen-einkommen, accesed in 19.05.2020) compared to 702 euros in Romania (National Institut of Statistic Romania, Presse Release, February 11, 2020).

b) The facility to open a company. The formalities are simplified, the establishment of a company in simple forms, such as the One Proprietorship (Einzelunternehmen e.U), is done in one day, by simply registering in the trade register. The exercise of a liberal profession in the legal form of an Authorized Individual (Freie or reglementierte Gewerbe) for those who have a professional certificate is also done in one day, by registering with the administrative authorities in which they are domiciled (Austrian Economic Chamber, individual Enterprises, https://www.wko.at/service/ Austrian-Economic-Chambers.html accesed in 9.05.2020).

2.5 Cultural and historical factors

Romania and Austria are two countries that are part of the European family and whose relationship stretches over several centuries. Austria is the de facto successor of the Habsburg (and Austro-Hungarian) Empire, which had a long-standing influence especially in Banat, Transylvania and Bukovina, leaving behind elements of cultural influence visible even today. For the Romanians from the mentioned historical provinces, which were under the Habsburg administration, as well as the entire Balkan area, Vienna represented the administrative, educational and cultural centre for which they developed a sentimental attachment. The phenomenon of migration and integration of people from these areas take historical and cultural forms and connotations. The migration and integration of Romanians in the economic, social, linguistic and cultural environment in Austria are positively influenced by the origin from an area of administrative and cultural influence.

2.6 Geographical positioning

By its geographical position, having a common border with the former communist eastern bloc, Austria represented the gateway to the democratic countries of the West. Austria’s policy regarding political asylum, the care provided in the refugee reception centre Traiskirchen and the integration of refugees have made Austria the main option for emigration for the people from the communist east. If during the communist period Austria represented the road to civilization and freedom, today it represents, for Romanians, the nearest and most accessible developed country in the European Union. The intense flow of Romanian citizens in recent years, over 10,000 annually, demonstrates that Austria remains one of Romanians’s top targets when it comes to emigration.

3. The actual community of Romanians in Austria

3.1 The main stages of the formation of the Romanian community

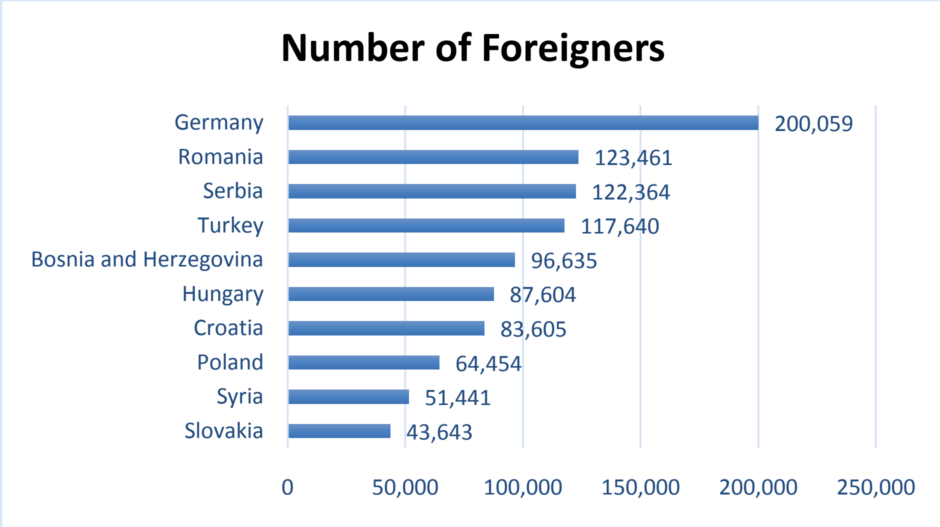
From the formation of the modern state of Austria in 1955 until today, the Romanian community has experienced a fluctuating evolution. It was influenced by the political systems of the two countries, bilateral relations and the admission to the European Union. Romania became part of EU, implicitly take advantage of EU basic principles namely, free movement within the European Union, the right of employment and establishment in the territory of any member state. The migration and formation of the Romanian community in Austria can be divided into the following periods:

- before 1989, the community was statistically insignificant and consisted mainly of people who wanted to emigrate due to the totalitarian regime in Romania. The number of visa beneficiaries was extremely low. All those arriving in Austria by illegally crossing the country's borders were granted political refugee status and were housed in the Traiskirchen emigrants' centre for a while. There, they were offered support for daily necessities and courses to facilitate economic and social integration.
- 1990-2002, influenced by the change of the Romanian political regime that allowed travel abroad, the Romanian community in Austria reached over 14,000 people. Until 1993 Romanians still benefited from the status of political refugees, receiving special attention from the Austrian state. Although movement was freer, entry into Austria after 1990 was still depending on whether or not one would receive a visa.
- 2002-2007, Romania was in the period of pre-admission to the EU and received the right to free movement within EU territory for all citizens. The visa requirement was eliminated, the trip being conditioned by the proof of financial resources set at 100 euros per day of travel and by the travel insurance. This measure led to an increase of over 100% in the annual number of Romanians who settled in Austria. Reaching a rate of 2000 people per year, the community accounted for 21,000 people at the end of 2006.
- 2007-2014, the period after Romania's admission to the EU when the rights of European citizens were the same throughout the Union, with one exception: free access to the labour market. Austria was one of the states that expressed its option to benefit from the right to postpone the opening of the labour market for Romanian citizens, except for the sectors with deficit in terms of labour force. Even though access to the labour market was limited, the community continued to grow by over 5,000 people annually, reaching over 53,000 by the end of 2013.
- Since 2014, Romanians have been enjoying full rights in Austria. The restrictions on access to the labour market were completely removed. The possibility to work legally was one of the factors that impelled the growth of the community even more, the number of Romanians settling in Austria rising to an average of over 10,000 annually. At the beginning of 2020, the community accounted for 123.451 people, which made the Romanians the second largest community of foreigners in Austria (Federal Statistic Office Austria, Population by Nationality, https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bevoelkerung/bevoelkerung_nach_staatsangehoerigkeit_geburtsland, accesed in 10.05.2020).

3.2 The current state of community in Austria

Due to accelerated growth of annual rate for Romanians who have settled in Austria since 2014, when the restrictive access to the labour market was eliminated, the

Romanian community has become the second most representative minority community after the of German one. The main minority groups can be observed in the figure below.



Own preparation, data provided by Federal Statistic Office Austria

The Romanian community has experienced a significant progressive increase since the elimination of visa requirements, both in absolute numbers and as a share in the foreign population. In 2002 the Romanians accounted for 2% (17.750), in 2007, the year of admission, 3% (21.882), reaching 8.3% (123.461) at the end of 2019 (own preparation, data provided by Federal Statistic Office Austria).

The Romanian community is spread throughout Austria, each administrative region registering the presence of Romanian nationals on its administrative territory. The distribution of Romanians is not a uniform one, but it is influenced by factors such as: proximity, well-being, job offer, preferential social system, the policy of local communities for the acceptance and integration of foreigners, etc. The largest community of Romanians is registered in Vienna, where 36.358 persons live, representing 29% of the Romanian community. The other administrative regions where a significant presence of Romanian citizens is recorded are: Lower Austria, Upper Austria and Styria, with approximately 22.000 (18%) Romanians in each region. A relatively low presence is registered in the remaining regions, each accounts for less than 5% of the community. From the data provided by the National Statistics Office, it can be observed that 50% of the community is established in the eastern regions of the country, 36% in the central regions and only 14% in the 4 southern and western regions.

4. The image of the effective integration of Romanian citizens in the socio-economic environment

4.1 Level of integration in the labour market

According to data provided by the Institute of Statistics and the Labour Office in 2018, almost 90% of Romanians in Austria were employed as persons in contractual employment relationships or as private entrepreneurs (Labor Market Service, *Report* 2019). Due to the social and integration model in Austria, which aims for each person, regardless of nationality, colour, religion, sexual orientation or disability, to be integrated into the labour market, the employment rate is much higher than in Romania, where it is 66.7% (National Institut of Statistic Romania, Presse Release, December 20, 2019). Every person receiving unemployment benefits, guaranteed minimum income or other forms of social support has the obligation to be registered in the database of the Labour Office, must participate in the training courses offered and accept the jobs available for personal profile. Any refusal or rejection of job offers leads to a reduction or loss of financial support (Basic Social Welfare Law, p.9). During the period of unemployment, the beneficiary may leave the territory of Austria. However, the financial aid is suspended during that time. In the case of social assistance beneficiaries, the duration of the trip is limited and must be announced in advance, otherwise they risk losing their financial support. The Austrian model of social integration in conjunction with the goal of Romanian citizens who opted for Austria out of a desire to work, as stated in the report of the Labour Office, led to a high employment rate. For comparison, the employment rate of Romanian citizens is much higher than the employment rate of people from other nations that came to Austria earlier, such as the Turkish population which has an employment rate of less than 60% (Labor Market Service, *Report* 2019, s.49).

The factors that influence the level of employment are:

- average age registered among Romanians included in the category of active population (15-64 years) is 30.3 years (Federal Statistic Office Austria, *Migration and Integration Report 2018*, s.29).
- 50% have at least one professional certificate,
- 12%, apart from the holders of professional certificates, graduated high school,
- 13% of those employed in the labour market are university graduates.

From the number of those in activity 67% are listed as persons in a contractual employment relationship, 33% as entrepreneurs.

The unemployment rate among the community fluctuated between 2006 and 2017, following the general rate evolution. In 2018, the unemployment rate for Romanian nationals was 11.2%, below the rate of foreigners, which was 11.3%. It was much lower than the unemployment rate of those accepted as asylum seekers in the period 2014-2015, which was recorded at 50.9% for Syrians and 39.2% for Iraqis. Even compared to Turks (16.8%) or Serbs (29.5%), communities formed in the 70s and 80s, or those from the Russian Federation, which was at 30%, the rate of unemployed Romanians was lower. The unemployment rate registered among women is higher than that of men, 12.8% women compared to 10% men (Federal Chancellery, Expert Council for Integration, *Integration Report 2019* s.48-49).

One third of Romanians have developed businesses or carry out professional activities as authorized individuals. The proportion is much higher compared to the national average of 10%. In the formed communities, especially in Vienna, we find restaurants, confectioneries and shops with specific Romanian and Austrian products. In the category of self-employed persons, there is a special subcategory working in the social field of care with persons that need to be supervised 24/7. The number of people registered in the Austrian Chamber of Commerce as freelancers in the field of care at the beginning of the year was 98,961 of which 68,926 are registered as active, 99% being people of other nationalities, predominantly from Eastern Europe, almost half coming from Romania. The role played by the Romanian community in this field was highlighted especially during the actual crisis when social care was deeply affected by the limitation of mobility within the EU.

Regarding the beneficiaries of minimum income granted to temporarily inactive people unable to actively participate in the labour market or even active but with insufficient income to meet the minimum income criterion per family member established by law, Romanian citizens do not appear among the leading nations which are: Syria (38,900), Afghanistan (15,500), Iraq (5,500) among asylum seekers or the other communities formed in previous decades like Russian (11,900), Turkish (9,400) or Serbian (6,500). The number of Romanians social assistance beneficiaries amounts to 4,400, around 4% of the community (Federal Chancellery, Expert Council for Integration, *Integration Report 2019*, s.61-63).

4.2 Integration into the educational system

The Romanian community is a young community both in terms of its formation and development, and in terms of average age. As mentioned above, the average age of active people is 30.3 years. An effective integration of the community presupposes an adequate educational and professional training in order to be assimilated to the integrative society. The Austrian education system offers a wide range of forms of education and training in response to the needs of the labour market. The school system not only offers the possibility of vocational training, but also facilitates its organisation, the development of occupational activities, the model of education with extended program in kindergartens, elementary schools, grades 1-4 and middle school, grades 5-8 being appreciated. During 2019, there were 5,712 children of Romanian nationality enrolled at kindergarten level, being the most significant group as a share among foreigners. At the level of students in elementary, middle and high schools, Romanians occupy a top place with over 12,000 children, while the number of those enrolled at university amounted to 1,407 (Federal Statistic Office Austria, https://www.statistik.at/web de/statistiken/menschen_ und _gesellschaft/ bildung/, accesed in 2.05.2020). The involvement of the community in the educational system is also at the level of pedagogy and teaching, being present in all school cycles, in different specializations, including those responsible for teaching the Romanian language in 27 schools for 366 children (Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, *Information sheets on migration and school* , Nr.5/2019. s.14). The share of Romanian children attending a school is about 10%, the same level as the other minorities and Austrians.

4.3. Naturalisation of Romanians

Naturalisation is an important aspect of integration, respectively of the assimilation of the persons of foreign origin by the Austrian society. The aspirations of Romanian citizens to Austrian citizenship were motivated by the benefits generated by the status of full rights citizen, such as unrestricted access to the labour market, access to social and health insurance, right to education, free movement, protection and security of a democratic environment, etc. in the pre-admission period to the European Union The naturalisation of Romanians has undergone variations over time, influenced by the political regime, bilateral relations, membership in the European community, loss of national sentiment. Three characteristic time intervals can be found according to statistical records:

- before 1989, the number of those who obtained Austrian citizenship was small, around 100 people per year, conditioned by political barriers to leave Romania in the communist system,
- 1990-2006, the period in which the number of naturalisations increased significantly to an average of 1000 people per year due to the opening of borders and the granting of the right to travel within the European Union,
- after 2007, the annual average of naturalisations decreased to 266 due to Romania's admission to the EU. When the rights and obligations for Romanians are identical to

those of the locals, the benefits of naturalisations don't justify their costs anymore. It should be noted that in the years 2018-2019, simultaneously with the political and legislative instability in Romania, there was an accelerated growth in naturalization from an annual average of 266 to 416 people.

Regarding the situation of naturalisations, Romanians are the most naturalised nationality among the countries of the European Union. In the last ten years, 2,682 Romanians have received Austrian citizenship (Ibidem, https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_undgesellschaft/bevoelkerung/einbuergerungen/, accesed in 9.05.2020).

4.4. Political involvement

The Romanian community does not currently have a political organization or representatives in the Austrian Government and Parliament. It is in the process of forming and recognizing a political organization that will represent the interests of the community in the future. Although there is no political party, community members are involved in the political process as members of traditional Austrian parties. Some of them have won seats in local administration by serving as councillors in town halls, such as the one in Krems or the 11th district in Vienna

5. Conclusions

Due to the integration factors, the Romanian community in Austria has experienced a marked development in recent years, becoming the second largest community of foreigners after Germans. From the presented data, it can be stated that Romanians are a community well integrated in the social and economic environment in Austria. Romanian citizens are not just people who only need to be integrated, as it has been the case with other communities formed in previous decades, but are an important aspect of economic and social life in Austria, some areas such as qualified permanent care depending largely on the contribution of Romanian specialists.

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FREEDOM TO RELIGIOUS BELONGING AND THE CRIME RATE ACROSS THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT

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Abstract. *Over time, people have focused their attention not only on faith and atheism, but also on the concept of religious tolerance. With the founding and expansion of the Islamic State, with the establishment of terrorist groups, formed and based on religious ideologies, the above-mentioned discussion has extended considerably. The information presented in this paper is meant to strengthen intercultural religious tolerance and provide support for debates on tolerance and acceptance of the diversity of faith and human security.*

Keywords: *religion, crime, tolerance, European Union*

The gradual abolition of border controls in the European Union has significantly facilitated not only the free movement of European citizens, but also the actions of criminals, especially since the scope of law enforcement authorities and criminal justice systems generally extend to the borders of national frontiers. Since the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty, the European Union has set itself the goal of creating a common area of freedom, security and justice. This goal was further developed through the 2004 Hague Program, which placed an emphasis on the following 10 priority areas: strengthening fundamental rights and citizenship, the fight against terrorism; defining a balanced approach to migration; developing an integrated management of the EU's external borders; establishing a common asylum procedure; maximizing the positive impact of immigration; the commitment to appropriate stability between privacy and security in the exchange of information; issuing a strategic concept to combat organized crime; ensuring a true European area of justice; shared responsibility and solidarity[1].

The Lisbon Treaty reinforces the importance of culture "inspired by Europe's cultural, religious and humanist heritage" and is enshrined in the preamble to the Treaty on the European Union. Among the objectives of the Treaty, it is mentioned that the Union should respect the richness of its cultural and linguistic diversity and ensure that the European cultural heritage is preserved and developed. (Article three of the Treaty establishing the European Communities)

Ever since the emergence of sociology as a research domain, the study ofreligion and faith has been an interesting topic of discussion for thinkers. This is not surprising, sincereligion has been present in all known human communities. It influenced the individuals' relationship with the environments in which they carried out their activities. It also had a crucial impact on individuals’ interactions with the other people they encountered, regardless of the type of relationship that were established.

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[1] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Archive:Crime_statistics/ro&oldid=259837, last accessed on May 20th, 2020.

Up to the present, the three classical sociologists: Marx, Durkheim and Weber have influenced sociological approaches to religion; each considered that religion has a crucial role to play in society. According to Marx, religion would justify, by the ideology he promotes, social inequality among individuals; Durkheim pointed at its cohesive role due to the religious rituals to which individuals participate; Weber focused mainly on the role played by religionin the development of capitalism and society. Despite the fact that all the aforementioned thinkers focused on religion and its role in human societies, they all perceived as "largely an illusion" both religion and "the other world that religion creates is our world, distorted through the filter of religious symbolism." (Giddens, 2010: 551)

In a work written by professor and Harvard University president Charles W. Eliot in the 19th century, entitled *The Religion of the Future*, the author shared ideas about the status of religion in the future: “The religion of the future will recognize the indisputable truth of these facts, the facts of bodily and spiritual guidance. Therefore, they will honor all persons who, through their lives, have exemplified and brought near to the understanding of their fellows the human ideal of goodness and goodwill. It will be a religion of all saints. All traditions, all the stories concerning the virtues and excellence of the human race will find a place within it. It will honor discoverers, teachers, martyrs and apostles of freedom, cleanliness and justice. It will respect and bring praise to all human beings who, through their power and meekness, will make us think of the similar qualities we worship in God. ” (Eliot, 1920: 23-24)

In a study entitled *Religion, Ethics and Politics*, Marcel Merle, one of the great pioneers of the study of the sociology of international relations in the 21st century, has openly affirmed the primordial role of the Church in the context of Europe. He pointed out that: “No country can afford to neglect the importance of the Churches and the balance that religious life can bring to a society of any kind. Churches have a very special importance in the European Union as a whole, and in each country, because they represent the primordial nucleus of European culture. A Europe that must take into account the common constitutional traditions, the traditions and cultural phenomena of the Member States, their national identity, as well as the principle of subsidiarity, must respect and protect the balance of Church-State relations”. (Merle, 1993: 58-65)

A Europe that claims to appreciate the values that each state and nation can bring to communion has not only the duty, but also the obligation to respect and protect the position of religious institutions in its member countries. The Churches come into contact with the European Union in many areas and thus Europe is compelled to take into account their deposition, and the Churches must, in turn, respect the socio-political orientation that is being built in this era”[2].

Guarantees of freedom of religion and respect for conscience and faith are inevitably found in the constitutions of liberal democratic societies and in international and regional human rights instruments. Article 18 of the 1948 “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” states that: “everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right implies the freedom to change one's religion or belief as well as the freedom to manifest one's religion or belief, individually or collectively, both in public and in private, through education, practice, worship and the performance of rites”[3].

[2] http://orthodoxero.typepad.com/bor/raportul_dintre_culte_si_stat_in_uniunea_europeana/, last accessed on May 20, 2020

[3] The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization on December 16th, 1948, available at http://legislatie.resurse-

Crime has been highlighted in multiple ways at all social levels, and yet the phenomenon can be further spread as the process of globalization intensifies. (Jidovu, 2013: 35)

The approach to crime can be done in various forms, from the effects produced to the causes underlying the perpetuation of criminal behavior. This study represents an attempt to establish a causal link between religious affiliation and crime, because all legally accepted religions promote the love of the neighbor and of humanity. It could be assumed therefore that people who embrace a certain religion are less willing to develop delinquent behavior due to the constraint that religious faith exerts on the conscience of the individual. (Mucea, 2016: 508)

The EU institutions, national authorities, the media, politicians, organizations and the public use crime statistics. No international regulations cover general crime statistics. Each state establishes its own criminal law and defines the offenses, legal proceedings, legal consequences, as well as the requirements for official crime statistics. Therefore, national crime statistics are often not fully comparable among states. Despite their different criminal laws, it can also be said that there are many similarities between European countries. This, combined with the public and political interest, was the context for compiling EU crime statistics. Over the last decade, the EU institutions, national authorities and the UN have cooperated to improve European crime statistics. A major improvement in quality is the use of a common classification of crimes to compare crime figures among countries[4].

The Netherlands, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Belgium are among the countries with the highest number of crimes. Romania ranks 10th in Europe with 1.25 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. The European Union (EU) police recorded approximately 660,000 car thefts in 2017, which means that there was a decrease of 1.9% compared to 2015. Car theft decreased by 36% between 2008 and 2017, with downward trends in most EU Member States. Taking into account the size of the population, the figures for 2016 were the highest in Luxembourg, Italy, Sweden, Greece and France, with over 200 car thefts recorded per 100,000 people. Seventeen countries had less than 100 thefts per 100,000 people, the lowest being in Slovakia, Estonia, Croatia, Romania and Denmark[5].

At the European level, according to police data, robberies fell by 24% between 2012 and 2017, to around 396,000 in 2017. Belgium, Spain, France, Portugal, England and Wales had the highest number of robberies recorded by the police (relative to the size of the population: over 100 per 100,000 people), while the figure was below 20 for Romania, the Czech Republic, Cyprus and Slovenia. Seventeen European countries had less than 100 thefts per 100,000 people, the fewest being in Slovakia, Estonia, Croatia, Romania and Denmark, according to Eurostat. Police recorded 1,334,000 burglaries from homes in 2017, which means that there was a decrease of about 1% compared to 2016. In other several EU member states a downward trend was recorded. However, Germany marked an increase by 5% in this respect, and France by 1%. In 2017, the number of burglaries registered by the police per 100,000 people varied considerably among the states of the European Union. Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland, Luxembourg, France,

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pentrudemocratie.org/legea/declaratia-universala-a-drepturilor-omului.php, last accessed on May 21st, 2020

[4] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics explained/index.php?title=Crime_statistics/ro#de_omoruri_.C3.AEn_UE_.C3.AEn_2017, last accessed on May 21st, 2020.

[5] http://www.analizeeconomice.ro/2019/04/la-capitolul-infractionalitate-romania.html, last accessed on May 25th, 2020

England, Wales and Italy had more than 300 burglaries per 100,000 people in 2016, while in Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Poland they were under 100. Finally, another statistic, namely the Global Peace Index, places Romania on the 24th place in the top of the safest countries in the world and on the 17th place in the top of the safest European countries[6].

It should be noted that murder, rape and robbery are completely forbidden in all cultures of the world, except in wartime crimes against the enemy. (Giddens, 2010: 748-793)

Homicide is considered to be the intentional killing of an individual through murder, euthanasia, infanticide, or culpable homicide, excluding death from motor vehicle accidents, abortions, or assisted suicide. (Clarke, 2013:1-4)

It shouldnt be overlooked that crime statistics (available so far) are influenced by the diversity of legal systems in each country and at the same time (Rotariu, 2013: 13), the crime rate is considered to be higher, as the data recorded are those received from the police, and in many cases victims, for various reasons, do not report crimes against them to the police. (Clarke, 2013: 1-4)

To comparing the crime statistics across countries "should focus" on trends over time rather than on comparisons compara between countries. (Rotariu, 2013: 13) In this regard, by deepening the analysis of the data in a longitudinal manner, an attempt is made to establish the trends that the three countries analyzed had in terms of registered delinquencies.

A causal link cannot be established between the religious affiliation of a people and the tendency toward criminal behavior, even if we are tempted to believe that, to some extent, the constraint or spiritual freedom that religion has on the individual could influence delinquent behavior. So far, researchers have not been able to fully establish the reasons and causes that determine criminal behavior, but the socialization and educational level of individuals, financial situation and standard of living, but also the position in society are considered to be much more significant in determining criminal behavior than belief or unbelief in a deity. (Mucea, 2016:510)

Therefore, emphasis should be placed not only on the behavior of the various religious groups, but on the equality and religious freedom of each individual, thus promoting religious tolerance among the population within a state, but also between immigrants and different religion from that state. (*Ibidem)*

The discussion on religious tolerance gained even more importance with the wave of immigrants in Europe. Attempts are being made to find answers to questions concerning human security. These questions are on the minds of all who are thinking: how can migrants from the Middle East integrate into the European Community? The difficulty of integration is not necessarily given by their nationality, but by their religious affiliation. And the differences and cultural values between the migrant population and that Europe's stable situation is quite significant. This cultural difference (religious) is not a purely theoretical one, the cases of immigrant aggression against women in Germany have been very well known and intensely publicized, and their source comes largely due to cultural differences supported by Muslim beliefs. (Mucea, 2016: 511)

The problem worsens with the presentation and media coverage of these cases of violence or crime (especially robberies), and the population forms a preconceived perception of Muslim people, especially since attacks are frequently reported in the media terrorists carried out by Muslim extremists. (*Ibidem).*

[6] http://www.analizeeconomice.ro/2019/04/la-capitolul-infractionalitate-romania.html, last accessed on May 25th, 2020.

Acceptance of cultural and cultural diversity is still a challenge for the world's population, and this phenomenon has returned to the discussion throughout Europe and beyond, with waves of migrants heading for the continent due to the war with the expansion of terrorist groups around religious fundamentalism, and these organizations, such as the Islamic State, pose a threat to human security. This paper does not propose social intervention policies, but it tries to accept religious diversity by promoting tolerance at European level and in Romania in particular. Thus, in the present study it was tried demonstrating that a Muslim people, such as the Turkish people, do not have a higher homicide or robbery rate than a Christian people, such as the Romanian people. (Idem, 2016: 512)

Even if from the point of view of religious cultural diversity, tolerance is the key to coexistence between peoples, behavior of criminal origin, or whether it is robbery or murder, must not be tolerated, regardless of the causes underlying the perpetuation of this behavior or the beliefs, religious or not, that lead people to adopt such behavior. It is also not demonstrated that belonging to a particular religion or cult, legally accepted, is a determining factor in criminal behavior, behavior which can lead to a decrease in human security. (Ibidem).

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EUROPEAN RURAL AREA AND THE CONCEPT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT. INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES[1]

Claudiu Gabriel BONACIU[2]

Abstract. *The rural space is not a material and uniform space. Uniformity can be considered in two aspects: the first is related to physical space - topography, basement, soil and microclimate; the second refers to demography - density, polarization from small communities to large urban areas. Through this article, we propose a conceptual analysis of rural Europe from the perspective of five disciplines: historical, geographical, sociological, political and functional economic. The purpose of this conceptual analysis, in which the literature has been used, is to understand the evolution of European rural space and rural development in the context of the transformations to which it has been subjected*

Keywords: *rural area, evolution, European, rural development, interdisciplinary*

The historical perspective on the rural space

An investigation of the European rural area in general, of rural development in particular, from a historical perspective is a great challenge, an area of interest whose roots can be found in all historical periods.

In the opinion of the French historian Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, rural civilization is first and foremost the product of a history. He proposes a stratigraphic history, developing this concept based on the specific contributions that rural civilization receives from each century or group of centuries and from each millennium (Le Roy Ladurie, 2020).

Historians concerned with the history of Europe, the evolution of civilizations in rural Europe notice first a development, as was natural, of primitive forms of organization influenced by climate change to which the European continent has been subjected. Among them are Jean Carpentier and François Lebrun who attach special importance to the way of life of people without history. At the beginning of the tenth millennium, the last hunter-gatherers change their living conditions and living environment according to the rate at which the cold decreases in intensity, a process that varies by region.Europeans have continued to hunt for fish since then, evolving their equipment while still maintaining their traditional techniques of subsistence. In this context, according to the French modernist historian Jean Carpentier, in the European space, on the territory now owned by Ireland, England, North Germany, Scandinavia, Poland, Russia, new areas of superior civilization appear in socio-economic terms.Certain groups, well adapted to the environment, which live isolated from dynamic areas, are maintained until the fifth century BC. and sometimes

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even as far back as the 4th century BC, even though it suffers from some influences of the Neolithic environment (Carpentier, 1997: 30).

Starting from the incipient forms of living specific to the historical periods, the appearance of the village as a form of organization of social life is a qualitative leap (Socol, 2006: 10). In the 5th century BC. with the discovery of agriculture, nomadic life is partially transformed into sedentary life. Testimony are the durable adobe constructions in Calabria (Italy), the Iron Gates on the Danube (Balkans), (Carpentier, 1997: 31).

In antiquity the evolution of the European rural space is determined by the appearance of agriculture, by the spread of the metal that registers an increase of the rhythm of the agricultural works, the construction technique demonstrates the adaptation to the new interactions and living conditions and organization.The originality of each cultural ensemble knows its own evolution borrowing techniques from the contact between the Mediterranean populations, from southern Russia, those from the shores of the Baltic Sea, those from the Atlantic coast of Portugal and of course those from the Middle East.

Since the I-III centuries as the Roman state expanded the reforms imposed in the two areas of domination, namely the space in the west and in the east are different. In the west of the Roman Empire, for example, the share of the rural element increased during the attacks of migrants, in relation to urban areas, the latter being abandoned or transformed into fortified units. The local elites formed in those times as "landlords" relied on the protection offered by the state. In the east, cities continued to develop, being more protected from migrant attacks - with the exception of the Bacchanals (Rădvan, 2010: 19).

In the medieval rural area, the innovations registered over time, the “plowing machine”, the “Gallic reaper”, culminate between the 5th and 13th centuries with changes from Asia, China or India, others from Central Europe. The introduction of the machine with three functions plug-coulter-die with medieval wheels (Ladurie, 2020) but also by multiplying the wind and water mills, led to the increase of wheat and bread production.During the Middle Ages, the rural space is dominant in relation to the declining cities, the urban civilization being affected by epidemics and migratory invasions. Rural communities survive the black plague by being more physically scattered and far from the major port cities on the European Mediterranean coast, while large European cities are ravaged by the pandemic, losing their dominant role (Platon et al., 2010: 418).

Undoubtedly the classical epoch of rural civilization can be divided into two stages, namely: between 1300 -1700 during the great progress and 1700-1900 the period of progressive disintegration of rural civilization by industrial and post-industrial society.By analyzing the two periods from the perspective of revolts and peasant wars in Europe (Firnhaber, 2016) we see that rural societies have the ability to organize to defend or demand rights when the state, the Church, the nobles change the organization of economic or social processes, increase taxes or the transformation of free people into serfs (Graus, 2008).Such rustic revolts take place in several areas of the European space: in Transylvania took place in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the uprisings in Bobâlna (1437), or Gheorghe Doja (1514). “In 1525, the German peasants, grouped around the communities, fought on several fronts; it protects itself both from the senior power that oppresses them and from the Church ”(Laudrie, 2020). In France, due to the problems caused in 1775 by Turgot's edict, which frees the grain trade from within the kingdom, the increase in grain prices led to the outbreak of the "Flour War" (Trenard: 2020).

As for the cellular structures of the rural settlement in the northern part of Western Europe, the rural family is nuclear, it is mainly focused on the married couple of small farmers or agricultural workers.The nuclear family, as a predominant model since the 13th century, is found in the northern half of France, as well as in England, the Netherlands and, in its entirety, in the vast areas of the most developed peasantry. In the northern part of the Massif Central (Auvergne, Nivernais), extended families are identified since the eighteenth century they are organized in a style that is neither patriarchal nor paternalistic, but very close to the Balkan zadruga, a form of organization which involves an intra-family collaboration of three, four or five married couples, linked together by siblings.In the second half of the 19th century in the Balkans, in Transylvania the traditional family model is characterized by the authority of the father, the emotional devotion of the mother, obedience and respect for children towards their parents (Brie, 2011).

In south-eastern Europe the forms of living and organization are different. In the Balkans zadruga is specific to Slavic and Albanian populations. It can be considered as a household composed of two or more biological families or small families, strongly related by blood or adoption, having in common the means of production, regulating property, work and existence in general (Mosley, 1976).Within Serbian serfdom (zadruga), the hereditary patrimony is inalienable, it shares agricultural lands, the house, the yard and is passed down from generation to generation. In Albania, these forms of organization evolve into fortified settlements built in the middle of arable land. This form of organizing peasant life is dominant in rural areas, but is also present in cities among people who have nothing in common with agriculture; craftsmen, seafaring merchants lived and worked in households organized on the principles of zadrugii (Sthal, 2018: 88).

Until the 16th century, the Romanian rural area in Wallachia and Moldova was dominated by free villages and ruins, the land was jointly owned and each used as much as he needed. "The village of Devălmaş is an association of family households, based on a jointly owned territory, in which the community as such has previous and superior rights to the constituent households, rights exercised by a governing body called the community *(obștie)* ", (H. Stahl, 1959).Within the Romanian village of Devălmaș, the domestic group is based on the existence of a single married couple with its unmarried children, unlike the zadruga, which is always made up of several married couples. Between the 16th and 19th centuries we witnessed a dissolution of this type of organization, some villages became enslaved, and in others the villagers became individual owners, and the division of land generated major dysfunctions (Pitulac, 2009: 228).

Starting with the 18th century, with the appearance of the concept of industrialization, the Industrial Revolution in the United Kingdom, with the introduction of medicine in the villages, with the technological progress, the rural civilization registered economic and demographic growth, without losing its original character. The surplus population with labor force is absorbed by the development of cities, new job opportunities appear in organized institutions.Instead, the wars lead to demographic changes among the young male population in the villages, only in the First World War it is estimated that out of the 9 million victims over 70% would have been from rural areas. Between the two world conflagrations the evolution of the rural space is different in Europe. After the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Eastern Europe, there are states that, in addition to increasing the territorial area, also register significant demographic increases in both rural and urban areas.Agrarian reforms are beginning to emerge, which have more or less solved the problems of the peasantry. After the Second World War, the situation of the Eastern European countryside, still in transition and reform after the great economic crisis of the 1930s and the war, changed again due to collectivization. Collectivization was achieved in several stages, it was imposed from outside, by the Soviet Union to the states of Eastern Europe but also to East Germany, being considered by historians a concept of development different from the West. Gail Kligman and Katherine Verdery in the volume “The Peasants Under Siege”.The collectivization of agriculture in Romania (1949-1962) deals extensively with the phenomenon: “Soviet collectivization took place in the context of a crisis of grain proportions due to drought and fueled from the outside by policies of major European powers seeking to destabilize the Soviet Union. In the East, despite the shortage of war and post-war reparations paid to Moscow, the situation was incomparably better, especially since states such as Hungary, Poland and the German Democratic Republic were already relatively industrialized compared to the Soviet Union in the early 1930s and did not depend. as much as rural food to grow ”(Gail Kligman and Katherine Verdery, 2015).

In Romania, the collectivization of agriculture was launched by the communist regime in 1949 and lasted until 1962, when more than 85% of the country's agricultural area was included in the socialist economy. Collectivization was a process that consciously ruined the peasantry class, affecting, first and foremost, its most dynamic members, the so-called chiaburi, peasants who, in reality, had best adapted to the demands of an economy. European market. “The communist agrarian reorganization took place using violence against both the peasantry and other social categories (Socol, 2006: 30). At the same time in Western Europe after the Second World War, European politicians pay special attention to rural development and agriculture on the principles of a balanced market economy, later introducing into the Common Agricultural Policy the concept of sustainable development according to which the environment is not affected.

Geographical perspective on the rural area

The development of rural space in Europe has been and is different being influenced by the great diversity of geographical environment, soils, climate, population, agricultural development. Analyzed from a geographical perspective, the European space is characterized by complex landforms that have allowed the inhabitants, since ancient times and until today, to practice subsistence farming activities.

Din punct de vedere al exploatațiilor agricole, Europa poate fi împărțită, în ceea ce privește relieful, în două părți. Exceptând nordul Rusiei și țările scandinave, prima parte exploatabilă pentru agricultură cu arii vaste muntoase este situată la peste 500 de metri deasupra nivelului mării și cuprinde spațiul fizic al Portugaliei, Spaniei, al sud-estului Franței, al Italiei, Greciei și Peninsula Balcanică până la sud de Carpați. Această zonă cu climat mediteranean are două anotimpuri, ierni blânde și veri calde și secetoase favorabil culturilor de fructe exotice, a viței de vie, etc. (Le Goff Jacques et al.,1999:111).The second geographical part is located north of the first and starts from southern England continues to the west coast of France and extends to the Urals and the Caucasus benefiting from the two types of climate, the oceanic temperate and continental temperate with mild winters , abundant rainfall and cool summers favorable to cereal crops and grazing.

Twenty years after the Second World War, the main objectives of rural development in the EC have been to improve agricultural production structures and improve the conditions for processing and selling agricultural products. The emphasis was on investments in means of production, both at the level of individual farms and at the level of processing and sales enterprises (Bleahu, 2005: 5).The development of agricultural activities generated mass production through the use of pesticides, and the emergence of industry in rural areas created changes in the rural landscape. Sloping fields, shrub lands and meadows have been largely transformed into control dam lands, and soil quality has declined due to the use of chemicals by large farms (Riccioli et al. 2109: 93-

110).In this context, in the European Union, the concept of rural development is integrated in a new innovative concept, that of sustainable development, being approached from the perspective of environmental protection. With the Meadows Report of 1972, the strong impact of human activities on the natural environment and the importance of unifying the environmental, social and economic fields in the territorial planning process were realized (Petre, 2016: 5). Translated into legislation, these new approaches to rural development create the premises for new types of capitalization of physical space.

Sociological perspective on rural space

From a sociological point of view, approaches to the rural environment fall into three categories of research: on the economic functions specific to rural areas, those that emphasize land use, and those that highlight the way of life and cultural identity of rural areas. Each of them relates the rural to the characteristics of the urban.Contemporary socio-economic analyzes of rural areas no longer consider as self-evident the equivalence between rural and agricultural occupations, but, on the contrary, they emphasize the multifunctionality of this space (Mihalache, Croitoru, 2014: 57).

From the theory of the Romanian sociologist Ilie Bădescu we deduce the idea that any society is distinguished by its ability to use natural, human, worldly and superhuman resources and to coordinate the different ways of using these resources so that everything allows a historical progress without declines and disasters and avoiding those uses that lead a system to extinction, as happens today with some dying ecosystems of the earth, increasing devastating disasters on a planet with limited resources (Bădescu, 2011: 331).Basically, the main role is given to the social, economic, ecological and cultural characteristics of the population living in a certain area and which make up a certain type of space, in our case the rural area. It is estimated that 8-10 thousand years ago, when the first forms of rural civilization began to appear, there were about 4 million inhabitants on Earth. At the beginning of the current era, the planet was inhabited by 100-250 million people, so that after 1000 years it will reach 300 million.At the beginning of the existence of the human species, the population grew particularly hard due to very difficult living conditions. After the first millennium of our era, the growth process of our population has accelerated. If until the seventeenth century, the annual growth was 30-40 million per century, after 1650 the pace accelerated, so that in the last century, the growth was 4.4 billion or an annual growth of over 70 million , this for the last half century. After 1900, the planet's growth rate was almost explosive.

Population growth in the future is not an exponential process where a constant growth rate is maintained. However, in developing regions growth rates will remain very high, will begin to decline in the first 2-3 decades of the current century and is likely to reach a stability after 2075. The evolution of rural areas is addressed in the literature. through the dynamics and depth of the transformations that it registers, especially lately. The assessments considered essential refer to the "demographic shock" that characterizes the contemporary countryside (Agenda 2000), to the peasant archipelago, respectively to the registration of specific mutations, sometimes even different from the other components of the socio-economic life. ruralities ", ie rural areas that are undergoing profound transformations, due to the impact of globalization of technology, environmental restrictions, economic developments and cultural values.

According to sociologists, the rural environment is the one in which co-participatory sociological research is the most frequent, thus there are several proposed research models. The traditionalist model considers the rural environment, respectively the village, as the true keeper of the spirituality, specificity and originality of a culture, of a society, researches of this kind seeking to reveal traditional rural values, behaviors and symbols. The meliorist model, which considers the rural environment as the genetic form of an insufficiently evolved society and which must be brought to the urban level; research in this field generally measures the gap between urban and rural, in terms of income, education, comfort and productivity. The ecological model, which reveals the specificity, peculiarities and advantages of the contemporary rural way of life integrated into the environment. The chronoregressive model, used, in general, in settlement monographs, based on recordings of events in chronological order (Zamfir, Vlăsceanu, 1994: 580).

In Europe, two great French rural scociologists, Henri Mendras and Maurice Jollivet, although in unison arguing that a scientific, sociological, interdisciplinary approach to rural space was needed, had differing views on changes in agriculture and theories of peasantry in France. They practically approached differently the French rural realities of the period 1960-1970, a period in which in the society of France there are changes in the whole, and in particular, in agriculture, being a period of intense social mobilization of farmers.

Henri Mendars developed a theory of peasantry influenced by the American anthropological school. Adherent to the thought of Anglo-Saxon cultural anthropology, he applied to the French realities the differentiations proposed by the American anthropologist Robert Redfield in 1967, regarding the concepts of primitive (sauvage), peasant (paysans), adding that of farmer (agriculteurs). The modern notion of "farmers" is, in Mendras's view, a social and professional category among others, it does not have the same complex semantic load as that of peasant (Mendras, 1958). In America peasants are not defined by Redfield or sauvages (primitives). nor “modern,” but a different “social species” (Redfield, 1967).

Maurice Jollivet contradicts Mendras by considering the typology of the latter an evolutionary scheme, which shows that the peasants are "savages" on the way to integration into a global society, whose unity is generally expressed through the state, and farmers would appear at a later stage of social dynamics, when the process of integration into a "modern" society takes place. In addition, the ideal type of Weberian origin present in the Mendarsian trilogy is considered by Jollivet to be descriptive and static and removes from the sphere of analysis access to knowledge of the mechanisms of change in society. In his opinion, the weakness of Mendras's approach consists in considering the Weberian source analysis of "ideal types" as unique and infallible (Petre, 2008: 523).

Regarding the approach to the changes in agriculture to which agricultural social groups in France were subjected in the middle of the twentieth century, we also notice here a difference of approach. Jollivet's conceptions are oriented towards an economic sociology of the countryside, and Mendras moves towards the area of political sociology. The development of rural areas is influenced by politics in the sense that decisions belong to the political society in setting minimum prices, ensuring agricultural production and compensation in case of natural disasters, interventions on innovation in agriculture. It is a matter of progress in which state officials prevail and not farmers.While the Jollivetian economy offers us a kind of agricultural socio-economy, relating the following three dimensions: 1. the evolution of the farmer's place in the national economy; 2. transformations of social strata and social groups within the agricultural population; 3. transformations of the social relations of production within the agricultural exploitation.

Other French sociologists G. Bauer and J. M. Roux noted that cities, especially French ones, do not only grow by absorbing their rural space immediately. They are developing over a wide area, with widespread extensions, which involve a growing number of new constructions. The two use for the first time the term urbanization, a process of intertwining rural spaces with urbanized ones. In the opinion of the two, the rural area can be urbanized only if it has the following characteristics: 1) they are close to urban centers and support the residential contribution of a new population, of urban origin; a declining proportion of farmers and rural artisans in the population; a strong transformation of the land market; a massive construction of detached houses in rural communes located less than half an hour from the urban agglomeration that is the pole; 2) the subsistence of a dominant non-urbanized space, it differs from the traditional peripheries which are in total continuity with the mother city, from where they appear as a spatial extension; the inhabitants of the new neighborhoods are sub-citizens (Bădescu, 2011: 307). The rural sociologist Henri Mendras considers that this concept, proposed to his compatriots, once put into practice, will save French society from the conflict between urban and rural inherited from the Romans (Mendras, 1977: 149).

Across the ocean, in America such a reality is called the Metropolitan Area, a phenomenon that appeared in the 40s of last century. According to American and French sociologists, these areas are made up of people living in rural areas and working in the city. In this context in Romania we can currently speak of 22 metropolitan areas that operate based on law no. 351/2001 regarding the approval of the Plan for the arrangement of the national territory - Section IV The network of localities. Unlike America or other Western European states, this new type of territorial organization is legally established in our country only in 2005, four years after the adoption of the law.The first inter-community development association with legal personality in Romania, in metropolitan area format, is the Oradea Metropolitan Area (Oradea Metropolitan Area, 2020). According to law 351/2001, the metropolitan area is that “area established by association, based on a voluntary partnership between large urban centers (Romanian capital and first rank municipalities) and urban and rural localities located in the immediate area, at distances of up to 30 km , between which cooperation relations have been established on multiple levels ”(legislatie.just.ro, 2020).

The difference between the American, French and Romanian metropolitan areas consists in the fact that in our country the absorption is made directly from urban to rural, not posing the problem of suburbs as in other parts of Europe or America. For the time being, the way of life of the natives from the Romanian countryside being less influenced by the urban habits. One can observe the transformation of arable land into construction land, or even the change of the rural landscape due to the new fields of solar panels.

American sociologists approached rurality from the perspective of the concept of "folk society", developed in 1967 by Robert Redfield. He argues that with the evolution towards modernity, these “folk societies” either disappear or transform into urban societies or communities (Redfield, 1967).

The political perspective on the rural area

The agrarian and rural issues are found in European political ideas and doctrines since the eighteenth century. After the French Revolution, the interests of the peasants were represented in the parliaments of European states by their masters. At the end of the 18th century, the peasantry had no market relations, becoming politically passive, a state that changes when in contact with the market. This social class lived in its own household, was not in frequent contact with the market, had known no other exploitation than its master and gifts, so that its only antagonism was against the feudal regime. During the French Revolution the peasantry did not have a political role, it participated in the destructive rebellions during the demonstrations only after the fall of the Bastille, practically contributing to the destruction of some castles. It is worth noting the insignificant political role of the peasantry in the conditions when France was at that time in a serious economic crisis, the development of agriculture was slow, and the development of crafts and trade was slowed by maintaining guilds and internal customs.

In the second half of the 19th century, when the peasant entered the gear of the market economy, money and new forms of exploitation of the peasantry appeared: usury and the grain trade, new political tendencies of the peasantry were signaled, but this time with anti-capitalist tendencies. .

In Denmark, even before 1849, there is a peasant program. This program provided for a wider culture of the people, professional freedoms and the transfer of land, given to the leased peasants, in permanent ownership. Following the liberal constitution of 1864, a privileged senate was created. Economist Virgil Madgearu considers the Danish senate "a fortress of conservatism designed to prevent the development of the free forces of the people, due to the fact that the king, the ministry and the conservative senate ruled absolutely." In 1870, Danish intellectuals attracted by the peasants' program joined ideology and fought alongside them for thirty decades until parliamentary democracy was established in Denmark.

Before the First World War, under the pressure of economic circumstances, the peasantry changed its political attitude. American competition has forced an intensification of peasant households in central and western Europe. After the First World War, the "big peasants" of Bavaria, assimilating the ideal of the petty bourgeoisie, tried unsuccessfully to represent the interests of farmers. This is also demonstrated by the sociological study carried out during the German revolution by Wilhelm Mattes. He finds that the peasants were divided into three or four bourgeois parties and some even into the socialist party. He discovers the causes of these political weaknesses, namely: the lack of leading personalities, of those representatives able to bring services in political issues specific to the class to which they belonged.

In the same context we must remember Marx who in the second half of the eighteenth century in the work Eighteen Brumaire (Der 18-te Brumaire) denied the political capacity of the inhabitants of the countryside "peasants are unable to capitalize on class interests in their own name , either in a parliament or in a convent ”(marxists.org/, 2020).

Starting from the social ideals of the peasant, labor-socialist parties, class parties in the sense of Virgil Madgearu, which aims to transform the social order in favor of those who exploit the land, we can say that these two doctrines are a response to liberal doctrines and conservatives who advocate for the maintenance of existing order. The program of a class party is made up of elements belonging to the same class, the adherents being partisans not only of economic demands, but also of political and philosophical conceptions that are based on a social ideal.

Russian populism, an ideology springing up in response to European capitalism, claimed that Russia had its socialist destinies, different from those of capitalist Europe, namely that it was believed that Russia would evolve towards socialism without going through the capitalist phase. Russian populism supported this idea by claiming that in Russia there was no capitalism, no bourgeoisie, no strong proletariat. Moreover, the terrorists of populism tried to prove that there were no possibilities for the development of capitalism in Russia. The Russian populists also relied on the deep hatred that existed in the Russian peasant against the state administration ", but also on the big owners, says

Virgil Madgearu, as well as on the belief among the peasant masses that the land must belong to the one who works it.

In Romania, the populist ideology was theorized by the lawyer and journalist Constantin Stere in the spirit of Russian narodnicism and traditionalist currents. Stere built an ideology around the concept of uniqueness of the Romanian rural civilization, which he exalts and considers authentic, organic, in opposition to the urban civilization considered to be foreign to the Romanian reality, being an imported civilization, therefore inorganic (Virgil Madgearu , The Agrarian Revolution and the Evolution of the Peasant Class, (1923), Stere argues that the only viable social and political form in late nineteenth-century Romania could only be rural life, in which the peasant and the traditional village were to be the main actors in development.

The Romanian thinker, although a follower of socialist theories, stated at the beginning of the twentieth century in the study "Social democracy or populism?" that in our country the conditions of using social-democracy in the analysis of society and development on the socialist path predicted by Marx and Engles are not yet met. Stere believes that Romania needs a different ideology, and in order to develop, it must follow a different line of evolution from that of the industrial and working-class West. The ideology proposed by Stere, corresponding to the Romanian socio-economic realities of the mentioned period, is populism, and the society was to be built, in Romania, on a “peasant society”.

In this context, we notice that in Stere's conception the peasant household is superior to other forms of organization because: “it does not seek to obtain rent and interest on capital, it produces cheaper; the small Romanian household has the more intensive labor power of the man who works for himself, the peasant household makes possible the use appropriate to its nature of each piece of land ”(Stere, 1996: 58).

The socialist current is another ideology concerned with the future of the peasantry in Romanian society at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Constantin Dobrogeanu Gherea, contemporary with Stere, delimits himself from the populists and remains faithful to Marxist ideology. He finds that after the agrarian reform of 1864 and the multiple laws issued for the capitalist development of agriculture there are feudal remnants, ie the relations between peasants and landowners continue to develop through relations of obedience, through relations of production advantageous only to the masters, laws disadvantageous in practice to the peasants. In this context, Gherea considers that Romanian society has to do with a new social form, namely neo-slavery, “a mixture of capitalist form and serfdom background” (Gherea, 1910: 35). The Romanian socialist, born in a Jewish family in the Russian Empire, today Ukraine does not see in the peasant property nor in the Romanian village the solution of the problems of our agriculture. This is possible only after the elimination of feudal remnants, and the final solution to the problem of agriculture is for Gherea the Marxist theory, the socialization of agriculture (Socol, 2006: 39).

We can talk about the consolidation of the peasant position in Romania after the reform of 1921, on which occasion over 75% of the arable agricultural land became the property of the rural inhabitants. Two years later, after the reform, during which the administrative reform of the country continued, the foundations of the peasant doctrine were laid. The promoter of this ideology is Virgil Madgearu, a member of the National Peasant Party, who believes that "the birth of the new agrarian regime in eastern Europe after the First World War was made under a revolutionary aegis" practically created "the peasantry of agriculture" (Madgearu, 1923: 100). . The central element of this "agrarian revolution" refers to the replacement of "exploitation property by peasant labor ownership." This refers to an economic reality distinct from both the large agrarian exploitation and the "capitalist exploitation".

In the opinion of the dominant conservatives in the second half of the 19th century and in the early years of the next, an opinion shared somewhat later by agrarians and, after the First World War by peasants who advocated the primacy of agriculture, there is confidence that agriculture can generate economic growth and economic development of the country. Their arguments being the richness of land resources, the cultural and traditional accumulations in the villages, the large proportion of the rural population "(Popescu, 2019: 586).

Foreign observers, who developed their political and social conception in environments quite different from those of the agrarian states, such as an English sociologist Dr. L. Haden Guest, who in 1921 traveled through all the newly formed countries and Russia, In this regard, I argue that in rural areas, democracy is found in peasant parties, which although generally willing to approve socialization or municipalization in cities or social control over industry, are in fact partisans of peasant land ownership and free trade.

On the other hand, the liberals were winning over industrial development, that is, the modernist current. This fact became a reality around the outbreak of the Second World War, when the profile of the Romanian economy became eminently agrarian, agrarian-industrial, remarks the same author.

The development along the lines of industrialism was also maintained by the communist regime for almost 50 years, between 1945 and 1990. was the network of large, state and cooperative units, they created an imbalance in rural areas.

The economic perspective on the rural area

After the Second World War, the rural economies of European countries turned to mass production through agricultural farms, diminishing the production character of small family farms. The latter are reoriented towards non-agricultural activities, and farmers towards multi-active activities. The lack of post-war food was common, and they helped to convince most European governments that increased intervention was needed in the production and marketing of agricultural products.

In rural areas, there are increases in cereal crops, livestock, meat and milk products based on massive technological changes in agricultural practice, introduced into the market economy with the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century. After 1948, cereal production increased on average "by 30% between 1948/50 and 1958/60 in the 16 countries of Western Europe, with increases closer by 50% in Austria, France and Greece" (Hoggart et al., 2015: 146). Compared to the United States where the increase in agricultural productivity has been achieved through the widespread and large-scale use of mechanization in Europe, the increase has generally come from the introduction of a "nitrogen saving" of chemical inputs (Hoggart et al., 2015: 147). This Fordist economic system which replaces the classical production necessary for its own consumption in mass agricultural production through the use of artificial mechanisms and which has kept Europe in an insecure and competitive market system has led to state intervention to ensure the stability of agricultural commodity markets. rural development, a trend that the CAP has taken over. For smaller producers, mass agricultural production meant the development of non-agricultural activities as a means of economic survival.Gradually, in the process of European rural development, the initiatives that led to the creation of a rural industrial system appear. An example is the case of rural areas in the west of Ireland where state initiatives are identified in the sense that from 1932 until the mid-1980s successive governments pursued a policy of pro-rural industrialization, granting preferential subsidies to rural areas. , even though in the second half of the 50s they were reduced. Between 1964 and 1984 the Irish government's economic expansion program provided special aid for the dispersal of industrial sites. And after 1984, government policy shifted from rural areas to attracting domestic investment in high-tech industries to serve an international market.

After 1947, the Economic Commission for Europe was created at European level as a body of the United Nations, being the first step towards the integration of the European market. At the time of the establishment of the common market by the Treaty of Rome in 1958, the agriculture of the six founding Member States was characterized by strong state intervention. Given that agriculture is now only a small part of the European Union's economy, public intervention has recently been strengthened by agro-rural policies with other dimensions, including sustainable development, combating climate change, landscaping, diversification and revitalization. rural economy or the production of energy and biomaterials. (Articles 38-44 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). Analyzing from the economic perspective the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) we notice that it aimed and aims at supporting farmers (subsidy system) and price control in the agricultural and food area, while registering dysfunctions contrary to the fundamental principle of the free market.“The relatively complicated mechanisms for granting subsidies have made it possible to estimate that half of their amount reaches the possession of anyone else related to the system than directly in the hands of farmers, the essential recipients” (Maniu, 2017: 599).

Evolved societies operating on the classic national models of socio-economic development of the American liberal, Japanese corporate type, oriented towards the private sector but coordinated by state legislation, the Rhine model represented by the combination of economic freedom and social equality present in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, or the French "statist" model, a type of economic system that combines liberalism and protectionism into a "state capitalist" system with a managerial tinge, goes through a transition stage "from a production-based economy to a service-based economy" (Bell, 1976).

Contemporary economic transformations, taking place in developed countries, are evidence of society's transition to a new principled stage. The appearance of such situations is related to the change of the material-technological base of production and to the formation of the "new economy". In mid-1994, the American magazine Fortune published the article "Awakening to a New Economy" (Fortune, 1994), which mentioned the emergence of the new economy in the United States, which differs from both the automobile era and that of agriculture. Reactions to the protests of the supporters of the old economy did not take long to appear. Proponents of the "new economy", especially the directors of IT companies such as Andy Grove, CEO of Intel, the world's largest chip maker and a true source of the new economy, say the new economic concept is not so dramatic, the new economy is just the old economy that uses technology as a competitive means of survival ”(Fortune, 1994).

From the perspective of the Romanian economist Ion Bari we can define the new economy as a concept in which “the economy in which modern digital technologies offer worldwide access to all the information available at a given time. These new technologies have the role of ensuring efficiency in conventional and traditional business practices and facilitating the emergence of new products "(Bari, 2001: 92).

Conclusions

The European rural area has gradually changed from one stage to another of the development of European civilizations in socio-economic terms. The economic transformations in the developed countries are a proof of the transition of the society to new stages, oriented towards services. Demographic changes in rural areas located in different geographical areas have led to the emergence of new concepts of rural development, but also the emergence of ideological currents focused on the rural problem. The article emphasizes that the principles of sustainable development must be reflected in all policies applicable to rural areas, and these policies need to be integrated into national policies. Innovations in agricultural techniques, the transition from subsistence production to mass production have generated tools and mechanisms that will be researched based on other methodologies.

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V. INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS AND CRIMINAL ORGANISATIONS

THE IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT ON MIGRATION[1]

Zsolt BOTTYAN*

Abstract. *In the present paper I will analyze the conflicting ideologies regarding immigration in Europe. I tried to define the contemporary historical context surrounding the issue of migration underlying the ideological rift between Western and Central-Eastern Europe. I analyzed the political, economic and cultural factors behind the ideological differences.*

Keywords: *ideology, migration, multiculturalism, secularism, globalism, national identity, economic nationalism*

1. The problem of migration

There are two forms of migration that will have a major effect on the future of Europe: the "internal migration" which is made possible by the Union's free movement agreement and the "external migration" which concerns the migratory movements towards Europe from the South and East, from demographically fast-growing areas that are characterized by economic, political and ecological turmoil.

In the present paper I would like to analyze the ideological context of the debate regarding external migration that brought up many issues including xenophobia, racism, economic nationalism, concepts that were considered pertaining to the past of Europe. From now on when I will refer to migration, I mean the external migration towards Europe.

The problem of non-European immigration is not recent, Western Europe received large numbers of migrants from outside Europe, mainly from Africa and the Middle East for many decades after the Second World War (Hansen, 2003). The issue was put to the forefront of the European debate by the events which occurred in 2015 at the border of Hungary where hundreds of thousands of migrants, mainly from Africa and the Middle East, tried to go through the Hungarian border illegally towards countries such as Germany or Sweden. These events determined the Hungarian government to close the country's southern border with a barbed wire fence, a decision that caused a lot of controversy throughout the European Union. The Hungarian government was condemned as xenophobic, Islam phobic, that breaches the international engagements regarding refugees and asylum law.

These events from 2015 set the debate on migration in a dichotomous choice: should Europe welcome more migrants from the South and the East becoming thus a multicultural and multiracial society or should limit drastically the influx of migrants, retaining the national and Christian identity of Europe.

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[1] This paper is a revised and added edition of the author's paper: Title: *The Ideological Conflict on Migration*, in Karla Barth, Mircea Brie, Dragoș Dărăbăneanu, Istvan Polgar (coord.),*The Role of Intercultural Communication in Adapting Ethnic Groups to the European Union Social Space*, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Saarbrücken,2019, p.507-526.

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The public debate on the issue made it clear that it's difficult to have an open and honest conversation about migration because of the political correctness that engulfs and distorts any argument. Accusations of xenophobia, racism, nativism are hurled far too easy by leftists and liberals towards national conservatives, who, in turn, accuses their opponents of anti-national policies or arguing with the replacement theory regarding the native populations of Europe.

2. Aspects of ideological analysis

Latent social phenomena produce changes in society that sociologists measure post-factum trying to construct and validate statistically various hypotheses which sometimes amount to an explanatory pattern. Quantitative models based on attitudinal measurements rarely offer a satisfactory predictability of social phenomena and are presenting a truncated model of causality because they don't take in account the influence of ideological structures on social change.

Ideological analysis combines sociological measurements, document and discourse analysis to reveal the ideological structures and ideas that have an influence on society in a given historical context. In opposition to latent phenomena, ideologies have a more immediate influence on social change and are the determining factors in explaining social phenomena like migration which are creating a distinct awareness at political level.

The ideological landscape in Western Europe and in the USA points towards an unusual alliance between liberals, progressives and leftist political groups on the issue of migration. At a first glance it would be baffling to put in the same pot ideologies that seems incompatible as liberalism and various leftist (socialist) groups. Progressivism, which is a distinct American ideology, is more malleable and can be associated with both liberal and left-wing ideas (Eisenach, 2006).

The modern-day liberals are proposing an extreme form of individualism which is strangely in a convergence with some leftist views. An example in this regard is the liberal-leftist convergence regarding gender and sexual ideology. Liberals and progressives emphasize on leaving behind traditional social norms, the right of every person to define their own sexuality, considering non-heterosexual relationships or behavior as "normal" and equal in social value, describing them as "alternative lifestyles". Leftist groups are close to these liberal views as they approach the same issues from the perspective of the "oppressed groups": women, minority groups (racial, ethnic, sexual, religious etc.).

We can observe enough issues where the left and the liberals converge, forming, in many situations, a unified and functional ideological structure. One of the issues where these historically opposing groups are converging today is migration.

The ideological elites define the cleavages in society and are proposing political solutions that are largely responsible for social change. In ideological analysis, the elites play a greater role in explanation compared with the measurement of the attitudes in the general population.

After the Second World War, the "elite "in Western Europe was represented by the liberal-leftist establishment, the alternatives to the mainstream political thinking were classified as "fringe politics" and were simply drowned out by the media and the academia.

The liberal democracy of the West became a left-right political rotation with less and less relevance regarding the substance of policies because there were minimal differences between the rotating establishment parties. The "establishment" developed a set of "orthodox" policies that were maintained or minimally altered by the political parties that rotated in power. Often, these policies were developed based on social and economic theories (Dequech, 2007, 2012) that were considered the correct way of thinking or scientifically grounded. Social theorists, especially economists, seemed to forget that every theory about society which goes beyond a banal quantitative assessment contains a certain amount of ideology. The establishment considered their own policies as the "optimal" solution based on the "social science" behind them. As a reminder, we had in Marx an economist who viewed the "thinking" of the proletariat not as an ideology but as a set of ideas that were substantiated scientifically in contrast with capitalist thinking which he considered pure ideology (Drucker, 1972; Wood, 2004), a theory that led to the forming of authoritarian socialist and communist governments in Europe. This is one of the most important shortcomings of the mainstream critique on alternative political thinking (populism), namely that the leftist-liberal establishment consider their position as inherently superior, scientifically validated, negating any substantive debate on the issues, often expressing authoritarian tendencies.

In conclusion, migration is a phenomenon that cannot be explained only by "objective" or latent social factors and if we want to understand the evolution of this phenomena, we need to understand the ideological framework of migration next to the objective factors that are determining it. The ideological analysis regarding the "cleavage" of migration is complicated as there are various nuances according to the specific political situation. As the scope of the present article demands simplification, we can identify two main sides in this ideological debate: the leftist-liberal establishment in Western Europe, which considers an increased immigration in Europe as a positive development, a solution to the demographic problem (Bijak, Kupiszewska şi Kupiszewski, 2008; Bouvier, 2001; Keely, 2001) which plagued Europe after the Second World War (Glass, 1968) and the national conservatives, who see immigration as a direct attack on national identity, the Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orban considering it as an "invasion" which will slowly replace the indigenous populations of the European continent[2].

3. Europe divided: West vs. East

There's a geographic separation that mirrors the ideological divide in Europe on migration: North-Western Europe is more immigration friendly compared with Eastern and Central Europe.

Many of the Western European countries were colonial powers that exploited for hundreds of years various societies including ones from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the main territories where did the immigrants come from. This historical heritage made the former colonialists more open towards immigration from territories that were once their colonies but in the same time made them more vulnerable ideologically regarding the issue of migration.

After the Second World War, the North-Western part of Europe enjoyed a half a century of unprecedented prosperity creating welfare economies which combined with the need for human resources for the economic growth made them more willing to open their societies towards migrants from outside Europe(Hansen, 2003).

During the crisis of 2015 the Western European establishment made it clear that they are willing to receive large numbers of people from outside of Europe. The German chancellor Angela Merkel openly expressed the so called "Willkommenskultur", which is

[2] Interview with Hungary's Viktor Orban - „You wanted the migrants – we didn't! ". [online] Available at: https://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/viktor-orban/exclusive-interview-with-viktor-orban-54405140.bild.html [Accessed 5 Jul. 2019].

translated as “welcoming culture”, towards migrants that came mostly from the Middle-East and Africa (Hamann şi Karakayali, 2016). Most of the migrants were Muslims that were in part refugees from the civil war in Syria, but many were economic migrants from countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan and other Middle Eastern or African countries. The legal status of the migrants represented an early point of debate between those who wanted to limit the numbers of the people received in Europe and those who argued that only the migrants that can reasonably prove their status as refugees should have permission to receive asylum in Europe.

In opposition, Central and Eastern European countries joined the European Union with a different historical background. These countries faced great economic hardships during the communist era and in the transition period that followed the collapse of communism. The Central and Eastern Europeans never sought colonial exploits and never had imperial ambitions but instead struggled to maintain their sovereignty fighting various empires such as the Ottoman, Hapsburg or the Soviet Union. In Central and Eastern Europe there is little economic capability to integrate large numbers of migrants or ideological openness towards immigration especially from societies outside of Europe.

From these opposing ideological standpoints are emerging different views about the future of the European Union. The pro-immigration groups in Western Europe are represented by the mainstream political establishment consisting of leftist, liberal and some pseudo-conservative parties which have an ecosystem formed by various lobby groups, the mainstream media and the humanities part of the academia. This ideological ecosystem sustained the political establishment that governed Western Europe after the Second World War, assuring, through the domination of the public discourse, the prevalence of its ideology and policies. Some of the institutions of the European Union, like the Commission or the European Parliament, which are influenced and controlled by these Western European power centers are also pro-immigration (we have yet to evaluate the changes of the position towards immigration in these structures after the European elections from May 2019).The Franco-German establishment is favoring a European super state which is multicultural and multi-racial, a sort of “United States of Europe” with high internal and external mobility where the national identities are greatly weakened (Morgan, 2009). Opposing this view are those who are called "populists", represented by the current regimes that are governing Hungary and Poland which are proposing a Europe of nations with low internal and external mobility and strong national identities. There is also a consistent opposition to mass-immigration in other Central European countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Austria and recently from Southern Europe where Italy is one of the most affected countries by illegal immigration.

3.1. Multiculturalism in Western Europe

If we take in account the ethnical and religious identity, we can distinguish between three types of societies in Europe: societies with a strong ethnic and religious identity which are mostly represented by Central and Eastern European countries, “open” societies that lost their ethnic character and are deeply laicized which are situated mostly in the North-Western part of Europe, and in the South we have countries which are in transition between the aforementioned models (Greece, Italy, Spain).

The problem of national identity is at the center of the argument regarding migration, which arises through the ideological conflict between multicultural and ethnically homogeneous societies. Western Europe was transformed after the Second

World War from ethnically homogenous in multicultural societies with considerable non-European, especially Muslim, minorities (see Fig.1).

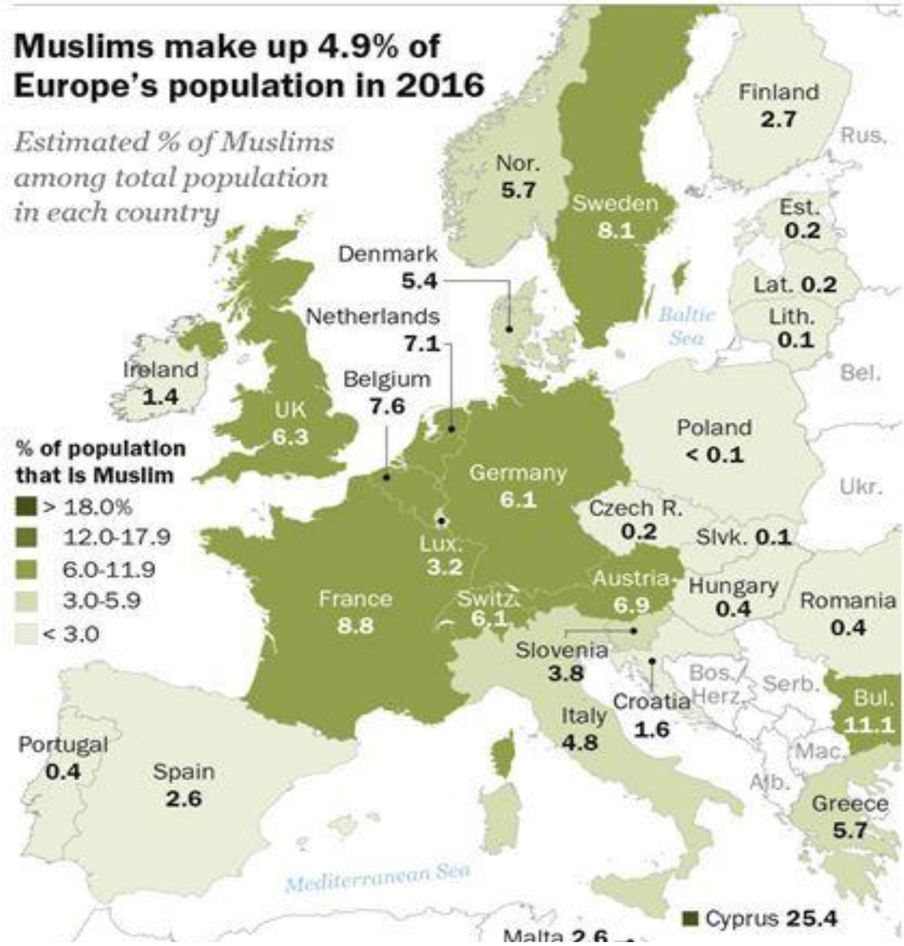

Fig.1. Muslim population in Europe 2016.
Source: Pew Research Center,www.pewresearch.org.
Webpage:https://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/pf_11-29-17_muslims-update-20/[Accessed 4 Jul. 2019]

The Pew Research study underlines different scenarios for the countries of Europe regarding the proportion of the Muslim population[3]. In a medium migration scenario, which I consider it realistic taken in account the migrational pressure from Muslim countries in the following decades, countries like Sweden, France or the UK will have close to 20% of the population Muslims. This data allows a reduction of the issues raised by multiculturalism to two core issues: the relationship between Islam and the Christian heritage of the Europe and the cohabitation between different races.

Statistical data suggests that Western societies, which are more diverse racially, are more open towards immigrants and more willing to integrate them (fig.2).

[3] Europe's Growing Muslim Population [online] Available at: Webpage: https://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/[Accessed 4 Jul. 2019]

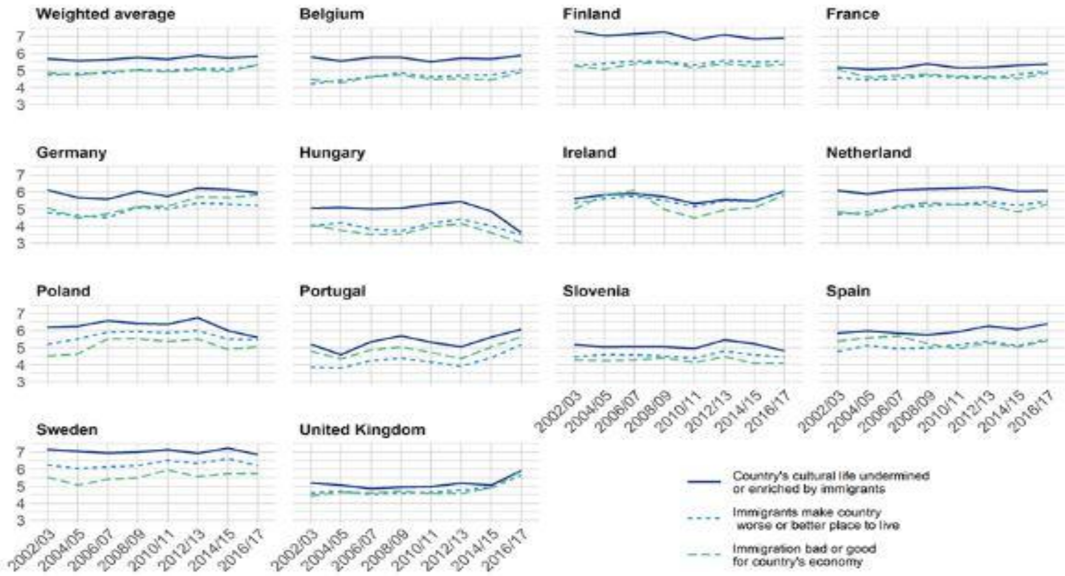

Fig.2. Attitudes towards migrants in Europe 2002-2017
Source: Europeans Are More Accepting of Immigrants Today than 15 Years Ago. Evidence from eight waves of the European Social Survey.
Webpage: https://www.medam-migration.eu/en/publication/europeans-are-more-accepting-of-immigrants-today-than-15-years-ago// [Accessed 1 Jul. 2019]

This openness towards multiculturalism in Western Europe can be explained in part with the colonial past that created a complicated relationship towards the issues of race and national identity(Benjamin, 2007; Pojmann, 2008). As a way of reckoning with hundreds of years of exploitation and segregation, justified at the time with racist and white supremacist theories, we can observe in some western societies, especially in the UK and USA, the proliferation of the concept of “white guilt”. Despite an unparalleled access to political rights for racial and ethnic minorities in the West, it can be observed a surge in anti-racist attitudes, inside of the millennial generation in the USA and Europe, through aggressive groups like Antifa[4]. These movements are fueled by an ideology, supported irresponsibly by some Western academic institutions, that considers “white privilege” (Kendall, 2012; McIntosh, 2018) as the main source for discrimination and inequality in society. The main argument of the leftist-liberal and progressive ideologues is that in the West we can still find “structural or systemic racism” which favors the white community. It is true that structural or systemic racism was an institutionalized form of oppression based on racist theories applied in the USA (Feagin, 2013)and in the former European colonies but it’s intellectually or morally irresponsible to equate the concern with preserving national identity in contemporary European societies to racism. I would point out that there is no significant non-biased research on the concept of race or race cohabitation: we ether have to deal with far-right ideologies about white supremacy or the modern condemnation of white privilege promoted by the liberals and progressives.

[4] Antifa attack conservative blogger Andy Ngo amid violence at Portland Proud Boys protest [online] Available at: https://news.yahoo.com/antifa-attack-conservative-blogger-andy-115152895.html [Accessed 5 Jul. 2019]

Even if the West is more open toward multiculturalism than Central and Eastern Europe it would be incorrect to say that there is a clear majority that supports immigration from outside Europe. In some Western countries, there is a distinct disconnect between the attitudes in the general population toward migration and the positions of the mainstream political parties and their ecosystem. I mentioned above the "Willkommenskultur" policy promoted at the beginning of the 2015 crisis by the German government. Chancellor Merkel overestimated the support of the German public for receiving 1 million refugees, most of them fleeing the Syrian war, and was swiftly criticized by the AFD (Alternative for Germany) and by the CSU (Christian Social Union in Bavaria). If the position of AFD, a far-right, anti-immigration party is not surprising[5], the CSU clearly felt that the moderately conservative German electorate is concerned about the migration friendly policies of the government so they tried to position themselves ahead of CDU (Christian Democratic Union of Germany) in Bavaria[6]. The pressure was effective, and the chancellor changed her position by cutting a deal with Turkey in March 2016 that would stop the migration route from the Turkish refugee camps towards Europe. The deal proved efficient in cutting drastically the number of migrants that came to Europe from Turkey[7].

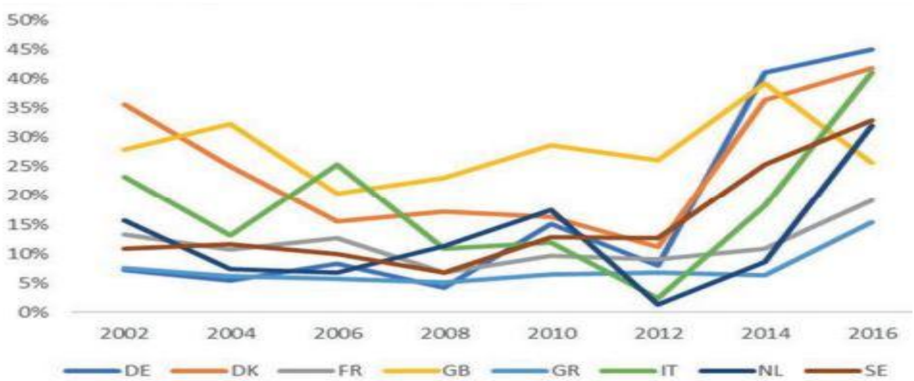

Fig.3. Percentage of the population that picked immigration as the most important issue facing their country between 2002 and 2016 (Euro barometer)
Source: Attitudes towards immigration in Europe: myths and realities. Explaining variation in attitudes to immigration in Europe, James Dennison and Teresa Talò, (Page.9).
Webpage: https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/findings/IE_Handout_FINAL.pdf[Accessed 4 Jul. 2019]

Alongside shifting attitudes toward migration, the Western politicians and thinkers are starting to critique the ideology of multiculturalism. At the end of 2015, when the political consequences of the wave of 1 million refugees who entered Germany were obvious, Angela Merkel was obliged by the political realities to change her position on multiculturalism and she came out with a more nuanced speech: "Multiculturalism leads

[5] Migration [online] Available at: https://www.afd.de/migrationspolitik/ [Accessed 3 Jul. 2019]
[6] Bavarian CSU takes tough migration stance but rejects far-right [online] Available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-politics-csu/bavarian-csu-takes-tough-migration-stance-but-rejects-far-right-idUSKCN1LV0K2 [Accessed 3 Jul. 2019]
[7] EU-TURKEY STATEMENT Two years on [online] Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20180314_eu-turkey-two-years-on_en.pdf [Accessed 5 Jul. 2019].

to parallel societies" and represents a "lie of life" or "fiction," Merkel said, adding that Germany "can reach its limits by accepting more refugees", stating the idea of a significant reduction in the number of refugees[8].

3.2 Factors of multiculturalism: Secularism, Post nationalism and Globalism

The main catalysts of multiculturalism in Western Europe are secularism and globalism. One of the orthodox convictions of the leftist-liberal political ecosystem was the idea that the future of humanity lies in globalization and in supra-national structures. The old nation-state is almost dead in the West, they argued, because is becoming practically devoid of any traditional characteristics such as religious or ethnic identity(Hoffmann, 1966; Holton, 2011). One of the main issues raised by this paradigm was if democracy, as a functional governance system, is possible outside the nation-state(Zürn, 2000). Many establishment political thinkers advanced the idea of a European "super state", which will take over several functions of the nation-state, while being less concerned by the issues regarding democratic oversight and emphasizing on the benefits: less nationalism, more mobility and free trade(Morgan, 2009).

The left had internationalist roots, which helped disseminating their politics, but they were historically more protectionist than favoring free trade. At end of the 20th century, the left in Western Europe turned towards the political center. The process was named by Giddens the "Third Way" (Giddens, 1998) and changed the leftist view on globalization and trade. As a consequence of their economic policies, the left was accused of betraying the interest of the working class whose jobs they shipped to low-wage countries putting an important pressure on the blue-collar middle class which played an important part in sustaining the postwar system (Giddens, 2013). Before the financial crisis of 2007-2008 there was a debate about the costs and benefits of outsourcing well-paying jobs which pro-globalist economists seemed to have won in first instance (Bhagwati, 2004) manipulating the public with "scientific" arguments, but the mainstream orthodoxy ultimately lost politically at the voting ballots to populists because the reality of globalization (loss of jobs, migration) kicked in. One of the wining issues of the Trump campaign in the Rust Belt was the deindustrialization of the USA made in the benefit of the Chinese economy which was managed by the democratic and republican globalist establishment[9].

If the economy is the endgame of globalism, a prerequisite is creating a social acceptance through promoting multiculturalism and simultaneously weakening national identity. The West undermined the national identity starting with The Enlightenment. This statement may seem an exaggeration because many national identities in Western Europe were in full development and transformation reaching their peak during the two major cataclysms of the 20th century. My argument regards the application of the principle of separation between church and state, formulated as a clear political principle in the Age of Enlightenment, which was interpreted in an anti-religious or, to be more specific, in an anti-Christian manner by the progressive Western elites. This antagonistic attitude towards

[8] Multiculturalism remains a life lie [online] Available at: https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/fluechtlinge-angela-merkel-spricht-von-historischer-bewaehrungsprobe-fuer-europa-a-1067685.html [Accessed 2 Jul. 2019]

[9] Donald Trump, Made in China, By Reihan Salam [online] Available at: https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2016/01/donald-trumps-insurgent-candidacy-has-been-fueled-by-chinese-driven-job-losses.html [Accessed 1 Jul. 2019]

religion determined the overwhelming secularization of the West towards by the end of the 20th century (Fig.4).

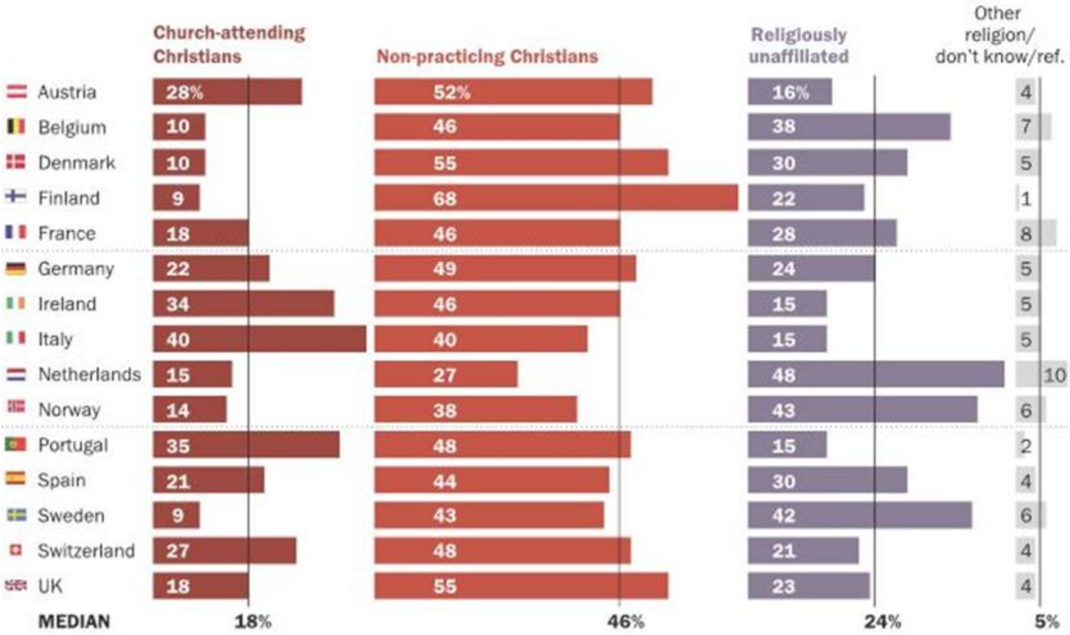

Fig.4. Christian religiosity in Western Europe
Source: Pew Research Center, www.pewresearch.org. Webpage: https://www.pewforum.org/ 2018/05/29/being-christian-in-western-europe/[Accessed 5 Jul. 2019]

After the Second World War, the marginalization of Christianity in Western Europe was continued relentlessly by the liberal and leftist establishment which eventually integrated the so called “Christian Democrat” parties that slowly abandoned their Christian roots and steered toward the center-left (Hanley, 1996). For example, in Italy, where Christianity was still an important part of society and politics after the War, we witnessed a strong secular shift towards the end of the 20th century caused by the compromise made by the Second Vatican Council with the secular establishment that greatly diminished the influence of the Church in society (Pollard, 2008) and the implosion of the Italian Christian Democracy Party under the evidence of ties with the Mafia (Gehler şi Kaiser, 2004). At the end of the 20thcentury,it can be stated without exaggerating, that Christianity ceased to remain a living force in people’s life in the West (fig.4) becoming practically a cultural relic.

Secularization go hand in hand with the weakening of national identity. Religion is one of the defining elements of national identity which interweaves with ethnic elements such as language or traditions. We can talk about Polish, Italian or German Catholicism and Serb, Bulgarian or Romanian orthodoxy. There are similarities between those national iterations of religions but there are a lot of differences that contributes to a unique national culture and identity.

The loss of religiosity, the liaison that underlies national identity, not only deprived Western European societies of a strong moral basis, a role that humanism could never assume, but made those societies incapable to respond to aggressive religious minorities, with a strong sense of identity like the Muslims (Fetzer şi Soper, 2005).Some will argue that the secular West is stable, less corrupt than the more religious Central and

Eastern European nations. The order and stability that the West enjoyed after the Second World War it's less the result of a flimsy secular moral philosophy elaborated by the liberal and progressivist elites but it's more the result of the inertia of a fundamentally Christian moral system that was developed for centuries, which slowly transformed in a sort of utilitarianism checked and guided by humanist (pseudo-Christian) values that worked in the boundaries of a generous welfare state that the West was able to build after the war. We can imagine a scenario where, in scarce economic conditions, Western democracies would crumble similarly to the Central and Eastern European societies under communism because the secular morality system have little capability of guiding and limiting human behavior without an authoritarian regime.

3.3. The economic argument for immigration

The ideology of multiculturalism it's a catalyst for the acceptance of immigration by the native populations but it's not the root cause that initiated the process. The gates of Western societies were opened to immigration for two main reasons:

- The economic motive of supplying workers to a growing economy with an aging population.
- The historical motive of responding with openness towards people that were soliciting asylum from countries that were former colonies of European powers (Hansen, 2003).

If multiculturalism and "the historical guilt" of former colonial powers are pure ideological aspects of migration, the economic argument seems to be, at least on the surface, an objective, measurable argument for encouraging migration. The economic argument is intertwined with the demographic problem that Europe's aging societies are facing for some time. We can separate three aspects of the economic argument:

- An expanding economy needs more workers who are willing to do jobs that the natives are avoiding.
- The innovation and entrepreneurial enthusiasm that some of the immigrants bring.
- The social security issue of paying the checks for the pensioners in a rapidly aging society.

The first two above mentioned aspects are classic economic growth issues. Economists often push in the mainstream media for increased immigration to solve Europe's economic growth problems[10]. Their analysis show the net positive outcome of integrating migrants on the medium to long term (Kancs şi Lecca, 2018). But these measurements regarding economic growth are "guided" by the basic ideological positions these economists are coming from. There is a banal quantitative relationship between economic growth, growth sustainability and population size (structure) but the crux of the growth issue is ideologic in nature: would I want to live in a country with high growth rates and high immigration, which becomes more crowded, changes culturally beyond recognition and would undermine my reference group's social status?

The idea of continuous "economic growth" as a must follow principle for economic and political decisions is an ideological position that stems from the unspoken principle of the orthodox economic view that "people are here for the economy". If we reverse the aforementioned principle to "the economy is for the people" the growth issue is becoming more nuanced, it's less easy to evaluate compared with the constant growth necessity of the orthodox view. These types of growth analysis ignores an entire shift in

[10] Immigration is vital to boost economic growth, Ian Goldin [online] Available at: https://www.ft.com/content/f1ca7b14-b1d6-11e8-87e0-d84e0d934341[Accessed 1 Jul. 2019]

Western culture that is masked by the solution of immigration: the processes that are changing the social fabric of Western societies such as the weakening of the heterosexual family, the altering of gender roles and sexual behavior that directly affects the demographic parameters and, by consequence, economic growth.

3.4. Central and Eastern Europe: The Rebirth of Nationalism

The debate regarding multiculturalism raised the issue of the meaning of nationality. If there are no more distinct and unifying cultural elements besides language, which is by the way undermined by the internet and the omnipresent English language, what is the purpose of the concept of nation? We can further ask ourselves: is the loss of national identity a good or a bad development, what will be the effects on society (Cesarani şi Fulbrook, 1996)?

Some thinkers are arguing that the dissolution of nations is a good process because strong national identity it’s leading to nationalism and ultimately to conflicts (Hoffmann, 1966). These views simply dismiss the role played by national identity in social cohesion, sustainable development and democratic governance, role that a supra-state structure cannot take over.Multiculturalism it’s not capable of shaping an identity for a group, it’s only diluting the national identity, pushing the culture towards cosmopolitism that melts in a limited set of abstract ideas that formed what we call today “correct political thinking” which dominates the Western public discourse. Multiculturalism is not enriching culturally the world, on the contrary, it’s destroying vibrant cultures replacing them with an uniformized culture. This manipulative environment created by the leftist-liberal establishment in the West contributed to the strong populist response that we see in Europe, in the USA and in many other parts of the world.

One of the most important voices against multiculturalism and immigration in Europe is the Hungarian prime-minister Viktor Orban. He is constantly criticized by the pro-immigration forces in Western Europe for his stance on migration which included sealing off Hungary’s southern border and rejecting the proposed quota system regarding the redistribution of migrants from other European Union countries[11]. Orban expressed his opposition to multiculturalism favoring an ethnically and religiously homogenous society. The Hungarian leader affirmed that he wants to build an “illiberal” state which was interpreted by his opponents that he wants to create in Hungary an authoritarian political system such as Putin’s regime in Russia or Erdogan’s in Turkey. Orban clarified that by illiberal state he means a society based on national-conservative and Christian values that is opposed ideologically to the liberal open societies of Western Europe[12]. In Orban’s vision everything is negotiable in a democratic system besides national identity. This position was dubbed by the leftist and liberal establishment and media as a far-right, outright fascist ideology which is in opposition with the European values.

Societies in Central and Eastern Europe have never claimed to be universal cultures as opposed to some national cultures of Western Europe. Always worried about their sovereignty, Central and Eastern European societies cherished their heritage, traditions and kept their ethnic identity. So, while a Moroccan can become French in a

[11] Hungary 'will never accept mandatory quota system for migrants (interview with Péter Szijjártó Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary) [online] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-Kw8kZtejc [Accessed 1 Jul. 2019]

[12] Full text of Viktor Orbán’s speech at Băile Tuşnad (Tusnádfürdő) of 26 July 2014[online] Available at: https://budapestbeacon.com/full-text-of-viktor-orbans-speech-at-baile-tusnad-tusnadfurdo-of-26-july-2014/[Accessed 2 Jul. 2019]

cultural sense because of the perception of French culture as a universal culture that can embed different ethnicities and religions, he will never become a Romanian or a Hungarian unless he renounces his traditions and religion. Nationality means more ethnicity than citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe, with a clear distinction between political and cultural identity. This makes integration of people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds more difficult. A revealing example in this regard is the failure to integrate the Roma community in Eastern and Central Europe even after hundreds of years of cohabitation.

Secularization in Central and Eastern Europe, led by the principle of separating church and state, never had the anti-religious and anti-Christian fervor of the process in the West. The individualism generated by Protestantism was much less present in Central and Eastern Europe. Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, which are prevalent in the region, is emphasizing more on the religious communities than on the individual, religion being more embedded in society and in politics comparatively with the West. Central and Eastern European countries are more religious than Western societies, Romania and Poland being one of the most religious countries in the European Union[13]. The fact that religious identity is stronger in Central and Eastern Europe makes very difficult the acceptance of a large number of migrants with a different religious background.

This idea of cultural incompatibility between a culture with Christian roots and large Muslim immigrant communities was formulated clearly by the Hungarian prime-minister Viktor Orban, the undisputed ideologue of the anti-migrant forces in Europe[14]. In Orban's vision "Christian culture determines the morals of our daily lives" and "The essence is not how many people go to church, or how many pray with true devotion. Culture is the reality of everyday life: how we speak and behave towards one another; the distance we keep from one another and how we approach one another; how we enter this world, and how we leave it". It's clear from his words that he sees Christianity not as a transcendental or theological presence in modern European societies but more as an ethical and political foundation or a way of life, position which is congruent with the revival of Christian Democracy in Hungary one of the most secularized countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

Orban's position on Christianity and migration it's at odds with the Pope's vision and that is raising several issues not only because Hungary is a majority Catholic country but because the Pope's vision seems to be more congruent with the teachings of the Bible and especially with the New Testament. The position of the Pope on migration is well known, he advocates for the receiving and integration of migrants, criticizing the actions of the Hungarian government by saying that: "Builders of walls, be they made of razor wire or bricks, will end up becoming prisoners of the walls they build."[15]. On the other hand, Orban's ideological oeuvre is not shying away from theological arguments. He used Christ's second commandment "Love your neighbor as yourself" from the Gospel of Saint Mark, emphasizing that love of another is not possible if you don't love yourself which is

[13] How do European countries differ in religious commitment?Jonathan Evans, Chris Baronavski [online] Available at: https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/05/how-do-european-countries-differ-in-religious-commitment/ [Accessed 2 Jul. 2019]

[14] We must defend Christian culture. Orban Viktor [online] Available at: http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/we-must-defend-christian-culture/ [Accessed 25 Jun. 2019]

[15] Pope criticizes building walls to keep migrants out. [online] Available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-immigration-border-pope/pope-criticizes-building-walls-to-keep-migrants-out-idUSKCN1RC0UO [Accessed 25 Jun. 2019]

primordial. Transposing the argument from the individual level to a nation, in Orban's view if you don't love your culture, if you don't have a strong national identity you cannot appreciate another's culture or identity. In this framework of thinking, limited immigration that is not affecting a nation's identity is possible but mass immigration that could deeply affect a society's culture and identity is not acceptable.

The critics of this nationalist ideological construction are arguing that in some parts has an eerie resemblance with the nationalist ideologies of the 20th century. It's still vivid in the memory of Europeans the shameful conflict that ravaged the former Yugoslavia at the end of the 20th centurythat stemmed from unchecked ethnic and religious hatred. Viktor Orban pleads his version of nationalism mostly from a cultural-conservative point of view but the critics are pointing out that the Hungarian prime-minister and his party (FIDESZ) often raises the issue of the Treaty of Trianon, with irredentist undertones, which is deeply unsettling for Hungary's neighboring countries.

3.5 Economic nationalism and migration

The revival of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe is raising the issue of the nationalist alternative for the liberal way of organizing the political and, subsequently, the economic system. Many former communist countries, that are members of the European Union, are accused of corruption, of misusing European funds for creating national oligarchies that are contrary to the European free market principle and, in general, to the principles of a democratic society (Fazekas et al., 2014).

To understand this problem, we must go back at the beginning of the transition towards democracy and a free market economy. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe were deprived of capital and know-how and received large investments from mostly Western European companies. Entire economic sectors that were very profitable like telecommunications, banking, retail etc. were privatized and fell in the hands of Western European owners. The profits were taken out from these countries and, for most of the people, the living standards remained, even after 30 years from the beginning of the economic transition, at a level that represented only a fraction of the living standards from Western Europe. This situation created a rift between a part of the population that is more urban and cosmopolite and benefited the most from the transition alongside the Western investors and those who are living in rural areas or in smaller cities which are more conservative and felt left behind.

The economic crisis deepened this rift and made possible the populist advance in Hungary and Poland that was led by a distinct national-conservative ideology. In Hungary, the FIDESZ government took economic measures that ensured that the burden of the crisis is shared by the multi-national corporations with the Hungarian people. They ensured that the Hungarian economy becomes more independent from international institutions like the I.M.F. and limited the in debtedness of Hungary towards foreign lenders. These measures were criticized by the Western liberal media as interventionist and contrary to free trade principles[16].

The Hungarian government implemented policies that are closely related with their staunch anti-immigration stance. Hungary has a long-standing problem with demographic growth, being among the countries with the lowest birth rates in Europe. To

[16] Viktor Orban Takes Economic Nationalism Too Far [online] Available at: https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/viktor-orban-takes-economic-nationalism-too-far-1.1221613 [Accessed 28 Jun. 2019]

tackle this issue, they created a consistent policy to encourage demographic growth that was swiftly criticized by the leftist-liberal media in the West of being nativist, misogynistic and ineffective[17]. The immediate labor shortage was addressed with a controversial labor law that permitted the companies and workers to negotiate supplementary work hours. This measure was also scrutinized by the liberal media in the West and was criticized in comparison with the anti-immigration policies of the Hungarian government[18].

Economic nationalisms represented by tendencies such as discrimination between foreign and national investors and exaggerated state intervention in the economy. There is a pernicious idea of the “autochthonous” or the “patriotic” investor that should be favorized comparatively with foreign investors for the benefit of the national economy. From a democratic point of view, there should be a clear distinction between democratic policies, such as creating a legal system that is protecting the national economy and that is equal to all the actors in the economy, and favorizing certain individuals because they constitute a “national economic elite”, an oligarchy that sustain a nationalistic ideology and political system. Of course, the foreign investors are not migrants, but this mindset is generating xenophobia which encourages a negative and dangerous take on nationalism.

4. Conclusions

The ideological conflict on migration continues and the parties involved have diametrically opposed views without the possibility of a compromise any time soon.

The national conservatives struggle to create a coherent ideology mainly because they have weakened elites, conservative views being marginalized in the academia and in the media. There is a real danger in a revival of anationalist extremist ideology that could undermine the goal of preserving the national cultures and identities. Central and Eastern European countries can only defend their national identities and cultures if they act together on the issues that undermine them, including migration.

The liberal, progressist and leftist continuum still argues from an arrogant and politically irresponsible position by considering their ideas about migration as implicitly the right ones, refuting any substantive debate on the issue. Their ideas and policies are sometimes just irrational, pseudo-scientific and politically bankrupt, such as the open borders proposal for migrants that come from progressives, alienating many people who want stability and security for their countries, thereby facilitating a populist and nationalist resurgence.

We witnessed a considerable decrease in the number of migrants after 2015 which is the result of strong anti-migration measures such as the EU-Turkey migration agreement, the Hungarian border fence and Italy's intransigence on maritime migration. In the coming decades, even if the Middle East and North-Africa somehow stabilizes politically, which is highly unlikely, climate change and demographic trends will determine an increased migratory pressure towards Europe leaving the European Union with two options: either it will find a compromise between the two opposite factions on migration, or it will break apart.

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[17] Viktor Orbán trumpets Hungary's 'procreation, not immigration' policy [online] Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/06/viktor-orban-trumpets-far-right-procreation-anti-immigration-policy [Accessed 29 Jun. 2019]

[18] Hungary’s Nationalist Policies Have Created a Labor Shortage. The Fix Isn’t Helping. [online] Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/03/business/hungary-slave-law.html [Accessed 29 Jun. 2019]

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THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF TACTICAL BLUFF IN THE INVESTIGATION AGAINST CRIMINAL ORGANISATIONS IN HUNGARY

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Abstract. *I have conducted several consultations and interviews with police officers (investigators, detectives, inspectors) pursuing criminal procedures, also with prosecutors, judges and attorneys (hereinafter: criminalists) on what they mean by tactical bluff. I understood, that some criminalists do not differentiate between colloquial bluff and tactical bluff, that can be the source of several mistakes.*

Keywords: *tactical bluff, criminal organisation, interrogation, testimony, inspection*

Introduction

The obtained *testimony may point out the structure of a criminal organisation*, and according to the rules of the domino effect, it may lead to the prosecution of its leaders, consequently, I consider the analysis of the issue important.[2]

The applicable Act on criminal proceedings does not specify the definition of tactical bluff, so the analysis of the issue is even more necessary.

On the one hand, properly applied tactical bluff may have several advantages in the investigation against criminal organisations and the criminal offenses committed by their members, while, on the other hand, the recognised, inadequately conducted tactical bluff or common sense bluffs may have serious negative impacts.

Due to the nature of the 'domino effect', proper conduct of the tactical bluff plays a rather significant role in the combat against organised crime, since

- we may detect information that was previously unknown by the authority,
- it is significant in rolling up criminal organisations,
- it may point out the structure of the criminal organisation,
- it may lead to the prosecution of the members and leaders of the criminal organisation,
- it may distract the member of the criminal organisation (suspect) from his 'artificially' construed, memorised and carefully rehearsed testimony, as he may also react to the tactical bluff,
- the interviewed person is unaware of the aims of the tactical bluff, therefore, he will possibly make wrong conclusions out of it and will direct his actions,
- he may eventually realise that he has been exposed by such inconsistencies, so he will make a confession,
- the information revealed may confirm the suspect's innocence in the criminal offense,

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[2] Generally, the testimony of the criminal organisation's weakest link starts the domino effect, that may lead to the conduct of the procedural measure.

- it may point out that the suspect's statement of confession was made under the force of coercion or threat, because his motive was to spear the member of the criminal organisation from the criminal procedure.

Consequences and disadvantages of the recognised, inadequately conducted tactical bluff or common sense bluffs:

- information may be transferred or the suspect may be influenced, which will effect the conduct, the results and efficiency of the investigation,
- the detective looses credibility due to groundless holding out hopes or bluffs, moreover, the suspect's disposition to cooperate may decline,
- the statements and announcements (audio recordings of interception or taping) might be misleading,
- the announcement is misleading and it may lead to inappropriate conclusions,
- the suspect may come to a conclusion on the method of obtaining the information,
- the suspect recognises the tactical bluff, to which he may respond with another bluff that remains hidden from the investigator, and so the investigation will pursue on the wrong path,
- the person who has been mislead or has been given groundless hopes by the interrogator will not be cooperative in the new criminal procedure,
- the member of the criminal organisation might become dubious or might start self-checking, whether they are under surveillance or not,
- the suspect (the member of the criminal organisation) subject to a special investigative measure (during phone interactions) may make false statements on the opposing criminal organisations or on trusty and respectable public officers, moreover, the suspect may mislead the further investigation, so part of the perpetrators (members of the criminal organisation) can not be prosecuted,
- the testimony made under the bluff shall (may) be considered as unrightfully acquainted evidence, even more so, such unrighteous procedural measure may be deemed as a criminal offense itself (e.g. unlawful interrogation),
- it might cause vast damages to the budget.

In order to differentiate between bluff and tactical bluff I find the classification of the elements of the definition rather important. Actually, only very few researches refer to the instrument of the tactical bluff.

Most criminalists believe, that criminal tactics (principles and recommendations) are 'everlasting', however, we may not agree with this approach in all cases, since the methods and measures of law enforcement are changing constantly, in compliance with the development of technology, consequently, tactical recommendations should follow the changes as well.

Nevertheless, there are only a few scientific fields, at which the store of learning would change constantly and dynamically, where everyday or random events create context for living science (Pallo, 2018:99).

The application field of tactical bluff is actually quite broad during the investigation, as it may also be applied in the course of coercive measures (e.g. at the search), however, this study examines raison d'étre of the tactical bluff in relation with the suspect's interrogation.

Definition of the tactical bluff

Tactics and measures of the interrogation may affect the efficient investigation of the criminal offense. Without any reference to evidentiary measures, the suspect must be advised on the main elements of his actions conducting the criminal action subject to suspicion, and also the classification of such acts in accordance with the provisions of the Criminal Code (Gov. Decree 100/2018. VI. 8.). In most cases, it is reasonable to show the obtained evidence after thorough interrogation of the suspect, or otherwise, defining the time of showing the evidence is advisory upon tactical reasons. Nevertheless, in certain cases it might be reasonable to keep the person subject to the interrogation in obscurity about what we know, even more so, confronting the person subject to interrogation with the actual evidence is usually more effective (Lakatos, 2009:199).

Tactical bluff is one of the tactical measures, however, its conduct is usually quite controversial. Probably, one of the reasons of the arguments is the fact, that many usually still identify the definition of colloquial bluff with tactical bluff.

The conduct of tactical bluff might have its most significant importance *in rolling up criminal organisations, whereas, during the interrogation process we may gain information and data that was previously unexposed to the authority.*

Of course, the interrogator using the instrument of the tactical bluff must be adequately skilful, but he must also have the necessary creativity and fantasy, as in they are both principal elements of the criminalistics mind. Having the principal knowledge of the character of the interrogated person should help the interrogator (Lehoczki, 2011:62-81). Moreover, the person of the interrogator is rather significant, since it can have direct effect on the person making the testimony (e.g. he would open up), as it may also effect the interrogation situation, i.e. it may be infirm, partially or entirely free of any confrontation, or confrontational (Lakatos, 2004: 204-207).[3]

However, the so called 'tactical bluff' is admissible during the interrogation, if it is *'a manner of behaviour, direction of interrogation, situation creating, or addressing a question (series of questions), whereas the person making the testimony does not understand or recognise the goals or significance of such action, therefore, he does not even consider whether to answer at all, or he does respond upon his own wrongful conclusions about what we know or what evidence we have.'* (Lakatos, 2004:208).

Some criminalists insist, that being unlawful and ethically unacceptable, tactical bluff should not be conducted. I suppose, this approach originates in issue of different cognizance of common sense bluff and its appearance in the context of criminalistics. This is exactly why it is necessary to clear the differences between bluff and tactical bluff.

Tóth's definition of tactical bluff: '[…] it is one of the procedures in the system of tactical measures that aims to gather evidence, whereas the inspector deliberately attempts to create a situation that may encourage the suspect to provide previously unexposed evidence, by suggesting a reality based on at least partially unproved and uncontrollable facts or circumstances […].' (Toth, 2004: 867)

According to my conclusions, tactical bluff is a *reality-based investigative measure of addressing questions or creating situations, whereas the goals and significance of the measure are not recognised by the declarant (during the interrogation, gathering data or during other investigative action), leading the subject to reveal relevant*

[3] Three typical kinds of interrogative situations: interrogation conducted in non-confrontational (e.g. the detective is convinced regarding the credibility of the person subject to interrogation and believes that the content of testimony complies with the truth); interrogation in confronted situation (e.g. in case of a false testimony or at testimonies believed to be false by the investigator); interrogation in uncertain situation (e.g. the investigator is not able to decide over the credibility of the testimony)

data to the investigating authority, that will promote the investigation or the evidentiary procedure.

In most cases, tactical bluff is conducted during the interrogation of the suspect, with regards to the requirement against the witness who must tell the truth in accordance with his best knowledge and his conscience, nevertheless, it may also be conducted during data gathering (e.g. prying or probing).

I must agree with Eszter Szijártó's opinion, according to which tactical bluff does not interfere with the provisions of law, and if properly applied, unwanted consequences can be avoided and can be a valuable instrument in the investigator's tactical toolbox (Szijarto, 2013:62).

If the question of the investigator is associated with other thoughts by the suspect during the cognizance process, it shall not construe a lie. On the other hand, should the investigator lie, his actions shall most probably result or create a lie in return, and the testimony shall be uncontrollable, because the investigator can not be sure if the suspect has any information on the facts questioning the lie.

Nevertheless, in certain cases it is necessary and advisory to apply the instrument of the tactical bluff during the interrogation of the witness as well (for example, if the credibility of the witness is questionable), and also at certain investigative actions (e.g. gathering data, search, on-site interrogation).

Tactical bluff may also be used to distract the suspect from his 'artificially' construed, memorised testimony, and the suspect may react to the action. The forensic linguistic expert can be a great support in filtering out memorised testimonies (Ürmösné, 2019: 65-75). The suspect is not aware of the aims of the tactical bluff or he misunderstands the action, that drives the suspect to make the wrong conclusions and act accordingly to his misbelief. In the line of the tactical bluff, the suspect remains unaware of the fact that the situation created by the investigator is actually a 'trap'. Answering the question, the suspect intends to avert imminent danger (being exposed), nevertheless, he is not able to prepare for every question, therefore, he will alter from his previously memorised testimonies (not or only partially containing true elements). When confronted with the contradictions of his testimonies, the suspect shall realize that he has been exposed by the contradictions, and may make a confession.

The new Act on criminal procedures that came into force only lately has incorporated the legal institution of agreement to criminal proceedings, whereas the defendant may expect more lenient penalties due to his statements disclosing previously unexposed details that would assist, accelerate and promote successful conclusion of the criminal procedure (Bárándy, 2019).

Distinction between tactical bluff from (ordinary) bluff

We must acknowledge the difference between tactical bluff and bluff referred in everyday life in the colloquial sense.

Bluff is:

- 'very vocal words of vanity or misguidance', (Hungarian Dictionary, Editors: Juhász, József et al., 2003: 137)
- boast, bluster, deception of someone (Hungarian Dictionary, Editors: Juhász, József et al., 2003: 137).

It may occur, that investigators fail to differentiate between the two definitions, as they only concentrate on acquiring the confession, so instead of using the instrument of the tactical bluff they are bluffing, leading to the result that these parts of the acquired testimony are not admissible as evidence. The goal of the interrogation is not be the acquaintance of the confession, but to reach to an exploratory and truthful testimony, taking into consideration that the perpetrator and the suspect is not necessary the same person (Lakatos, 2004: 224).

The aim of the tactical bluff is to create a situation by deliberately using suspicions believed to be true, provided that the suspect shall deliver evidence against himself (Toth, 1980:15).

Furthermore, the interrogator shall never prove anything through the bluff, but shall aim to indicate expressions that may serve as evidentiary measures or may lead to evidence (Toth, 1980:16). Another factor of importance is that the suspect may not only deliver damning evidence against himself due to the tactical bluff, but, in consequence of the tactical bluff, further information may also occur, that will eventually point out that the suspect did not commit the criminal offense, therefore he is innocent. It may occur that the suspect made the testimony under the forces of coercion or threat, or else, he intended to spear the member of the criminal organisation from the criminal procedure. This aspect should give further confirmation to the aim, that the suspect's interrogation should not be the acquaintance of the confession, but to have an exploratory testimony that is in compliance with the truth.

When questioning the suspect at the interrogation, the possibility that the suspect and the perpetrator is not necessarily the same person must be taken into consideration, therefore, 'protected data' can not be exposed to the interrogated person. In such case, most probably the innocent person shall not give any reaction. 'Protected data' is a kind of data *'of which only the actors of the case and direct participants of the investigation may have knowledge about'* (Ballane-Lakatos, 2012: 105)

It is crucial, that the question should only content any new information for thee interrogated person to the necessary extent only, otherwise the testimony shall become uncontrollable. More so, the member of the investigating authority shall not be able to detect, what is known by the suspect that he would have voluntarily imposed. The suspect must be granted the possibility to represent his testimony as a comprehensive whole.

If covert measures were used against the suspect, most probably, the announcements construed after the interrogation (audio recordings of the interception or taping) will be misleading, in case the questions of the interrogator referred to protected data of the investigation (on circumstances or perpetrators), of which the interrogated person if innocent, might not have an information about. The third party listening to (monitoring) the phone conversation might be mislead by the given statement and might come to the wrong conclusions.

The viewpoint and opinion of the witness is better learned upon an unbound and free statement that may assist to find out whether the witness is biased or objective. in such cases they likelier to share information on facts they remember more clearly, the ones they find injurious, or what they want to bring to the notice of the authority by all means. Usually, several facts previously not integrated to the case might emerge in the course of such comprehensive presentations, or otherwise, questions of such nature would not have been addressed in the lack of the given information. Efficiency of the interrogation may also depend on the relation of the person conducting the interrogation and the witness, as in the interrogator must gain confidence of the witness, whereas such confidence and trust might be accompanied with the intent of cooperation (Ibolya, 2016: 14-15., 26.)

Preparation for the tactical bluff

Extensive and thorough preparation must precede the conduct of the tactical bluff, since if the suspect realizes that he has been subject of a tactical measure by the member of the investigating authority, he might as well change his attitude and start bluffing, that would deliberately mislead the authority and cause additional work to the authority.

It is advisory to make a plan prior to the interrogation. It is recommended to prepare a memorial-like plan contrary to merely theoretically defined line of ideas. Laying down the ideas only in the mind is usually acceptable from interrogators of exhaustive experience, however, several external inducements may effect such mental objectives, which may cause that previously planned questions will pass into oblivion. Likely, relevant information announced during the comprehensive presentation of the interrogated person might have such external impact on the interrogator, driving the officer to define new questions. Due to any new information or to the questions of the interrogated person, the questions defined during the preparatory process might be deleted or forgotten, regardless of the fact if the suspect was cooperative and the interrogation has taken place in a non-confrontational situation. An eventual conflict or an infirm momentum of the interrogation may cause further problems as well, therefore, is is recommended to make a memo-like plan before the hearing.

Sadly, experience proves that in most cases the investigator has not time to prepare for the pursue of the tactical bluff before the interrogation, as he has to improvise and conduct the measure of the tactical bluff in the very moment during the interview. The detective has to address the questions to the interrogated person in reflection of the new information, provided to clarify the emerging information knowledge. Answers lay in the establishment of a situation or in the wording of questions, until the importance of such measures remains undetected by the interrogated person, therefore his responses shall confirm or exclude his preceding statements.

In case preliminary preparation for the conduct of the tactical bluff is possible, it is recommended to study both the person to be interrogated and also the criminal case itself (available records of the investigation). Furthermore, information collected during the covert intelligence gathering may also serve as a basis of preparation.

It is also considerable, that if the suspect gains knowledge of the tactical bluff, the authority shall loos its credibility and the previous disposition to cooperate may decline.[4] If a defense attorney is present at the investigative measure, there is much higher chance of de-conspiracy for a weakly structured tactical bluff. The attorney may recognise the signs of tactical bluff, he may draw consequences from the investigator's conduct, nevertheless, on the other hand, it must also be taken into consideration that usually all details of facts are only known to the suspect, so on these grounds in certain cases, whereas the suspect is the actual perpetrator, most probably only he will react to the tactical bluff, while the defense attorney is unlikely to recognise the tactical bluff.

Conduct of the tactical bluff

As one of the tactical instruments, tactical bluff plays a significant role in the combat against organised crime. So tactical bluffs must be adequately chosen and may not be conducted at any prize, since even in case of a confession, all other evidentiary means

[4] In most cases, the members of criminal organisations are already 'tried' criminals who usually despise police officers event at the very beginning of the interrogation and they intend to thwart the procedure. Consequently, in such cases authorities shall not loose credibility if the suspect gains knowledge of the tactical bluff.

must be acquainted. On the other hand, and especially in priority cases, special emphasis must be taken in order to avoid measures of taking testimonies by breaching evidentiary prohibitions.[5] (See more in Vári, 2018: 129-140, 133) In case of inappropriate conditions, other tactical measures and methods can also be applied, as, for example, the tactic of presenting the evidence (first, the less important evidence should be revealed, then the rest if it does not endanger the investigation).

Tactical bluffing may be conducted verbally, in the course of a conversation or in the form of questions, or, in other cases, by the creation of a certain situation, whereas the person subject to interrogation remains unaware of the objectives and significance of the measure.

A crook was taking over money by issuing fake vouchers for years. During the investigation, only three persons were heard as witnesses, but also, they handed over the receipts to the authority. As a start, the inspector show only one of the receipts to the suspect who maintained a negative attitude, then he turned to show the second and later the third one, further on, he placed a bunch of papers underneath the real vouchers, suggesting that the he has at least 10-15 receipts, implying the number of victims as well. Seeing the stock of documents, the suspect told the names of victims the investigator did not even know about. The inspector pursued to apply the tactical bluff in line with the gradual showing up of the evidence, which proved to be conductive to the success of the method (Toth, 2004: 880) The inspector did not state that any of the invoices laid down on the table were given to the victims by the suspect. The suspect could only presume, that he issued them, so he revealed further transfer of invoices the authority had no information of.

Tactical bluffing may be conducted verbally, in the course of a conversation or in the form of questions, or, in other cases, by the creation of a certain situation, whereas the the person subject to interrogation remains unaware of the objectives and significance of the measure.

Following the structure of a conversation-based (question-based) tactical bluff, and building the tactics on the available data and the suspicion he believed to be true, after the confession of the person who has been preparing forged administrative documents (suspect), the interrogator told the suspect that the quantity of the blank sheets of papers found and seized at the search conducted at his apartment presume the preparation of thousands of forged documents (e.g. certificates, diplomas) upon order.

The presumption is based on valid data, since the seized items (clues) and the audio recordings of the interception actually confirm the assumption. Then the interrogator asked the suspect about the number of the forged documents he had prepared in the past years. The suspect did not think much before he would answer the question, he did not realise the significance of the situation (question), because he could only think of the mentioned clues. So, the suspect answered, that he forged only a few hundred of documents with his associates, but not thousands of them, then he recalled, that it was around 563 cases, and added that that he actually kept a list on a pendrive, that can be found in the table drawer in his apartment.[6] The detective's questioning method was

[5] Factual persuading of the authority related to its own version of conviction very often leads to unlawful evidentiary measures, especially if confirmation of such version is only possible through the breach of procedural regulations.

[6] The authority gained knowledge that the target person (later suspect) has prepared fake documents with his associates upon order. During the secret intelligence gathering approximately 100 persons ordering fake documents were identified. The investigating authority learned, that the suspect has been preparing fake documents for years preceding the preparatory procedure

adequate, he did not mention actual numbers, so he could not influence the suspect, who was only mislead by the question. The clues, the question referring to the forged documents and the situation created an assumption in the suspect that the interrogator has or might have substantive information, to which he has to respond, even more so, he felt compelled to tell the truth. The rules tactical bluff is usually lectured as part of the regulations of interrogation at universities (e.g. the National University of Public Service), whereas the definitions is explained through examples, but sadly, due to the narrow number courses, there is not time for rehearse the use of tactical bluff during the interrogation practice. According to our opinion, tactical bluff can not really be taught (at the interrogation practice), due to the fact that every case is unique and even the case cases of the same sort show differences, but even if its conduct is situation based, its significance can be introduced through examples, moreover, we may draw attention to the fact, how tactical bluff should be eliminated from bluff.

Judges may also use tactical bluff in the session of the court, as shown by the following marvellous example. The indictment stated that the prostitutes working at the brothel run by a family provided sexual services for HUF 2-3000. One of the defendant, a pretty lady denied that she would ask for money for intimacy. She stated that she would only give sexual services if she actually liked a young man, and she would only accept dinner invitations after the event. At the session of the court, the judge asked her, ‘how come, that such a pretty lady would involve in intimate relationships only for a dinner?’. The defendant did not comprehend the focus of the question, so she immediately said that ‘I even got HUF 10000 from men’. It is clear, that the defendant did not reconsider the gist of the question, she could not prepare for the answer and responded at once, then only later did she realise that she slipped and made a confession. The example shows, that tactical bluff is admissible at the court, nevertheless, it also depends on the case and the situation.

According to the above examples, tactical bluff can be applied by the investigator, the detective, the inspector, the prosecutor and by the judge as well. Usually, its conduct is permitted at every offense, however, it has its greatest significance in the investigation of criminal organisations. However, in the course of my research, I have met a detective (interviewee) who said that when using ‘tactical bluff’, ‘we have wored-and-turned the suspect, who confessed’. To my next question the detective shared what he generally meant by tactical bluff, which made it clear for me, that he was thinking of everyday bluff. In case the interrogator addresses a question that includes the statement of an unproved fact, the effected parts of the acquired testimony could be deemed as ‘obtained in other forbidden manner’ as well.

By wrongful conduct of the tactical bluff we may share information, we may influence the suspect, also the course and the result of the investigation thereto.

Prohibition of ‘bluff’ and consequences of the wrongful conduct of tactical bluff

Since they can not be fulfilled, groundless holding out hopes or bluffs addressed to the suspect cause the investigator to loose credibility. Unfounded promises may lead to even more serious consequences in the future, for example, in a new criminal case, the person formerly flattered by baseless promises of a detective is not going to be willing to cooperate

with his associates, but had no information on these clients. The suspect has made an exploratory testimony during the interrogation, however the investigating authority wanted to inspect the criminal offense thoroughly and intended to identify and prosecute all perpetrators, therefore they decided to ask questions and create a situation, yet hiding the actual importance and objective of the procedure from the perpetrator.

anymore. However, intelligence of such source can be crucial in cases when organised criminal groups are preparing, for example, to execute explosions, or in cases when police forces plan to roll up criminal organisations, to identify or check members of the organisation, furthermore, in case of a suspected criminal act, they decide to initiate criminal procedure.

However, suspect may be told, that his testimony may be evaluated as extenuating circumstances by the court.

It does not matter if the officer conducting preliminary investigation had any information about intelligence sources of the given person, if such person has been bullied (by the interrogator) earlier, he shall feel stiffed and will not be willing to cooperate. Therefore, a bluff may effect a latter case of priority as well, so preliminary investigators shall have difficulties to convince the informant to cooperate with the authorities. It may occur, that this very person could be a source of information, that could prevent a more severe criminal offense or the information of the source could save lives.

In case the suspect recognises the tactical bluff, he will possibly resond with a bluff, that is, if not recognised by the officer, shall mislead the investigation. Thus, adequate conduct of tactical bluff is not sufficient enough, but detectives should also recognise the bluffs of the suspect. Bluffing, the aim of the suspect is to make the process of investigation more difficult.

Members of organised criminal groups, usually well tried and slick criminals shall become dubious and start self-checking after the recognition of the tactical bluff, reconsidering whether they are under surveillance, or being intercepted.

Perpetrators may agree to call each-other earlier, time-to-time sharing misleading information, waiting for the reaction of the investigating authority, whether their phones are intercepted or not. During the phone conversation, the suspect may mention (drop a sentence) that the officers might have something in their hands (e.g. they shall soon find the hideaway), so he describes (in a manner to be identified) the location (e.g. certain segment of a forest or a park) where the illicit assets originating from the offense 'are hidden'. Following, the suspect and his associates shall watch the given address. Should police forces appear, they shall know that they are under surveillance, so they shall not use former numbers, acquaintances, they either shall be more careful or may destroy the evidence.

They may also state false information about the opposition, stating, its members have conducted severe criminal actions, or they plan to do so. They are well aware of the fact, that the investigating authority has to check the information, in certain cases, the covert intelligence gathering, or the authority has to initiate a preparatory procedure and use special measures, all based on forged information.

Members of organised criminal groups can disrupt another group's powers, knowing that the other group is also involved in criminal acts, financing its activities from illicit sources, and they also presume, that authorities shall succeed to find substantive data during the strike at the other group. (After the criminal procedure, the criminal organisation delivering information shall take over the other organised criminal group's illegal territories.)

Criminal organisations channel vast amount of false information on trusty and respectable public officers, nevertheless, any and all information must be forwarded to the competent and authorised National Protective Service for further checking.

Any doubts originating in wrongly conducted tactical bluffs may allow the members of the organised criminal groups to spend more time and energy to check whether they are under surveillance or not, furthermore, they shall be even more precautious about the most insignificant details than they were before.

Perpetrators may set a route where they return in vehicles from time to time, or they decide to line up in certain streets, while a third or forth associate stays steady, monitoring and recording the licence plate numbers of the vehicles passing by on the given route. All they have to do is to check the repetitiously appearing licence plate numbers at the given time and route, so they manage to gather the type and licence plate numbers of the vehicles involved in the operation. Upon their surveillance information, they may decide to postpone or to finish the planned criminal action. Furthermore, they may deliberately leave the intercepted communication items at their residence, so even after triangulating the signals the investigating authority can not draw any consequences on their location. When committing the criminal act, the criminal organisation may use new, disposable phones, making seizure of the phones impossible at the search, so the possibility of further data request or verification of acquaintance is eliminated.

According to my opinion, wrongful conduct of a tactical bluff may even influence the assessment of the information gathered during the operation using a covert measure (interception), it may result in false analysis or evaluation of incoming data to a great extent. Inappropriate practice of the tactical bluff may have several negative consequences, especially if the detective is unaware of the suspect’s bluff, furthermore, if he misunderstands the statements heard.

Groups of criminal organisations may attempt to influence the witness, but first, they have to identify the person who gave the testimony. It is also possible, that the defense attorney shall bluff as well, in order to find out the name of the witness, who has asked for separate and confidential treatment of his personal data during the investigation, or is probably the only witness.

Under the umbrella of his bluff, the defense attorney may call the case officer (few days after the interrogation of the suspect) to announce his motion requesting for hearing of a few persons as witnesses. The attorney may also excuse himself for bothering the officer at all, or for too long, stating he would only like to clarify the names he should include in his motion out of the four persons he had mentioned. There is no reason to write the name of the person already interviewed by the officer. The helpful officer, not realising that he had been bullied, hearing the list of names, might as well ask not to enlist the second person in the motion, since he has interviewed the person as a witness.[7]

By these means, the defense attorney has already learned the name of the only witness probably acquainted with the perpetrators, so this person is easy to find.[8] Thereafter, members of the criminal organisation might threaten the witness, who may, under such pressure, change his testimony, undertaking legal consequences (e.g. perjury). After such threat many witnesses tend to change their testimonies in the protection of their families, and ignore the consequences. There is no use of the most fundamental witness protection instruments, namely confidential treatment of personal data of the witness, investigating authorities must step to a higher level of protection, since the witness’s identity has become known to the perpetrators and he has been threatened. In such cases, second level of regulatory witness protection could be personal protection, however, in this case, the third level of protection, that is, declaration of the person a specially protected witness is not

[7] In certain cases bluffs of the defense attorney may conduct the criminal offense of harboring a criminal.

[8] The interrogator did not recognise the aim of questioning.

possible. In the worst case scenario, the witness may be adopted in the witness protection program in accordance with the statutory provisions. In order to protect the witness, investigating authorities must be aware of the regulatory provisions of witness protection and the related tactical recommendations for certain investigative measures.

The interrogator's bluffing that would hinder human dignity of the person subject to interrogation (e.g. the suspect's wife, making her believe, that she has been cheated by her husband) is unacceptable. The only aim of the interrogator's bluff is to force out an incriminating testimony of the wife to her husband.

Conclusions

Conclusively, we may state that tactical bluffs must be based on available data, the assumptions must be confirmed, however, it is not recommended to use all data to avoid sharing information with the suspect in case of unsuccessful tactical bluffing, because it may mislead the investigation. In case we do not use all data we have, even in case of inefficiency, we may use other tactical measures.

Tactical bluff must have a clear objective, same as for prying or probing. Thus the investigating authority's queries can not be accidental, its intention is to either verify or exclude its own assumptions, based on factual data. Even partial success should be awarded, since we may gain data to continue the investigation by other measures (Toth, 1980: 20.) Even in case of successful conduct of tactical bluff control is a must, similarly to prying or probing, nonetheless, there is always a doubt whether the confession is truthful or the obtained data is eligible for the detection of further source of evidence or not.

Certain criminalists intend to believe, that as known types of data gathering, instruments of mass communication (e.g. media: newspapers, internet, television) could be involved in the conduct of tactical bluff, in order to motivate the suspect to act. The scientific field of pragmatism may also support detectives, analysing presuppositions, implications, discursive implicatures, direct and indirect verbal activities and shum languages, that can support parts of tactical bluff in assumption, indication and aim. (See more in: Ürmösné, 2014., 2018) As another tactical element and data gathering method, the tool of observation of persons, items, objects, locations and events should be involved. In the course of direct observation, the investigating authority has the opportunity to conduct the measure and to obtain evidentiary measures.

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THE PHENOMENON OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN THE INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN DOCUMENTS

Anca IUHAS *

Abstract. *Trafficking in human beings is considered to be the modern slavery. In the last few decades, it has spread and is continuing to spread all across the world due to its high-demand character and also due to the complex transborder network of organised crime working underground. In order to counteract this phenomenon, there needs to be a similarly complex network of international actors, such as international organisations, states, NGOs and all the other actors involved, which intensively and efficiently cooperate in order to prevent THB, prosecute offenders and protect victims. Most counter trafficking efforts have accelerated after 2000, when the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children was adopted. Therefore, in the area of legal measures, much has been done, but in the area of gathering data, prosecution of offenders and protection and assistance of victims there is still much to be done. This article will make a general overview of the most important EU documents issued in the area of counter trafficking, in addition to the UN Protocol, assessing the legal and policy framework that is already in place in the EU concerning this aspect.*

Keywords: *trafficking in human beings (THB), counter-trafficking, security governance system, prevention, prosecution, law enforcement, protection of victims, cooperation, international legislation, transnational organised crime, child-sensitive approach*

Definition

Trafficking in human beings (THB) is a serious human rights violation, which has been increasing year after year not only within the European Union, but worldwide, as well, as a result of its demand-driven character. It is deemed as being a highly profitable form of transnational organised crime.

Several European, as well as international documents have defined this phenomenon and tried to establish strategies to combat it. The phenomenon of human trafficking is considered by many researchers as spreading more rapidly and more efficiently than counter-trafficking efforts and, therefore, major international and regional organisations, such as UN, IOM, UNODC, EU, have started to define counter-trafficking as one of their major priorities in the last few years. In spite of all concerted endeavours, there still remains much to do, and the main issue is that gathering information in the field and setting up accurate statistics to start from is an extremely challenging task, considering that organised crime is largely an underground activity, gradually moving their operational centres in the cyber space and thus being even harder to detect.

Trafficking in human beings is defined as a crime against human rights in the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*. Mention of this is made in Title 1

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on *Dignity*, Article 5 – *Prohibition of slavery and forced labour*: „1. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; 2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour; 3. Trafficking in human beings is prohibited" (*Charter of Fundamental Rights…*, 2012:9).

Furthermore, an international definition of human trafficking was formulated by the United Nations in ***Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*** (hence *the Protocol*), which was adopted in November 2000. In Article 3 of this Protocol, "trafficking in persons" is defined as (*UN Protocol*, 2000:2):

"(a) the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;"

Also, the concept of "consent" is clearly mentioned, as stated in point b) of the same article (*UN Protocol*, 2000:2):

"The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used"

The Protocol also adopts a child-sensitive approach, setting a higher standard for cases where children have been trafficked (*UN Protocol*, 2000:2).

"(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) «Child» shall mean any person under eighteen years of age."

The European Commission's document entitled *Working together to address trafficking in human beings: key concepts in a nutshell* defines other important concepts of THB, as they are already defined in the most important European and international documents, with the aim of coordinating and consolidating the EU's response against trafficking in human beings, as well as providing the conceptual clarity that is necessary for concrete policies, operational action and funding allocations (*Working together to address trafficking in human beings*, 2018).

Global and Regional Action Against THB

The Protocol was the result of a series of meetings and conventions where international organisations tried to understand the phenomenon of THB and find sustainable solutions to combat it. After the summit meeting of G7 held in Naples in July 1994, focusing on combating organized transnational crime, the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan against Organized Transnational Crime was approved by the UN assembly in 2000, which expresses the decision of the participating countries to cooperate against transnational organised crime. The Committee convened at the United Nations in Vienna eleven times and a number of 120 countriesparticipated in the negotiations together with several NGOs (Ollus, 20-21).

The Protocol was adopted by resolution A/RES/55/25 of 15 November 2000 at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. It was opened for signature in December 2000 in Palermo, Italy and came into force in 2003. Currently (as of May 2020) there are 176 parties and 164 signatures or ratificationsof the Protocol, with more than 130 countries having enacted national legislations that criminalises THB (*United Nations Treaty Collection,* 2000:1; Chamie, 2015:83). It was one of the protocols attached to the *Convention against Transnational Organised Crime* (UN TOCC), and it is the only international legal instrument criminalising human trafficking in all its forms of exploitation. The main focus of the convention was collaboration with the aim of combating organised crime in all its forms. Before this Protocol, the United Nations had adopted in 1949 another document called *Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others*, which came into force in 1951. This was the first legally-binding instrument; however, only 66 countries ratified it, as many countries refused to criminalize prostitution at that time. As noted, there was a gap of 51 years between the adoption of these two legally binding instruments focusing on trafficking in human beings (Kangaspunta, 2020; Bosco, Luda di Cortemiglia, Serojitdinov, 2009:36; Mitsilegas, 2003:76-77).

The 2000 UN Protocol has three main objectives: 1) to **prevent** and **combat** trafficking in human beings, especially that of women and children; 2) to **protect** and **assist** victims of trafficking, giving full respect for their human rights; and 3) to **promote cooperation** among States in order to meet these objectives (La Strada Documentation Center About Human Trafficking, 2020). Currently, the UN Protocol is ratified by all Member States of the European Union, as well as the EU.

The European Union has also enacted a legally-binding document tackling the issue of THB, namely *Directive of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA (Directive 2011/36/EU)*, where the **prevention** and the **combat** of trafficking in human beings are clearly defined as a priority for the Union and the Member States (Directive 2011/36/EU, 2011: Recital 1).

Directive 2011/36/EU, also known as *The Anti-Trafficking Directive*, is one of the most important points of reference in the area of THB. Its main objectives are the **prosecution** of this crime, the **protection** of victims, **prevention** and **partnership** in the area of THB, and contains minimum rules concerning the definition of criminal offences, including a list of forms of exploitation, such as prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, including begging, slavery and similar practices, the exploitation of criminal activities and the removal of organs. The Directive clearly mentions that this list is a non-exhaustive one and that other forms of exploitation can take place, some of which are mentioned as additional forms of exploitation in some of the Member States'laws, such as trafficking for forced marriage, pornography or the extraction of human tissue (*Working together to address trafficking in human beings*, 2018).

As A. Scherer and W. Helmut note in their assessment of *Directive 2011/36/EU*, the European Parliament played an important role in drafting the *Directive* by insisting on the comprehensive, holistic and human rights approach, focusing on the protection of the victims. The authors' point of view is that the Directive is *"indeed already very sound but that it needs to be applied in practice"* (Scherer, Helmut, 2016:10-25).

Some of the important outcomes of the Directive have been the function of EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator (EU ATC), initially provided for by *the Stockholm Programme* (which defined the EU priorities for the area of justice, freedom and security for the period 2010-14) and further elaborated by the Directive 2011/36/EU, and the adoption in 2012 of ***the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016*** by the Commission. The strategy was elaborated to support the transposition andimplementation of *Directive 2011/36/EU*, support the work done by governments, international organisations and civil society in the EU and third countries. The implementation of the strategy is monitored by the EU ATC, with a focus on a few priorities: identifying, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking; accelerating prevention and prosecution of traffickers, as well as coordination and cooperation among key actors and policy coherence and increasing awareness of and effective response to all issues concerning any type of trafficking in human beings*”* (Scherer, Helmut, 2016:10-25).

Cooperation in these areas should be developed between the Member States of the European Union, as well as with third countries, other international organisations and with the civil society. This purpose was stated by the Council of the European Union in December 2005, in the ***Strategy for the External Dimension of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)*** (*A Strategy for the External Dimension of JHA*, 2005), which called for action-oriented papers (AOPs). As a result, the ***Action-Oriented Paper on strengthening the EU external dimension on action against trafficking in human beings; Towards Global EU Action against Trafficking in Human Beings*** (*Action-Oriented Paper*, 2009)was published in 2009, bringing into focus the need of political dialogue and partnerships with third countries, advocacy at various UN fora, the composition of a plan of action on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing THB, redefinition of legislation in the area of THB creating a common language in the constitutions of the Member States, the establishment of a specific coordination mechanism at EU level, involving Member States, the Commission, EU agencies and other key stakeholders (and to this end, the setting up of the informal EU Network of National Rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms), the allocation of more funds to the implementations of measures against THB and other secondary measures.

As illustrated above, the United Nations has had a leading role in defining the concept of THB and drafting directions for future action in this area. The European Union has followed suit, working to implement these directions within the territory of its Member States, as well as to build partnerships with countries outside the EU. However, it must be mentioned, in this context, that international and regional organisations, as well as states, are not the only ones which have shaped the legal framework concerning THB and taken action against it. Considering that organized crime, and therefore THB, are global issues, having crossed borders worldwide, this is no longer an aspect that states or international organisations alone can tackle. Rather, it is a multifaceted issue that needs to be tackled by numerous actors of the global community, including the civil society, which has started to have an increasingly important role in the fight against THB.

This point of view is illustrated by Cornelius Friesendorf in his article *Pathologies of Security Governance: Efforts Against Human Trafficking in Europe*, where he states that THB is an issue that can only be solved within a security governance system, where all actors need to efficiently cooperate in order to see any positive results. According to him, there are five governance approaches, to which different activities and actors pertain and all of them should share information and best practices, exchange databases and join efforts according to their specific area of expertise. The five approaches identified by Friesendorf are: legal measures, prosecution, protection, prevention in countries of origin and prevention in countries of destination. For each of these approaches there are several actors, some of which tackle two or more of these approaches at the same time. For example, in the area of prosecution, with main activities such as arrest of traffickers, zero-tolerance policies, asset seizure and forfeiture, capacity-building, creation of databases, witness protection programmes, border controls, and anti-corruption efforts, the main actors are governments, IOs and international authorities. In comparison, NGOs tackle at the same time the areas of legal measures, protection of victims and prevention in the countries of origin and destination. Friesendorf advocates for a more balanced, as well as a better networked governance in the area of counter-trafficking (Friesendorf, 2007: 379-402).

This perspective is shared by Marco Gramegna in his article *Human Trafficking: Policy Needs and Political Responses*, who highlights the fact that action undertaken by private and public institutions against THB has not been comprehensive of coherent, nor has there been good coordination among the actors involved. The real need, acording to Gramegna, is a better synchronisation between policy-making and implementation, with an extra focus on policy assessment and monitoring of anti-trafficking activities (Gramegna, 2008: 63).

Joseph Chamie, in *Human Trafficking: A Serious Challenge to Humanity*, notes that it is only since 2000, after the UN Protocol, that the UN Member States have joined efforts decisively to confront the phenomenon of THB in all its forms globally. He mentions four important priorities where the international community should cooperate: *„a) undertake quantitative research as well as in-depth qualitative studies; b) raise public understanding and awareness of human trafficking's criminal nature; c) encourage needed changes in norms, attitudes and behaviour towards human trafficking in many parts of the world; and d) pursue and prosecute human traffickers"* (Chamie, 2015:82).

Other European Documents Tackling the Issue of THB

Concerning the dimension of legal measures against THB, the European Union has intensified its efforts by drafting several documents regarding this area, with the purpose of implementing them.

Besides *Directive 2011/36/EU*, another useful EU document is the *EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance*,where reference is made to the most important international instruments and mechanisms in the fight against THB created between 2012 and 2016 (*EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance*, 2017). It provides an overview of the work carried out during this period on the basis of two important legal and policy documents of the EU concerning trafficking in human beings, namely: the *Anti-trafficking Directive* and the *EU Strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings 2012-2016.*

Even if it is non-exhaustive, *EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance* is a useful document comprising the main instruments and tools delivered during those five years in the area of anti-trafficking in human beings. It is all the more useful as it includes links to other official documents and mechanisms referring to this subject. All these instruments are available to the public, with the exception of the EU Anti-Trafficking Website. They are organized in sections, which provides for a useful structure when attempting to understand the multiple tools available in the area of preventing and combating THB.

To give just a short description, the document organizes all tools in sections such as the EU Legal Framework (where *Directive 2011/36/EU* is included) the EU Policy Framework (where the *EU Strategy towards the Eradication of THB 2012-16* and *The External Dimension of THB* are included), Creative Synergies (such as the EU Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanism, the EU Civil Society Platform against THB, EU agencies fighting THB, such as CEPOL, Eurojust, Europol, EASO, EIGE, FRA and Frontex), Statistical Data, Guidelines and Helpbooks (such as *Guidelines for the Identification of Victims*, *EU Rights of Victims of THB*), relevant publications (such as *Eurojust Action Plan against THB 2012-2016*, *'European Union Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) 2017*, *EUROPOL Situation Report* and *EUROPOL*

THB Financial Business Model). A complete list of countertrafficking instruments and mechanisms found in this document can be found in *Annex 2* (*EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance*, 2017).

Another similar document was issued on the period comprised between 2017-2019, entitled *EU anti-trafficking action 2017-2019: At a glance*, which is summary of the main developments and updates made after year 2017. Annex 3 shows a complete list of all these mechanisms and instruments (*EU anti-trafficking action 2017-2019*, 2019).

One of the documents issued after 2016 was the European Commission Communication ***EU Strategy 2012-2016 towards the Eradication of Trafficking of Human Beings***, whichwas aimed at further developing a coherent response to trafficking involving all instruments available to the EU. The main priority of the Strategy is, as stated, *"to focus on concrete measures that will support the transposition and implementation of Directive 2011/36/EU, bring added value and complement the work done by governments, international organisations and civil society in the EU and third countries*". The Strategy highlights that Member States will be deemed responsible for addresing trafficking in human beings, while the European Commission will seek to help them better accomplish this purpose. Some of the most important obligations of Member States are mentioned – recruitment, investigation, prosecution, protection of human rights, and providing assistance to victims – as well as the five priorities (mentioned above: see page 3) that the European Commision purposed to implement during 2014-2018 (*EU Strategy 2012-2016*, 2013).

The Commission made up a report on how the Strategy was implemented by the Member States and has published its conclusions in ***Report from theCommission to the European Parliament and the Council Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings*** (2016:10-14). Some of the main problems encountered by the Member States was measuring the results and impact of the countertrafficking measures, as few of them evaluated their national strategies and plans or developed indicators. The report identified four areas of concern where progress was evaluated and future indications were outlined.

First, in the area of criminal law, investigation and prosecution, the Commission's conclusions were that prosecutions and convictions are unusually few, which is evidence that Member States are not using enough efficient investigative tools. Moreover, victims are refused assisstance at police stations and misidentified as offenders, on the one hand, and Member States have difficulty seizing and confiscating criminal proceeds, as they are hard to detect, on the other hand. However, some progress has been noticed as regrads the organisation of joint investigative teams and the cross-border cooperation in fighting THB (*Report from theCommission*, 2016:10-11).

In the area of identification, protection and assistance, further problems have been noticed: there are few identified victims, and those who have been identified are not treated according to their rights during criminal proceedings; child-sensitive measures have not been applied as requested; and there are still limited solutions for male victims of trafficking. However, there is some progress made by the Member States in developing the National Referral Mechanisms (NRMs) that are to coordinate actors involved in the identification, assistance, protection and reintegration of victims, as by 2016, over half of the Member States had formalised their NRMs. In the area of prevention, actions such as training of frontline staff and awareness-raising have been reported by the Member States, but there is little information on the impact of such actions. And lastly, in the area of financial support to address THB and implement legal obligations there is still less progress made, as resources available for countertraffciking measures have been limited. The NGOs, and not state or local authorities, have been providing funds for assisting victims of trafficking until recently (*Report from theCommission*, 2016:10-11).

Based on what had been established in *Directive 2011/36/EU*,as well as *the EU Strategy 2012-2016*, and using feedback from the 2016 Report, in December 2017 the European Commission adopted a set of priorities to step up EU efforts against trafficking in human beings (*the 2017 Communication*). These priorities are: a) Disrupting the business model and untangling the trafficking chain; b) Provide better access to and realise the rights for the victims of trafficking; and c) Intensify a coordinated and consolidated response both within and outside the EU. The 2017 *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Reporting on the Follow-Up to the EU Strategy Towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings and Identifying Further Concrete Actions* outlines the fact that trafficking in human beings is a far more complet phenomenon than it has been deemed until now and that Member States should accelerate their efforts to use all the tools given to them in order to conter THB. Also, mention is made that the Commission will allocate more funds to support all the priorities established in the *Communication* (*Communication from the Commission*, 2017:8-9).

Conclusion

Much has been done in the area of counter-trafficking, especially by the United Nations and other international organisations and by the European Union, but still much more is left to be done, as trafficking in human beings is spreading at a much faster pace than it is being combated, with consequences in numerous aspects of life, family and the wider community. As researchers have observed, one of the main tools to effectively combat this phenomenon in this era of globalisation will be intense cooperation and collaboration between a wide range of actors at multiple levels, such as: law enforcement, border management, labour, gender, children’s rights, data collection and external relations. As THB is a worldwide phenomenon with multifaceted impacts, it should be tackled with at a globalized level, following a global governance pattern, in order to avoid duplication of measures and gain more effectiveness. Considering all these aspects, it seems that counter-trafficking is still just at the beginning of a long process of hard work and intense collaboration between all actors determined to see human trafficking come to an end.

ANNEX 1

Eu's Compendium of the Main Instruments in the Fight Against THB
The table below shows all official documents referred to in Directive 2011/36/EU as the most important tools that have helped to put together the Directive.

DIRECTIVE 2011/36/EU
OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA

1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Geneva Convention)
1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
1990 Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime,
2000 Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and the Protocols thereto
2000 United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and
2001 Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA of 15 March 2001 on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings - OJ L 82, 22.3.2001
2001 Council Framework Decision 2001/500/JHA of 26 June 2001 on money laundering, the identification, tracing, freezing, seizing and confiscation of instrumentalities and the proceeds of crime - OJ L 182, 5.7.2001
2001 Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA (replaced),
2002 Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA of 13 June 2002 on the European arrest warrant and the surrender procedures between Member States - OJ L 190, 18.7.2002
2002 Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA of 19 July 2002 on combating trafficking in human beings - OJ L 203, 1.8.2002
2002 Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA
2002 Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA (replaced)
2003 Interinstitutional Agreement on better law-making - OJ C 321, 31.12.2003
2004 Council Directive 2004/81/EC of 29 April 2004 on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration, who cooperate with the competent authorities - OJ L 261, 6.8.2004
2004 Council Directive 2004/81/EC of 29 April 2004 on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration, who cooperate with the competent authorities - OJ L 261, 6.8.2004
2004 Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the rights of the citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States - OJ L 158, 30.4.2004
2005 Council Framework Decision 2005/212/JHA of 24 February 2005 on Confiscation of Crime-Related Proceeds, Instrumentalities and Property - OJ L 68, 15.3.2005
2005 Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
2005 EU Plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings - OJ C 311, 9.12.2005
2008 Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA of 24 October 2008 on the fight against organised crime - OJ L 300, 11.11.2008
2009 'Action-oriented Paper on strengthening the Union external dimension on action against trafficking in human beings; Towards global EU action against trafficking in human beings' approved by the Council on 30 November 2009.
2009 Council Conclusions on establishing an informal EU Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms on Trafficking in Human Beings of 4 June 2009.
2009 Council Framework Decision 2009/948/JHA of 30 November 2009 on prevention and settlement of conflict of jurisdiction in criminal proceedings - OJ L 328, 15.12.2009
2009 Directive 2009/52/EC Directive 2009/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 providing for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals - OJ L 168, 30.6.2009, p. 24–32.
2009 Directive 2009/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 providing for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third-country

nationals - OJ L 168, 30.6.2009

2010 Stockholm Programme — An open and secure Europe serving and protecting citizens - OJ C 115, 4.5.2010

Protocol on the position of Denmark - OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, p. 299–303

Protocol on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland - OJ C 202, 7.6.2016, p. 295–297

Protocol on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland in respect of the area of freedom, security and justice - OJ C 202, 7.6.2016, p. 295–297

Table 1. *Documents referred to in the Directive 2011/36/EU*

ANNEX 2

The table below shows all official documents referred to in the document *EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance* as the most important instruments and mechanisms to refer to in the fight against THB.

"*EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance*"	
Types of tools and mechanisms	**Documents & mechanisms and their issuing institutions**
EU Legal Framework	**EU Anti-trafficking Directive 2011/36/EU** *European Parliament and Council, April 2011* **Progress Report** *EuropeanCommission, May 2016* **'Transposition' Report** *European Commission, December 2016* **'Users' Report** *European Commission, December 2016*
EU Policy Framework	**EU Strategy towards the Eradication of THB 2012-16** *European Commission, February 2013* **Mid-term Report** *European Commission, October 2014* **The External Dimension of THB**
Creating Synergies	**EU Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms** **EU Civil Society Platform against THB** **EU Agencies** **Funding**
Studies as Deliverables of the EU Strategy	**Comprehensive Policy Review of Anti-trafficking Projects Funded by the European Commission** *European Commission, September 2016* **The Gender Dimension of Trafficking in Human Beings** *European Commission, 2016* **High-risk Groups for Trafficking in Human Beings** *European Commission, 2015* **Case-law on Trafficking for the Purpose of Labour Exploitation** *European Commission, 2015* **Prevention Initiatives on Trafficking in Human Beings** *European Commission, 2015* **Regulation of Labour Market Intermediaries and the Role of Social Partners in Preventing Trafficking of Labour** *Eurofound, April 2016*
Statistical data collection	**Statistical Working Papers on Trafficking in Human beings** *Eurostat, 2013 and 2015*
Guidelines and Handbooks	**Handbook on Guardianship** *European Commission and EU Fundamental Rights Agency, June 2014* **Guidelines for the Identification of Victims** *European Commission, September 2013* **EU Rights of Victims of THB** *European Commission, 2013*

Selected Publications	**Eurojust Action Plan against THB 2012-2016** *Eurojust, January 2017* **SOCTA 2017** *EUROPOL, 2017* **EUROPOL Situation Report** *EUROPOL, February 2016* **EUROPOL THB Financial Business Model** *EUROPOL, July 2015* **Identification of Victims of THB in International Protection and Forced Return Procedures** *European Migration Network, March 2014*
EU Anti-trafficking Day	
The EU Anti-trafficking Website	

Table 2: *Main tools and mechanisms delivered by the EU institutions and agencies between 2012-2016 in the area of THB, as shown in the document "EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance"*

ANNEX 3

The table below shows all official documents referred to in the document *EU anti-trafficking action 2017-2019 at a glance* as the most important instruments and mechanisms to refer to in the fight against THB, starting from 2017 and completing the previous document *EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance*.

***"EU anti-trafficking action 2017-2019:* At a glance"**	
Types of tools and mechanisms	**Documents & mechanisms and their issuing institutions**
EU Legal and Policy Framework	**EU Anti-trafficking Directive 2011/36/EU** *European Parliament and Council, April 2011* **Second Progress Report** *EuropeanCommission, December 2018* **2017 Communication stepping up EU action to address trafficking in human beings** *European Commission, 2017* **Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the EU** *European Commission, 2018* **Key concepts in a nutshell** *European Commission*
A coordinated and coherent response to Trafficking in Human Beings	**EU Network of National Rapporteurs and Equivalent Mechanisms** **EU Civil society Platform and ePlatform against trafficking in human beings** *9 February, 2015* **EU Agencies working together against THB** **Commission Inter-service Group on THB** **European Parliament** **International partners**
Gender specificity	**Gender-specific measures in anti-trafficking actions Report** *European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and European Commission, 2018*
Child trafficking	**Criminal networks involved in the trafficking and exploitation of underage victims in the European Union Report** *Europol, 2018* **Children deprived of parental care found in an EU Member State other than their own - A guide to enhance child protection focusing on victims of trafficking** *European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and European Commission, 2019* **Funding matching EU priorities and identified patterns**
Outreach	**EU Anti-trafficking Day**

The EU Anti-trafficking Website

Table 3: *Main tools and mechanisms delivered by the EU institutions and agencies between 2017-2019 in the area of THB, as shown in the document "EU anti-trafficking action 2017-2019: At a glance"*

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VI. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PANDEMIC CRISIS

COVID-19: SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES FOR THE ROMANIAN ECONOMY

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Gabriela-Victoria ȚEPUȘ**

Abstract. *The crisis generated by Covid-19 is universal, affecting the world not only from a health perspective, but also from a socio-economic one. While facing an unmatched situation, governments have reacted differently in order to bolster their economies. This article deals with the support established by the Government of Romania for businesses. The analysis includes three major instruments: IMM Invest, Emergency Situations Certificate and technical unemployment. Furthermore, a number of other secondary measures along with the prepared support for economic recovery are mentioned. The study relies on official data communicated by the authorities, on petitions submitted to ministries, on press information, and on the collection and examination of statistics. How these programmes were carried out during the state of emergency, what immediate effects they had and what else should Romanian entrepreneurs expect are key questions to which this article provides answers. Technical unemployment was a necessary measure, taken in due time and prolonged long enough, but once halted, it can generate the termination of many employment contracts. The Emergency Situations Certificates, due to the low number of requests, suggest the fact that this instrument was overwhelmed by the situation. Their importance can rise during the period of economic invigoration if there will be non-reimbursable support provided on its basis. Last but not least, the IMM Programme, during its first weeks of existence, generated nine times more rejected than approved applications and offers the public space contradictory data depending on its source. In these conditions, companies are looking forward to economic recovery measures.*

Keywords: *Coronavirus, COVID-19, IMM INVEST Romania, technical unemployment, Emergency Situations Certificate*

1. Introduction

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) started at the end of 2019 from the Chinese region of Wuhan (WHO Timeline - COVID-19, 2020), spreading until May 2020 to 2012 countries and territories (Coronavirus Update (Live): Worldometer, 2020). Europe and EU states have been affected by the pandemic starting with February, and the authorities' responses have been, with few exceptions, quite similar. The most common measures were: the establishment of the state of emergency, social distancing, prohibiting events and public gatherings, closing up schools and forbidding some economic activities (Deutsche Welle (DW), 2020). In Romania, preventive measures were generally more severe compared to the

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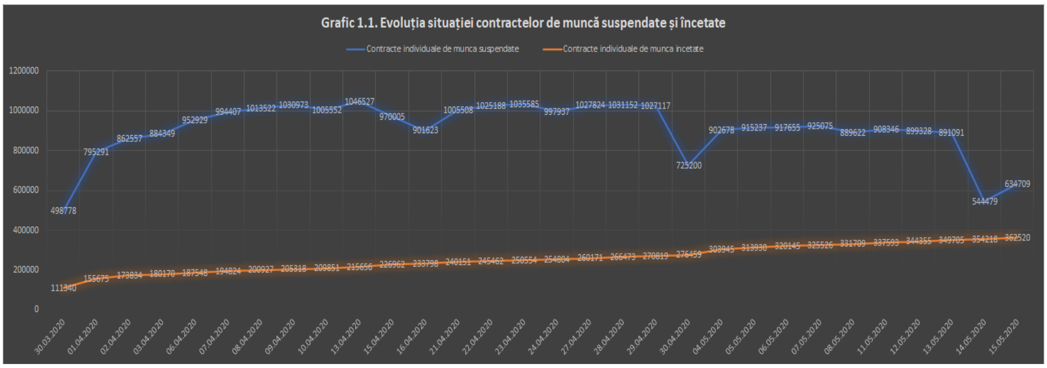
rest of the continent.In addition to all the problems and damages caused by the new coronavirus regarding health, there is also an incommensurable number of economic risks and losses. Without comparing the effects of the health crisis and the effects of an eventual economic crisis, the present study aims to analyze the series of measures taken by the Government of Romania between March- May, 15^{th}, 2020, namely the state of emergency, in order to support the economy, respectively to review the measures proposed for the restart of activities or the economic revival that will follow the state of emergency.

The measures to be analyzed are those regarding technical unemployment, emergency situations certificates and IMM Invest. At the same time, there will be mentions about state digitalization measures, postponement of bank loans, of rents and utilities, bonuses for timely tax payments, VAT refund with subsequent control and paid leave for one of the parents. The study proposes a historical-interpretative approach of the subject, using descriptive statistics and document analysis as qualitative methods for data examination.

2. Tehnical Unemployment

The first confirmed case of coronavirus on national territory was announced on February 26, preceding the first legislative action from March 6, the GSTSCBIC Decision number 6 (Grupului de suport tehnico-științific privind gestionarea bolilor în altcontagioase pe teritoriul României). Starting with March 16, Romania enters the state of emergency for a period of 30 days according to the Decree of the President of Romania regarding the establishment of the state of emergency on the Romanian territory, followed by an additional time of 30 days. Measures of utmost urgency with gradual applicability have imposed the temporary closure of some restaurants, hotels, cafés, clubs, casinos, association headquarters and other public spaces (Decret al PreședinteluiRomâniei nr. 195/16). These sectors were not the only ones affected by the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the first solutions proposed by the Government of Romania to support the economy surfaced on March 21, when Ordinance no. 30/2020 was published, dealing with the establishment of social protection measures in the context of the epidemiological situation determined by the spread of the SARS-CoV-2, which was later simplified through OUG no. 32/2020. Thus, the Government has enacted the conditions for **claiming technical unemployment** and regulated the online submission of necessary documents for social benefits during the state of emergency. Romanian companies were offered the possibility that, during the state of emergency, their employees benefit from technical unemployment regardless of the field of activity in which case, according to the employer's affidavit, the activity was reduced or partially interrupted during the state of emergency as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic. The allowance which benefits the employees is borne by the unemployment insurance budget, but the amount cannot exceed 75% of average gross earnings provided in the Law on state social insurance budget no. 6/2020 (Ordonanța de urgență 32 din 26.03.2020). Therefore, technical unemployment can take two shapes. The first one is related to partial or total interruption of business activity as resulted from decisions taken by the authorities in the COVID context (eg. shutting down restaurants), while the second one refers to those types of commercial societies which have recorded a decrease in revenue, not in turnover, in March as compared to the average of January, Frebruary respectively. It's noteworthy that this type of facility is available to categories of beneficiaries other than limited liability legal entities, such as self-employed person, copyright or professional contracts.

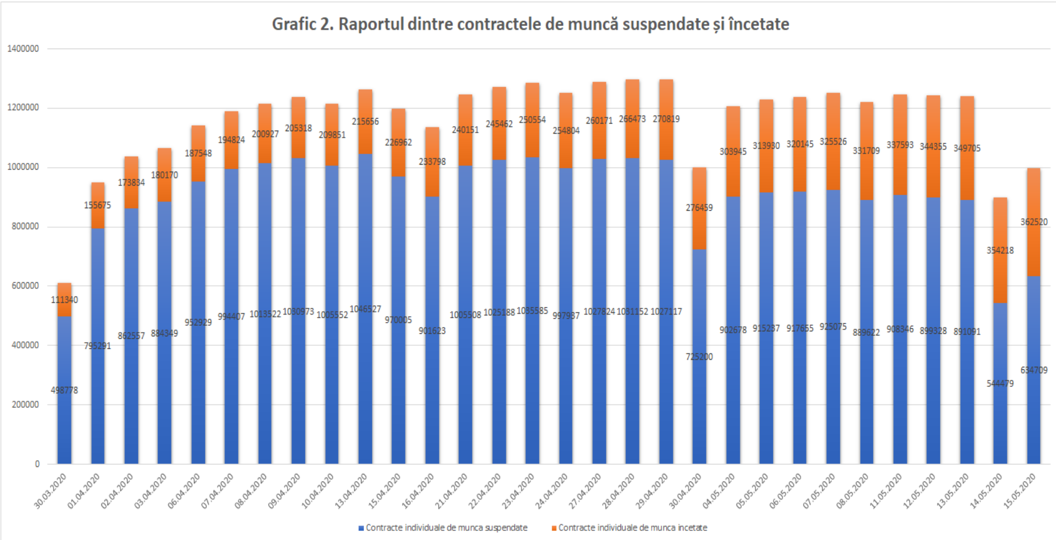
We might say that the relatively new situation of technical unemployment was addressed briefly in the Labor Code, the only reference being presented in article 52 para. (1) lit.c), according to which the individual labor contract is suspended at the initiative of the employer in case of interruption or temporary reduction of activity, without the termination of employment, for economic, technological, structural or similar reasons (art. 52 para. (1) lit. c.CodulMuncii).One interesting and noteworthy aspect for employers is that in order to suspend labor contracts there is no need for the employee's agreement.The two ordinances which regulate the method of granting technical unemployment also seem to have occurred with shortcomings, from a vague concept such as „financial capacity to pay all salaries", to using the financial indicator- revenue- in order to justify the reduction of activity, where there might be revenue from receivables including the previous year. In any case, as it was proposed, the support grantedrepresented for some companies an air bubble which was more than necessary, but certain warnings and recommendations articulate a serious analysis for the necessity of these benefits. To exemplify these mentions, we will portray two of the employers who represent companies affected differently by the pandemic, namely the Federation of Employers of Construction Companies (FPCS) and the Federation of Employers of Romanian Tourism (FPTR). FPCS recommends that technical unemployment be the last resort for its members, supporting the continuation of activity where possible. They believe this facility should be benefited from in a responsible manner. Technical unemployment should not be viewed as a facility from which all business „must take advantage", but as a last resort to ensure the survival of economic operators (FPSC - FederațiaConstructorilor. Home, 2020).On the other hand, FPTR believes that among minimal measures for avoiding the bankruptcy of Romanian tourism there must be the Government's support of technical unemployment amounting to 75% of employee's gross salary, or a direct payment given to employees by the National Agency of Employment (Masurile minimale solicitate de FPTR in vederea evitarii falimentului turismului romanesc - Federatia Patronatelor din Turismul Romanesc, 2020). The private sector was gravely affected, reaching over 1 million suspended labor contracts and amounting over 350.000 terminated employment contracts, which represents a burden for the state budget. To reduce this hardship to some extent, the Ministry of Labor proposed a normative act regulating the introduction of a rotating work schedule in the public sector, linked with the low workloadduring this period of time, and the payment of 75% of salary, as is the case of technical unemployment (Şomaj tehnic prin rotaţie, pentru bugetari, cu 75% din salariul de bază - proiect pentru sectorul public de la Ministerul Muncii, 2020). This normative act has not been adopted anymore.



***Source**: Own editing, based on Ministry of Labor and Social Protection press release*

The Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MMPS) stated in a press release from March 30, 2020, that it will inform the public about the situation of suspended or terminated employment contracts during the state of emergency. The chart below indicates this evolution divided into terminated and suspended employment contracts, including the four main areas affected: manufacturing, trade, hotels and restaurants, and the construction sector. The days not mentioned below are the ones in which MMPS has not published the data (the weekend, public holidays).

Chart 1 show the evolution of the situation of suspended and terminated work contracts between March 30- May 15, 2020.During this period, the record number of employees in technical unemployment was reached on April 13, 2020, when 1.046.527 of them were registered. Among the most affected areas by technical unemployment we name manufacturing, the wholesale and retail sector and the hospitality industry, which represent 61.39% of the total number of employees in technical unemployment on the day when the record was reached.



***Source**: Own editing, based on Ministry of Labor and Social Protection press release*

The chart shows as well a constant growth in the first days, followed by the maintenance of the number over 1.000.000 until April 30, 2020. The significant decrease of April 30, 2020 can be explained either through employers' predictions of the possibility to resume activity starting with May, or through the expiration of requests at that time. Subsequently, by the end of the state of emergency, the number of employees in technical unemployment stabilized at around 900.000 and right before the start of the state of alert it dropped again to just over half a million on May 14, 2020. This decrease was followed by a natural growth as a consequence of the extension of this support until June 1, 2020 (Șomajul tehnic, prelungit pentru actvitățile restricționate, la firme, PFA și alte afaceri, 2020). A review published by the Ministry of Labor and Social Portectionclaims that during the state of emergency payments of over 1.78 billion lei were given to almost 1.3. million beneficiaries (Bilanțul măsurilor luate de Ministerul Muncii și Protecției Sociale în perioada stării de urgență: plăți de peste 1,78 miliarde lei pentru aproape 1,3 milioane de beneficiari, 16 mai 2020, 2020).

Most worrisome economically speaking is not the number of people temporarily without a job or without the possibility to carry out their activity, but the number of people whose position no longer exists. Chart 2 shows the evolution of terminated work contracts in this period and the bad news is that these numbers grow daily, with out exception. 362,520 people are left jobless as a consequence of the health crisis generated by COVID-19 until May 15.

Obviously, we do not find in these statistics people who were working without employment contracts, either as day laborers or doing any other shape of work, but they are also affected. The ratio between suspended and terminated contracts shows an upward trend in percentages of the number of terminated contracts and a downward one for suspended contracts. In other words, it might be possible that some employees, after state support expires for technical unemployment, will immediately increase the number of people whose employment contracts have ended because employers are facing many problems at the moment, and an extreme gesture they resort to especially in trade, manufacturing and construction sectors, is to lay off and reduce the number of their staff. On top of existing struggles, a series of utterly complicated conditions were imposed by Ordinance no. 1731/832/2020 regarding measures to prevent SARS CoV-2 contamination and to ensure the conduct of activities in sanitary conditions in the field of economy during the state of alert (Ordinul nr. 1731/832/2020 privind măsurile pentru prevenirea contaminării cu noul coronavirus SARS CoV -2 și pentru asigurarea desfășurării activităților în condiții de siguranță sanitară în domeniul economiei, pe durata stării de alertă. În vigoare de la 16 mai 2020 Publicat în Monitorul Oficial, Partea I nr. 406 din 16 mai 2020. Formă aplicabilă la 21 mai 2020). Measures which bind the economic system to a restructuring of team management, measures which provide a delayed work schedule, ensuring the observational triage of employees, staggered lunch breaks, thermometry, disinfecting surfaces more often, all which lead to bigger costs.

3. Emergency Situations Certificate

Taking into account the Decree of the Romanian President regarding the establishment of the state of emergency, the first military ordinances of 2020 and the emergency Ordinance no. 30/2020 of the Government for the modification and completion of certain normative acts, as well as for the establishment of some measures in the domain of social protection in the context of the epidemiological situation determined by the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and the emergency Ordinance no. 29/2020 of the Government regarding some economic and fiscal-budgetary measures, the idea of an emergency situations certificate (CSU) was introduced through Ordinance no. 791 of 24.03.2020on behalf of the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Affairs of emergency situation certificates to economic operators whose activity is affected in the context of SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.The Ordinance states that the companies whose activity was affected in the context of the pandemic are entitled to request one of the emergency situations certificates type 1 (blue) or type 2 (yellow). The blue certificate can be demanded by economic enterprises whose activity was totally or partially interrupted as a result of decisions taken by the competent public authorities, while the yellow one is granted, based on an affidavit, to legal entities which have recorded a loss of at least 25% of revenue or income in March or April 2020 compared to the average revenues of January-February 2020. (Modificări la emiterea Certificatelor de Situație de Urgență în favoarea operatorilor economici, 2020).

The method of obtaining these certificates is simplified, the applicants uploadingthe identification data and the affidavit by which they confirm the veracity of the request on the platform http://prevenire.gov.ro. An electronic signature is needed for registration and those of accountants are also accepted. A few minutes after submitting the documents, the certificates are issued exclusively online, at no costs. At the same time, it should be noted that these emergency certificates were not limited to sectors of activity, even if the form initially concerned only the following: transport, tourism, hospitality industry, event planning, advertising, primary education and related activities, the garment industry, footwear and leather goods and general services.

The facilities that can benefit the enterprises which obtain emergency situations certificates are: the postponement of utility payments (electricity, natural gas, water, phone and internet services), as well as rent, the possibility of invoking force majeure against them only after the renegotiation of contracts and the postponement for a period of 9 months of existing loans introduced by OUG 37 from 30.03.2020 regarding the grant of facilities for loans given by credit institutions and non-banking financial institutions to a certain category of debtor.Even though initially the payment of technical unemployment employees was to be made based on these certificates, through the supplements and modificationsintroduced by OUG 32 from 26.03.2020 regarding the modification and completion of emergency Ordinance no. 30/2020 of the Government to modify and complete some normative acts, as well as for the establishment of measures in the domain of social protection in the context of the epidemiological situation determined by the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 and for the establishmentof supplementary measures for social protection, this idea was renounced and the grant of technical unemployment was no longer conditioned by the attainment of the emergency situations certificate.

During April 5, 2020- May 18, 2020, a total of 50,331 certificates were requested, of which 32,974 were type A (blue) and 17,357 were type B (yellow). According to Ordinance 791 and an answer offered by the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment, the request for releasing emergency situations certificates can be submitted during the state of emergency (Q&A Obținerea Certificatului de Situație de Urgență, 2020). Emergency Ordinance no. 70/2020 regarding the regulation of some measures, starting with May 15, 2020, in the context of the epidemiological situation determined by the spread of the SARS-CoV-2, for the extension of some timeframes, for the modification and completion of Law no. 227/2015 regarding the Fiscal Code, of national education Law no. 1/2011, as well as of other normative acts, has extendedthe possibility to request Emergency Situations Certificates until June 15, 2020.

On May 9, through a petition addressed under Law 544/2001 on free access to information of public interest of the Ministry of Economy, Energy and the Business Environment, three answers were solicited. The first concerned the provision of a database of applications for registration in order to analyze the evolution of these applications over time and to verify the number of errors recorded, because in the above-mentioned total number we find all of the requests, including the ones which were erroneous due to lack of digital signature.The real number of enterprises which requested the Emergency Situations Certificate is thus lower. The second case was an open question, namely, if besides the declared purpose of the certificate „to obtain support facilities/measures or in commercial relations under the law" which have taken shape in the postponement of utilities, rent or loan payment and the possibility to invoke force majeure, are other measures taken in consideration to be granted based on CSU? The third and last question includes a short analysis, which predicted that in Romania there are over 700.000 businesses, of which almost 44.000 have requested CSU up until now. The percentage is 6% and it will not exceed 10% until the end of the state of emergency (n.a. this prediction came true; on May 19 the situation is at 7.2%). The question was whether this percentage reflects market reality, only 7.2% are affected according to the definition, directly or indirectly, or many entrepreneurs have not requested the CSU since they had no need at the moment or didn't consider it useful. In these conditions, regarding the economy invigoration measures, would it be fair to corroborate the support offered through non-reimbursable funds by this

Emergency Situations Certificate? If it won't relate to this, what objective indicators will be taken into consideration so that those who are really affected will benefit from the support, ensuring the chances that the public policy will be successfullyimplemented?In the legal deadline of 10 days, the Ministry of Economy, Energy and the Business Environment has not answered these questions. Answer number 41386/DN/16.06.2020 was received on June 17, 2020, but all the formulated answers that were provided, did not bring anything new or any sort of clarification to our study and questions.

4. IMM Invest România

The attainment of the Emergency Situations Certificate was not a necessity in the process of applying to the biggest Programme of bank guarantees for enterprises in the history of Romania (24 et al., 2020). The IMM Invest Programme aimed to offer access to work capital and investment capital to businesses through a guarantee of up to 90% of loans to the Ministry of Public Finances through the National Loan Guaranteeing Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises and subsidizing interest and bank charges (eg. Management fee, risk fee, guarantee bonus). The latter are supported through the statesupport offered throughout the loan period, and interest is subsidized until 31.12.2020 by means of a de minimis aid offered to enterprises, with the possibility to extend the period until 31.12.2022 if the economic growth estimated by the National Commission of Strategy and Prognosis for this period is under the level of economic growth of 2020.

With the allocation of the guarantee ceiling of 15 billion RON, the state wants to offer access to work capital and investment to IMMs under the following conditions:

Beneficiary	IMM Invest Guarantee	Maximum Amount	Expenditure
Microenterprise	90%	500.000 lei	Labor capital (max 36 months): salaries, expenses with suppliers, utilities, state budget taxes, raw materials, consumables, other materials, etc.
Small enterprise	90%	1.000.000 lei	
Medium enterprise	80%	5.000.000 lei	
SME	80%	10.000.000 lei	Investment (max 72 months)

The list of expenditure is quite permissive and capable to cover the current needs of IMM sector, but there are two paths on which these loans cannot be used, namely the refinancing of other credits or the insurance of one's own contribution in European funds projects or other state aid. In order to benefit from this support, the microenterprises, small and medium enterprises have to meet a series of eligibility criteria, such as:

- To meet the SME definition (to not exceed at group level 249 employees, and a turnover of 50.000.000 € or total assets of over 43.000.000 €);
- Any organizational form of an economic activity that is SME. Examples: PFA, II, IF, CMI, SRL, SA, etc.;
- Is does not find itself in difficulty on December 31, 2019 (exception: companies which met with difficulties or went into difficulty thereafter as a cause of COVID-19 pandemic);
- Are not part of litigation, as defendant, with the Ministry of Public Affairs and/or the partner credit institution;
- Does not appear with overdue loans, including for leasing financing, in the last 6 months preceding December 31, 2019, or if they register backlog these belong to categories A, B, C, (max. 60 days delay) in the database of the Credit Risk Center, named CRC;

- Is not prohibited from issuing checks on December 31, 2019 and does not appear with major promissory notes in the last 6 months preceding December 31, 2019 in the database of Payment Incidents Center, named CIP;
- Against the IMM the insolvency proceedings were not opened under the applicable laws;
- Presents collateral guarantees to the credit institution;
- Does not record overdue tax liabilities and other budgetary receivables administered by the central fiscal body. If they record such overdue obligations, the beneficiary is obliged to pay them from the loan/ credit line of the work capital granted during the programme;
- To not request the support for a field of activity excluded from financing:
  - Gambling and betting activities;
  - Production or sale of weapons, munition, explosives, tobacco, alcohol, substances under national control, narcotic and psychotropic plants, substances and preparations;
  - Investigation and protection activities;
- To not exceed the de minimis ceiling: max. 200.000 EUR de minimis aid in the last 3 fiscal years for the sole enterprise;
- To commit not to lay off staff from 04.04.2020 until December 31, 2020. Technical unemployment, retirement or resignation are not considered redundancy;

The Programme was not lacking problems and shortcomings. Initially, the launch of the application through which the requests for enrolling in the Programme would be submitted was established for Good Friday- April 17, 2020- but, due to complications met by the platform where the registration was attempted (FNGCIMM, 2020),the launch and the functioning of the application started on April 28, 2020, 9 AM. (Aplicaţia pentru inscrierea in program meu limm invest Romania va fi deschisa pentru imm-uri in data de 28.04.2020, ora 9.00, 2020). Among the problems frequently dealt with by applicants and FNGCIMM operators we mention: confirmation replies on e-mail yahoo and freemail.hu received with tardiness or not at all, the heavy wording and using of passwords, erroneous completion of the data by the economic operator or the application (IMM Invest: Răspunsurile FNGCIMM la problemelereclamate de firmelesolicitante, 2020).

Until May 4, FNGCIMM processed and sent to banks for analysis a number of 20.139 requests, while other 26.000 requests needed to formulate answers to some clarifications (FNGCIMM, 2020). This effort of the FNGCIMM personnel can be seen as admirable, as they have managed to respect the promised deadline of maximum 72 hours of analysis. Nevertheless, among the 22 partner banks, on May 4, from unofficial information, no bank had internal methodological rules to implement the Programme. Thus, the fast work and speedy solutions from the first phase are ruined in the second phase of the Programme, where, for example, Banca Transilvania, which has over 20.000 requests (Banca Transilvania, 2020), wants to receive the loan records through an electronic application which, on May 10, 2020, still did not exist. So, the week after the 20.000 requests were sent to the banks, the number of loan records approved is 2. Banks' offers are almost similar financially, with adifference margin of 0.01%-0.1%, for work capital the interest is 2.5% of bank's margin + ROBOR in 3 months, and for investments 2% of bank's margin + ROBORin 3 months. The explanation for the fact that all 22 banks who take part in the Programme have almost identical offers is that the upper limits for interest were capped through methodological rules for Programme implementation.

There are also at least four drawbacks in implementing the Programme:

- **The authorized NACE code:** the application was built by programmers so as the NACE codes of enterprises are selected from a database connected to the Trade Registry.The shortcoming is that this database allows the selection solely of the NACE codes authorized in the moment of enrollment, while the legislation related to the Programme does not limit the right of IMMsto request loans for authorized NACE codes only. There are many entrepreneurs who wish to adapt and to have investments in new areas of activity, with NACE codes which will be authorized only after the investment is done.

- **Enterprise classification:** enterprise classification into micro, small, medium or large companies is done according to Law 346 of 2004 on the stimulation of establishment and development of small and medium enterprises. Due to the interpretable wording of this law, the operators who initially process the data in the IMM Invest application and the banks have different interpretations, especially with the bundles which form through private persons or groups of private persons. In this sense, the European Commission's user Handbook for the definition of IMMs proves itself useful.
- The IMM INVEST application with only one enterprise in the group: in response to frequently asked questions, authorities said that in case of a group of companies, only one in the group can apply for funding through this support. Fortunately, this restriction is mentioned nowhere in the legal basis, thus the answer to the question remains incorrect and can be ignored.
- **The bank's own rules are restrictive compared with IMM Invest rules** regarding the maximum amount of the loan offered to economic operators. If Government Decision 282 on final IMM Invest rules states that the maximum amount of funding is limited based on three conditions (either one of the three conditions, the value most advantageous for the beneficiary): double the amount representing salaries, 25% of the beneficiary's net turnover for 2019, respectively a value resulting from its liquidity needs for 18 months, partner banks provide for working capital the approval of the loan for the second option related to Government Decision 282. More precisely, 25% of the beneficiary's net turnover from 2019, value in which existent loans are included. To give an overview, we present a concrete example. An applicant for the working capital loan which falls into the category of microenterprises applies for the maximum value of the loan for employment, namely 500.000 lei, based on criteria number three, theliquidity requirements for working capital for 18 months.This amount is justified if we take into consideration the operating expenses from 2019, which rise to 420.731 lei, and for 18 months the company would need at least 630.000 lei. The salary expenses for the applicant in 2019 were 79.729 lei, their double is159.458 lei. The net turnover for 2019 was 607.497 lei, 25% of it is 151.874 lei. Currently, the applicant still has a loan to reimburse with the value of 50.000 lei. Thus, the loan approved by the bank for the applicant is 101.874 lei for working capital through IMM Invest, a total of 25% of net turnover including existing loans.

In the first two weeks of the Programme (May 5- May 19), according to the declarations of the Director-General of the National Credit Guarantee Fund for IMMs, DumitruNancu, around 5.000 files of the total 57.800 were approved by banks (Ungureanu, 2020). Still, this declaration contradicts the analysis made by Termene.ro (ANALIZA CSU + IMMINVEST industrii/judete, 2020)and the published data of the official website imminvest.ro. This analysis shows there were only 197 loans approved by banks in May 20, 2020, which is very close and coincides with our own analysis, claiming that on the same date, until 15:56, there were 210 approved files in the database provided by imminvest.ro. This excellent analysis offered by the platform which gives legal and financial information about companies, offers real-time data for the evolution of IMM Invest, the evolution regarding the Emergency Situations Certificates and also compares the number of businesses which have requested CSU with the ones who apply for IMM Invest, respectively it shows that only 1 in 3 applicants for IMM Invest have also requested CSU. Nevertheless, the number of rejected requests is nine times bigger, while the rest of the applications remain at different stages, such as: sent to the bank, under clarification, taken by FNGCIMM or revoked. Meanwhile, on May 20 the Chamber of Deputies (decision-making body) approved the doubling of the IMM Invest guarantee ceiling of 30 billion euro, but this decision must also be approved by the European Commission before in enters into force (Programul IMM Invest plafondublat: 30 mld. lei aprobat in Parlament, 2020).

5. Other Measures of Economic Support

5.1. Digitalization, financial-fiscal system, paid leave for parents

Besides the support offered by the Romanian state for technical unemployment and for work capital and investment loans through IMM Invest, respectively in addition to the instrument of Emergency Situations Certificate, another series of measures existed during the state of emergency which aimed to bolster the economy or to contribute to the successful overcome of the crisis generated by the novel coronavirus.

The need to digitalize the state came to the fore in the midst of the pandemic because many issues and much of the institutions-citizens relationship was happening by means of physical contact, and once with the imposition of social distancing restrictions the importance of digitalization has significantly risen.The president of the Romanian Digitalization Authority claims that: „The problem of the state if more profound than the fact that websites are precarious. There comes a danger of bad procedures, which do not work well even if undigitized." (Codrean, 2020). Emergency Ordinance no. 38/2020 on the use of electronic documents at the level of public authorities and institutions is a step forward almost as great as eliminating the obligation to use the seal. In short, OUG 38/2020 regulates the general framework for the use of electronic signature and documents at the level of public authorities and institutions. There are two directions provided by the introduced norms, on the one hand, all authorities at the time of entry into force of the ordinance must receive and accept electronically signed documents and treat them as if signed with private signature and, on the other hand, authorities are obliged to sign with a qualified electronic signature all acts issued in electronic format. What's more, in the Government meeting of May 7, 2020, the Executive adopted the Ordinance „Goodbye papers", which imposes to the Ministry of European Funds and its subordinated structures the obligation to exclusively use the digital system and the renouncement of documents in paper format in relation to the beneficiaries with the purpose of debureaucratisation and increase of transparency (Guvernul a adoptat Ordonanța „Adio hârtii" propusă de Ministerul Fondurilor Europene, 2020). Furthermore, through art. 14 from annex 1 of decree 195 of 16.03.2020 on the establishment of the state of emergency on Romanian territory, measures shall be taken to maintain the validity of documents issued by public authorities which expire during the state of emergency.

Financially and fiscally speaking, enterprises paying corporate or income tax could enjoy bonuses of 5% or 10% for the advance payment or at the latest at due date of owed taxes. (Ordonanța de urgențănr. 33/2020). At the same time, with the purpose of reintroducing money quickly in the economic circuit, at the initiative of the Ministry of Public Finance, emergency Ordinance no. 48 of April 9, 2020 was adopted, on some financial-fiscal measuresthrough which it is established that value added tax requested for reimbursement through the expense accounts with negative VAT amount with reimbursement option, submitted within the legal deadline, to be reimbursed by the central fiscal body with subsequent control.

Paid leave for one of the parents for children supervision, the suspension of the calculation interest and of delay demerit, the payment rescheduling granted along with the suspension or non-initiation of enforcement measures, by subpoena, the seizure and capitalization of goods at auction, of budgetary receivables, and many others are the measures taken by the Government of Romania to support the business environment during the state of emergency. The effects of these interventions will be seen in time, but for the wellbeing of the Romanian economy, at the commencement of the state of alert, the programmes and decisions regarding economic invigoration are important (Comunicat de presă, 2020).

5.2. Economic invigoration programmes

The National Liberal Government and President Klaus Iohannis have constantly claimed during the state of emergency that after the cessation or containment of the health crisis, in addition to economic support measures such as IMM Invest, technical unemployment or emergency situations certificates, they will bring a series of economic invigoration measures (Iohannis anunţă măsuri de „revigorare" economică, 2020). Information on this subject has been floating in the public space since April 15, after the Minister of European Funds, Marcel Boloș, announces for the first time some measures taken into consideration, during the Show ”Fără Nume” moderated by Lucian Mîndruță (Live - Cum restartăm România cu fonduri europene, 2020). The four abovementioned measures which started to materialize in the next month were the non-reimbursable aid for work capital- a grant of 10% of turnover in 2019 to cover losses during the state of emergency, non-reimbursable aid through consumption vouchers offered to employers and employees, support from non-reimbursable funds to reactivate employees returning to work from technical unemployment and, last but not least, a de minimis aid of up to 800.000 euro for investment (Ministerul Fondurilor Europene a obținut 1 miliard de euro pentru IMM-uri de la Comisia Europeană, 2020). Based on the declarations of the same Minister, the possibility of resuming two important programmes within the Regional Operational Programme was taken into account, namely Investment Priorities 2.1A for microenterprises and 2.2 for small and medium enterprises.

Following consultations of interested parties, such as Management Authorities which handle European funds, at the beginning of the state of alert, the programmes presented, which amounted to about 1 billion euro in the previous paragraph, are shaped as follows:

- Micro-grants for working capital for directly or indirectly affected companies without affected employees–fixed amount of 1.000 or 2.000 euro, paid once;
- Micro-grants for the reactivation of employees in technical unemployment (all enterprises, excluding hospitality industry)- support between 250 and 750 euro / employee depending on staff number ;
- Micro-grants for the reactivation of employees in technical unemployment in the hospitality industry, a support of 1.600 - 1.700 euro / employee, up to 50 employees;
- Micro-grant for investments for directly or indirectly affected companies – a non-reimbursable aid of up to 200.000 or 250.000 euro with own contribution ofapproximatively 15%;
- Support for hotels of up to 27.000 euro with 100% financing for the installment of photovoltaic systems of up to 27 kWp and for electric car charging stations.

At the same time, on May 15, the Applicant's Guide for the POR 2.2. call for projects was launched, with a budget of 150.000.000 euro, which can be increased to 550.000.000, but which seemsto cut off any chance of launching a call for POR 21A. These support measures should have been finalized and approved in May, so as to allow companies to request aid in June-July 2020 and to enjoy the long-awaited support as soon as possible, but, until June 18, 2020, none of the these measures is active, nor anybody knows any kind of new information since last month.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Contribution of the study

This article aims to accomplish two objectives. Firstly, the presentation and analysis of measures taken by the Government of Romania between March- May 15 (the end of the state of emergency) to avoid economic collapse, as well as the goals these measures have upon economic operators. Secondly, the review of other types of proposed measures, named measures to restart activities or the economic invigoration which will follow the state of emergency. The main measures analyzed in this study and adopted during the state of emergency, producing further consequences, were: technical unemployment, Emergency Situations Certificate, IMM Invest Romania. The main question raised in this article refers to the real support of the economy and whether these measures came as direction-givers on a road which seemed to never end. The first adopted measure, technical unemployment, was a support seen by some employers as an inevitable and necessary loophole, for others as a last resort which they did not want to approach. The possibility to benefit from support was offered to all companies, regardless of the field of activity, but it seems as if the most sought-after domains which needed to resort to this means were: manufacturing, trade, hotels and restaurants, and the construction sector. The private sector was gravely affected, reaching over 1 million suspended employment contracts and 350.000 terminated ones, representing a burden for state budget. The Emergency Situations Certificate was another type of support for companies, with facilities such as: postponement of utilities payment, of loans and of payments toward public institutions. One can obtain the certificate in an extremely simplified way, it has two types, a blue one for operators interrupting totally or partially their activity, respectively a yellow one for operators who experienced losses of more than 25% of revenue or income. Until May 14, the last day of the state of emergency, 25.081 companies requested the Emergency Situations Certificate type 1 (blue). As for type 2 (yellow), the deadline for obtaining the certificate was prolonged until June 15, and until April 25 a number of 14.400 certificates were applied for.Therefore, data shows that less than 5% of companies declared as being affected by the establishment of the state of emergency as a result of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, and this percentage comes along with doubts and a series of questions for which time will aid us in finding an answer. It shall be seen if the certificates and postponements of payment were useful for the companies. The use of the Emergency Situations Certificate was not a necessity to apply to the biggest bank guarantees Programme for enterprises in the history of Romania, IMM Invest. The Programmeaims to facilitate the attainment of loans for work capital, but also for IMM investments through guarantees of up to 90% and subsidizing 100% of interest and bank chargesuntil the end of the year, with a possibility to extend until the end of 2022 if the economic growth estimated by the National Commission for Strategy and Podcast for this period is below the level of the economic growth of 2020. We analyzed throughout the article issues that the launch of the Programme was dealing with, as well as the illusions of economic operators. The banks' own rules were restrictive compared to IMM Invest norms on the maximum value of the loan offered to economic operators. It is certain that the process of granting the loan is rather more complex than in the case of obtaining a normal one, because it does not go through more stages, fact also proven by the extremely low number of requests approved by the bank compared to the total number of registered enterprises, three weeks after the launch of the Programmeless than 1% of requests were approved by the bank, those rejected being 9 times more numerous. Besides the support offered by the Romanian state for technical unemployment and for work capital loans through IMM Invest, respectively in addition to the instrument of Emergency Situations Certificate, there were a series of other measures to support the economy or to contribute to successfully overcome the crisis generated by the novelcoronavirus during the state of emergency.

6.2. Limitations and future research

The limitations of the present study determine the path for future research opportunities. The short period of analysis, in which were presented the immediate results which should have appeared as a consequence of the implementation of a state of emergency for 60 days, have rendered impossible to analyze in this article the real impact of the measures upon companies' economic activities and their management. The state of emergency period and then the establishment of the state of alert have forced companies to restructure management activities, to implement action plans adapted to the situation on an indefinite period. Therefore, a new path is proposed for further studies to combine the approaches with the so-called methodological pluralism, which brings an analysis of companies who have directly benefitted from state support and how the business reacted to economic revival measures. Last, but not least, the measures that will be taken for economic recovery, could make the subject of further studies, even by using our historical-interpretative approach.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID – 19 PANDEMICS

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Abstract. *Currently we are witnesses at a situation conditioned by the presence of COVID-19 virus which has repercussions both at the moment and over the entire world of international relations in general, and at the behavior of the States in particular. This is precisely why, and because the new virus is developing dynamically over time and space, the research is needed upon the impact of the new virus not only from a biogenic perspective but also from a other perspective, including from the perspective of the field of international relations.*

The events we are currently witnessing are challenges to keep pace with the changes taking place on the international arena, especially those in the virological field . As the epidemics over time, the viruses causing them will change and occur one thing remains constant: they will always influence not only interhuman relations, but will condition new realities in the international relations system.

This article aims to highlight the main repercussions of the new CoviD-19 virus on the international relations system.

Keywords: *pandemic, impact, state, politics, coronaviruses, international relation*

The multitude of research that has been carried out recently, more or less, more accurate or confusing, has led to a few positions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the New World Order. Thus, to improve the understanding of the present situation at the beginning of the second decade. XXI, conditioned by the appearance and expansion of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the world, there is a need to appeal to the sentences put forward by Thucydides in the work of the "Peloponnesian War" written in the 16th century, IV i.e. referring to the impact of epidemics on the international relations system (Thucydides, 1966:29).

The Peloponnesian War would have triggered the creation of the new world that divided the international system into two major blocks: "At the top of one was Athens a great naval power, and at the head of the other Lacedemonia, the great military power.' The Democratic Athens, and the aristocratic Sparta, sought to rearrange other societies in terms of their own political values and socio-economic system. Athens was a democracy; its people were energetic, bold and enterprising; its naval power, financial resources and the empire were expanding. The Sparta traditional hegemon of Greeks, was an oligarchy, its foreign policy was conservative, focused only on the narrow interests of preserving the internal status quo. Due to the little interest in the business activity or overseas imperials,

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it is gradually declining compared to its rival (Gilpin, R). In Thucydides' view, the similar situations as Athens and Sparta will arise in the future, and this inevitable process it will always be repeated.

Although these variations and extensions of Thucydides' base model raise many interesting issues, they are too numerous and complex. Instead, the focus will be on the contribution of Thucydides' theory, its applicability to modern history, and its continued relevance to the dynamics of international relations. Taken into account Thucydides' argument and belief that he has discovered the basis of the dynamics of international relations and the role of the hegemonic war in changing international order can only be understood if his scientific conception and his vision that led to this explanation.

Thus, Thucydides uses as a model of analysis and explanation the method of Hippocrates, the great Greek physicist. The Hippocrates school says the disease must be understood as a consequence of natural forces and not as a manifestation of supernatural influences. By carefully observing the symptoms and course of a disease, it is possible to understand its nature. Thus, a disease can be explained by recognizing its characteristics and tracing its development from its triggering, passing through the inevitable periods of crisis to the final evolution, healing or death. The development of symptoms and manifestations of the disease is essential in this way, rather than the search for root causes, as modern medicine does. Thucydides wrote his history aimed at demonstrating the fact that the great wars are recurring phenomena with the characteristic manifestations. Like a disease, a great or hegemonic war, it has the same visible symptoms and is following an inevitable course. The initial phase is a relatively stable international system characterized by a hierarchical order of the States in the system. Over time, the power of subordinate States is starting to increase disproportionately, which is why they are in conflict with the dominant or hegemonic States in the system. The fights between the two States and their allies led to a bipolarization of the system, an inevitable crisis and, they end into a hegemonic war. The final phase will be the end of the war in favor of one side and the establishment of a new international system that will reflect a new power distribution of the system (Gilpin, R)

The symptoms and course of a disease can be observed through the systematic noticed and it is possible to understand its nature. Thus, a disease can be explained by recognizing its characteristics and tracing its development from its triggering, passing through the inevitable periods of crisis to the final denouement, healing or death (Gilpin, R)

According to Thucydides' theses, we could mention that the presence of a disease with a global impact, such as the presence of COVID-19 virus at the beginning of the 21st century, has similar characteristics to the situation described in the "Peloponnesian War". Regardless of the position of the geopolitical actor (in the given case of States) on the international arena, the level of development, natural resources, population..., in case of the presence of a disease, of the COVID-19 pandemic, all actors have faced a problem not prepared for such a situation. In the Peloponnesian war - the founding text of realistic theory - and let us remember the plague that hit Athens in 430 BC, which killed nearly a third of the old town-state's population. The States are less and less relevant on the international affairs and that their sovereignty is diminished due to the actions of non-state actors (Thucydides, 1966: 29).

However, when problems such as COVID-19 arise, the citizens first of all seek to be protected by the state. In fact, there are no citizens who are asking the United Nations, the European Union or any other multinational organization to save them from the coronavirus. Clearly, the American citizen is asking Washington for help. The human beings are looking for civil servants, they need the authoritarian information and they expect an effective response, which seems only States can give it.

What about global efforts? Would international cooperation not be much more effective in a crisis of this magnitude? But to answer, it would be necessary to ask: Did China act cooperative or, rather, have it followed the realistic premise of self-aid? In a recent Article, St. M. Walt notes that States remain the central actors in the contemporary world and that the coronavirus offers a living reminder.

A second answer makes us to analyze the actions of state actors interacting in the world. Firstly, we must refer to what China has done: Its policy of coronavirus has been clearly realistic. The actions of the Chinese authoritarian regime have been acted by centralizing its domestic and external policy, guided by the realistic principle of self-help or selfishness (another realistic premise). Once the virus was contained, it was offered to the international community and abandoned the realistic paradigm.

In Europe, the situation has developed from the citizen - Italians, Spanish and now French - who have called for concrete action from their public health system. The failure of the countries of the Southern Europe has focused on Germany, the state that supports the European Union. The Trump administration is realistic and, in times of crisis, its citizens automatically address to their chief commander.

Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), avian (H5N1) and swine flu (H1N1) - the response from the realistic paradigm will inevitably be the trend toward globalization. The historic search for an enemy - in this case, those who proclaimed a world that is flat and borderless - will translate, under realistic foundations, into ever higher borders" (*Def Online.)*

We are in the early stages of what is to become a series of the crisis chains that are present throughout the world. We could not be able to return to anything similar to normality if the great powers would not find a way to cooperate and to manage problems together. The first phase was the health crisis in the world's largest economies. The next is the phase of economic paralysis. The US lost 10 million jobs during the first 2 weeks of quarantine, exceeding the 8,8 million that occurred during the 106 weeks of the recession 2008-2010.

The next phase, no doubt, is the risk of countries being "implicitly". The Republic of Italy has entered this crisis with the highest public debt of the euro area countries and the third largest in the world. Italy is the Europe's third largest economy, but it is only one of the many European countries at risk of fiscal collapse. This comes at a time when the Europe's most dynamic economies, which often provide rescue funds and guarantees and support mechanisms, are facing the same problem with COVID-19. Germany, which has not had a serious recession since the last 75, expects its economy to contract 5% in 2020.

Then there will be the "explosion" of developing countries. So far, the number of people infected has been low in countries such as India, Brazil, Nigeria or Indonesia. This is probably due to the fact that they are less interconnected countries of trade and tourism than the developed world. Moreover, these countries have tested relatively few people, keeping their artificial number low. However, if heat is shown to not hinder the virus, these countries will be hit very hard.

Under the created conditions, the countries will come with the oil reserves. Even if the fight between Saudi Arabia and Russia is resolved, at the moment the demand for oil has collapsed, reaching the oil for the first time in history to drop to $10 per barrel. Consider what this means for countries such as Libya, Nigeria, Iran, Iraq or Venezuela, where oil revenues represent the vast majority of government revenues (most often from the whole economy), but only the profit from oil sales when prices are above $60 per barrel. There will be political unrest, refugees, perhaps even revolutions, at an unprecedented level in recent decades, similar perhaps to the collapse of the USSR. The crisis is coming with global co-operation collapsing, and the traditional leader and organizer of all these efforts, the United States of America which have completely abandoned this role (Zakaria, *El coronavirus es..)*

Analyzing the impact of the new virus on the international relations system, some researchers are reporting some features of the new reality.

1. China, not the US, is the Asian giant to which aid is given first. Based on the reasoning according to which it is the first outbreak of the virus, and therefore also the first state to suffer consequences. By effectively overcoming the crisis, China has demonstrated the ability to overcome this fight. The percentage of affected and deceased persons compared to its population of 1, 7 billion are more than minimal, unlike what has happened in other parts of the world. It is consolidated at global level.
2. Neoliberalism, as a rationality, no longer works. The sentence "save yourself who can" has also proved ineffective; when collective efforts are required, the supremacy of the individual is a great obstacle; cooperation takes precedence over competition. Markets are not able to manage themselves; there is no invisible hand to regulate them; nor does the myth that private agents achieve their benefits by taking more risks does it work.
3. Europe is no longer a mirror to imitate. Once again, it has been shown that many geopolitical actors are losing the opportunity to show the world that they are leading the important issues. They do not have the ability to demonstrate effectiveness against coronavirus. The welfare state is much weaker than assumed. Eurocentric sovereignty made them underestimate everything that came from the far East. In Italy and Spain, the epidemic, although it arrived late, was the worst affected by the crisis and it is not a coincidence. In addition, the European Union has shown its inability to coordinate and harmonize at least one action against this pandemic. Thus, in the light of the situation created, it has been shown that this area is actually a single economic and monetary market, but it is far from being a common social project.

The situation created, a new dispute is opened: Between the Washington consensus constantly updated and a new post-coronavirus consensus that considers public health vital, and the state must become the main player in its policies (fiscal and monetary), in order to maintain control over the capital of emerging countries, as well as in order to avoid adversity, the economy must focus on the quality of human life (Mancilla, *Siete lecciones geopolíticas..)*

Over the last hundreds of years, epidemics have affected humanity quite often. If we consider the massive occurrence and lethality of infectious-contagious diseases during the centuries, one of the 20th century's "regularities" together with wars is the pandemics: From the Spanish flu of 1919 to the Ebola epidemic in 1994-1996, the loss of human life caused by viruses exceeds 60 million, without taking into account the "fixed deaths" over time due to viral diseases such as AIDS. Compared to the 20th century, the frequency of epidemics has increased considerably in the two decades of the 21st century. There is almost no gap from the polio mini-epidemic in Central Asia and especially since the SARS epidemic in the early centuries (Hutschenreuter, *¿Van a cambiar?).*

Delays in testing and quarantine have been costly for Europe, especially for Italy, Spain, France and the UK. Some countries in East Asia have responded much better. South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong have more effectively controlled the spread of the disease, thanks to a combination of testing measures, monitoring of infection and strict quarantine chains. On the other hand, governments reacted much more efficiently and quickly where they enjoy confidence from the company - again the same players South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong and Taiwan.

China's reaction proved to be typically Chinese: Concealing information about the spread of the virus, a high level of social control and massive mobilization of resources when the threat became evident. Turkmenistan has banned the word coronavirus, as well as the use of medical masks in public places. Viktor Orban of Hungary took advantage of the crisis to strengthen its power: It dissolved the parliament after granting it extraordinary powers for an unlimited period (OMS: *Noul coronavirus)*

According to H. Kissinger, during the USSR, the 'task of weakening the confrontation' was an imperative in time, and now it is the 'task of creating a new world order', and 'all States should participate in the creation process, confident that all will take place in this world order'. Going back to the theory of 'creating the new World order', H. Kissinger, believes that the 'coronavirus pandemic will change world order forever.' This sentence is also the title of the Article published on 5 April 2020. When the COVID-19 pandemic ends, institutions in many countries will be perceived as failing," Kissinger says, "the reality is that the world will never be the same after the coronavirus." It should therefore be mentioned as the COVID-19 a coronavirus epidemicit became the trigger for the implementation of the scenario about which former US Secretary of State H. Kissinger spoke as inevitable a year ago -- "weakening the confrontation" between countries against a common threat and "creating a new world".

Secondly: As we see, "all States participate in the process of its creation". What will be the new world order after such an artificially provoked or caused global "epidemic"? Here we need to recall the aims of the US – ZB strategy. Brzezinski. Brzezinski had to admit the failure of his original concept that the new world order would be built "against Russia, to the detriment of Russia and on the wreck of Russia", which was written in the 1997 "Great Chess Board". At the end of 2017, Brzezinski says: An ideal geopolitical response to the global power crisis will be the triple connection between the United States, China and the Russian Federation." In fact, the US strategist predicted the appearance of an "equilateral (but not equal) triangle between Beijing, Washington and Moscow on the world political stage. The institutions of several countries do not fall under the scenario put forward by the ZB. Brzezinski. A number of countries will experience a real catastrophe when organizational resources and capabilities are not enough to save the state system, population, national currency and territorial integrity. Outbreaks of local armed conflicts are not excluded. In such circumstances, governments will seek the help of the power centers of the new world order (*Посткоронавирусный мировой порядок..)*.

White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett warned that unemployment could reach levels that have not been reached since the Great depression, because the economy contracted dramatically, while companies in most US regions remain closed due to the coronavirus pandemic, CNBC reported. According to Hassett's statements, the unemployment rate could reach 16% and that "the next two months will be terrible" for economic data. "We see an unemployment rate that is close to the rates we saw in the Great depression," Hassett said at the ABC's "this week." show. "During the great recession, we lost a total of 8,7 million jobs. Now we are losing every 10 days", and the isolation measures taken to combat the enlargement of the coronavirus as "the biggest negative shock that the US economy has ever seen". According to the data of the budget

Bureau of the Congress, which forecasts GDP will fall by 5,6% this year and unemployment by 2020 will be close to 12%. (*Consilier al Casei Albe..).*

It would appear that the main battle is taking place on the oil market at the moment. However, we must understand that this is only the visible part of the iceberg. The US President, Donald Trump, would not have developed such a nervous activity solely because of the crisis of US mining companies (*Посткоронавирусный мировой порядок*).

Professor Yuval Noah Harari, author of the volumes, 'sapiens: The short history of humanity', 'Homo Deus: The short history of the future and 21 lessons for the 21st century” considers that the surveillance of people motivated by the pandemic ‘can create a totalitarian system as never before’ (Yuval, *Supravegherea oamenilor).*

Also, the sentences concerning the post situation COVID-19 are being put forward by some globalists. Thus, according to their position, after exiting the COVID-19 pandemic, we will clash with a changed world. Today, there are a multitude of predictions presented by analysts everywhere, quoted by foreign Policy and political newspapers. Thus, according to the position of many experts, a first change that could occur at the post site COVID-19 refers to the nationalization of the territory in favor of internationalization. Otherwise, the center of power of the world, as it was perceived before, will change – not the West, but the East. This (and) because, in relation to the size of the outbreaks, the Eastern States, especially South Korea and Singapore, have responded well to the tragedy. In another note, the COVID-19 pandemic was – and is – better managed by States with a collective culture, used to being "together". Individualistic cultures (US, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, etc.) calculated. Western cultures are more common to revolt, to counter laws, to the rules "from above" (isolation, for example), make a bigger case of the restriction of individual rights and freedoms – even when times require it. On the contrary, are the Eastern cultures.

The second change means the end of globalization. As an argument for this sentence, we could be able to show the United States' intention to decouple China from the advanced technology and the "intelligence" (of American origin) it has offered.

No less attention will attract the emergence of China's new centrism. Focusing in this context on S. Handincton, a new form of globalization, will come from China, as the West, led by the USA, will lose confidence in international trade, but also in the pile of "at times of need" aid protocols, which, in the context of a real, global emergency, will be able to bring about a new and more effective and effective crisis. they turned out to be nothing more than papers with autography sound.

According to Ikenberry, a professor at Princeton University, after any economic crisis, we will find ourselves in the midst of even more fragmented societies than today (Ivascu, *Cum va arăta ..)* when we leave the COVID-19 pandemic. We will see the formation of a diverse ideological landscape, similar to that of the '30-'40. After an eccentric-nationalist, perhaps xenophobic, "we with us for us", the recovery of the world's States will take place. The post-COVID-19 situation will also make a rethink of the functioning of multinational political bodies such as NATO, the UN or the EU. In the long run, according to Ikenberry's stance, democratic countries will benefit.

The post-Covid-19 situation will have repercussions on the economic sector. After the coronavirus, corporations will cut out from the chain of steps and countries where they were used to thinking and doing business. We will, it seems, see a new face of capitalism characterized by making smaller profits, but which will provide greater financial stability.

According to Professor Shannon K. O'Neil, expert in international relations, we will be present at several state interventions in the economic sector. The Chinese labor force price has risen anyway, during which the trade war between Beijing and Washington has been on the rise. Moreover, in mature economies, tens of thousands of people lost their jobs due to automation and robotisation, and "money is moving less". The COVID-19 situation has made things even more complicated: The production plants have closed down, so the medical, pharmaceutical, food and so on chains are in a drop. In the forthcoming period, small and medium-sized companies will give up part of the shares to the state. A dialog between the State and the 'private' will be created (Ivascu, *Cum va arăta.).*

Savings will be created closer to home. With a financial market that narrows every day, experts are predicting a slight turn to what is called a "non-market economy" in socialism. Domestic industries, domestic production, are expected to resuscitate. Otherwise, it is likely that new investors will be involved and the "old" will withdraw. COVID-19 showed us that pathogens are ill not only human but also savings," said Laurie Garrett, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, also, according to Garrett's picture "the raw material is taken from one side and transported elsewhere. That was how the world worked, on the second, well-orchestrated. In the post coronavutroza site, this scenario is no longer valid.

Another aspect that will characterize the post-COVID-19 situation will be the increase in distrust of political "giants". If the blame dribbling continues, China and the United States, two great world superpowers (and those most affected by the pandemic, except Italy), will slowly lose their credibility [5]. Charged by Western media as "unable to take real-time measures for its 500 million inhabitants", the EU, according to specialists, will not take "unscratched" steps in the post-COVID-19 world. New relationships of forces will emerge between States, there will be a deepening of the existing conflicts and 'history will be written as each time by the winners', J. Allen, former NATO commander. We are currently present at a "new zero point" that can rewritea new direction to develop the World order. In practice, those countries that overcome the first humanitarian crisis, regardless of their old-pandemic status, can set the tone for a new geopolitical game.

The social sector will be no less affected. We will go to personal universities, communities, smaller, more intimate, but also poorer (in fact). The event industry will probably have to reconsider: At the end of the coronary woodockiana's option of spending your free time in bulk with thousands of people (concerts, festivals, etc.) will no longer be in the vogue. In the fashion there will be parks, gardens, breathing breaks in buccal spaces. Farms, suites, forests, beaches, mountain areas – from the shelf of the "derisory falls" will, as in the past, pass that of the favorites. The monotony dictatorship will fade away. Finally, according to cultural critic V. Hefernan, more and more employees will display work across the program and other "successful recipes" in motivational books. The man post-COVID-19 will be even freer, will take care of more health, sleep and food (Ivascu, *Cum va arăta ..*).

In the context of the analysis of the post-COVID-19 situation, P. Freedman, a history professor at Yale, adds something about changing eating habits: "In Europe and America, sumptuous restaurants will lose ground to bistros. The cooking age is again at home." Then, a virtual-real war is expected "with cards on the face": Between people who will claim the near-complete return to physical life, as she pointed out in the early 2000 when digital means had not colonnaded their leisure time, and groups that, on the contrary, will push for a continuation of professional life on-line.

Post coronaviruses *will increase the responsibility level* of individuals, but also of society as a whole, toward "common assets". Artificial intelligence, radiation, planetary ocean growth, pollution, the extinction of plant and animal species, computer viruses and viruses will reshape human consciousness and responsibility for the environment. We are already seeing the impact of global problems and their consequences on the environment, including human life, which we will have to face together. But a paradox is born in the situation created. According to the sentences put forward by Joseph S. Nye Jr "every country will see its national interest, which will amplify the global problems, which will remain of no one (Ivascu, *Cum va arăta.).*

No less impact will have post-COVID-19 on the *scientific framework.* Coronavirus will return the long-lost poet to the scientist (doctor, researcher, inventor, professor, etc.). The truth, through its most prominent emissary, science, will be once again honest, by doing its long exile on the edge of an intoxicate global society of false news, conspiracy theories, anachronism and the literaturization of facts. Analysts anticipate the decline of relativism, "careerism", subjectivity – "I believe so!" – with valid argument pretensions.

Conclusion

We are present at a situation conditioned by the presence of the COVID-19 virus which has repercussions both for the moment and for the duration of the formation of the new World order, for the whole world of international relations in general, and for the behavior of the States in particular. This is precisely why, and because the new virus is developing dynamically in time and space, it is necessary to research its impact not only from a biogenic perspective, but also from the perspective of other areas, including international relations.

The fact that researchers' opinions differ, is likely to contribute to the creation of an integrated picture of COVID-19 behavior and the repertoire of the coronary concerned on the international relations system. The events we are currently witnessing are challenges to keep pace with the changes taking place on the international arena. Just as the epidemics, the viruses causing them will change and occur over time, one thing remains constant: They will always influence not only interhuman relations, but will condition new realities in the system of international relations.

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CONFLICT ZONES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract. *One of the problems that are present not only on the international arena, but also on the work table, in the laboratories of virologists, in the scientific discourse of polemologists, political scientists, economists and specialists in other fields refers to the problem regarding the impact of COVID-19 virus on conflict zones. Although in the first three months of 2020 all the attention of the international community is focused on the emergence of COVID-19 virus and its impact on citizens, society, interpersonal and interpersonal relationships, it is worth paying attention to the conflict zones present in the world. At the end of the virus emergence, the international community's attention to conflict zones seems to be redirected to the issue of COVID-19.*

The purpose of this article is to analyze the impact of COVID-19 virus on conflict zones that are present on the international arena such as those on the African continent, the Middle East, the Latin American continent, including Europe.

Keywords: *international community, international relations, virus, conflict zones, Middle East, Africa, Latin America, European continent*

One of the problems present on the work table and in the laboratories of virologists and biogenetics, but also in the scientific discourse of polymologists, political scientists, economists and specialists in other fields refers to the problem regarding the impact of COVID-19 virus on conflict zones. Although in the first three months of 2020 all the attention of the international community is focused on the emergence of the COVID-19 virus and its impact on citizens, society and interpersonal relationships, it is worth paying attention to conflict zones around the world. Following the emergence of the virus, the international community's attention to conflict zones seems to have been abandoned. All attention is shifted to the issue of COVID-19. Although the emergence of COVID-19 virus is the main global problem, the presence of conflict zones in the international arena deserves special attention. In epidemics, especially in the case of viruses, the greatest disasters with local, regional and global impact appear.

Given the emergence of the virus, special attention should be paid to conflict zones. Namely, the population of the countries affected by the conflict - regardless of the war or its consequences, they are more vulnerable to the spread of the virus. In many cases, prolonged war or unrest, exacerbated by crisis management, the presence of corruption, and

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international sanctions, have weakened national health systems, demonstrating to the world the inability to cope with the COVID-19 virus. Thus, for a better understanding of the repercussions conditioned by the presence of COVID-19 virus on conflict zones, there is a need to highlight the specific situation in these areas (*La vulnérabilité des populations* …). Starting from the reasoning and the situation prior to the emergence of COVID-19 virus, the Ebola epidemic in Guinea in 2014, Liberia and Sierra Leone, had a devastating impact on states. According to the Crisis Group, "at first, the virus spread uncontrollably, not only because of limited epidemiological monitoring and the lack of capacity and responsiveness of the health system, but also because people remained skeptical of government statements and its directives".

In the case of conflicts, it is difficult for humanitarian, national and international actors to obtain help from the population in conflict zones. In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) and international NGOs fought the Ebola epidemic in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In some cases, the fighters targeted doctors and medical institutions themselves. Although the Congolese authorities and the WHO apparently managed to end the epidemic, it lasted and claimed many victims (a total of 2,264 confirmed deaths (*Deportation and Disease...)*

In many cases, the impact of Covid-19 on refugees and displaced persons will continue to affect women, who are the majority of the displaced population in conflict regions. Stigmatized because of the (real or presumed) connection they had with the armed groups, these women face huge difficulties in accessing services and feeding their families. Displaced women and children, exposed to sexual exploitation or violence and whose reintegration into communities is not the priority of weak or indifferent governments, will be the first to be affected by the economic crises that will accompany the spread of the virus.

The vulnerability to Covid-19 of refugees and displaced persons is partly explained by the fact that the virus could seriously weaken the capacity of international institutions to act in conflict areas. WHO and representatives of other international agencies are concerned that virus will disrupt humanitarian supply chains. But humanitarian organizations are not the only actors in the multilateral system, they can also be affected. The potential effects of Covid-19 on specific stress points are amplified by the fact that the global system has already been redirected. Thus, the current period differs from other international crises. When the financial crisis caused a global economic slowdown in 2008, the United States still had enough effect to shape the international response through the G20, even though Washington was careful to involve Beijing in the process. In 2014, the United States took responsibility, albeit belatedly, for the West African Ebola crisis, with the help of countries such as the United Kingdom, France, China and Cuba. Today, the United States - whose international influence has already weakened considerably - simultaneously managed the national response to Covid-19, failed to unite other nations, conditioning international resentment. President Donald Trump not only insisted on the Chinese origin of the disease, but also criticized the EU's restraint (*Conflits, pollution, délinquance...*).

Thus, for a better understanding of the problem, there is a need to develop an analysis of the situation in conflict areas. According to the position put forward by Catherine Chatignoux, the Covid-19 virus can eliminate, but can also intensify the dynamics and energy of wars (*Conflits, pollution, délinquance...*).

A first area, characterized as one of the most conflict-ridden, is the Middle East. The Middle East is currently facing a convulsion that will have cross-border implications and will destabilize countries that managed to keep conflicts out of their borders. In countries where state capacity has become either severely diminished or non-existent, the consequences of COVID-19 could be transformative, extending the reports of gendarmes, terrorists and other armed substate actors who have filled government gaps by providing community services, in some cases combining this work with brutal subjugation. Hundreds of thousands of citizens were killed and millions displaced. Currently, the question arises, the Covid-19 virus that has affected the entire world will diminish or intensify the dynamics and evolutions of conflicts in the world (*Alaadin R.*)

The outbreak of Covid-19 in *Syria* conditioned the ceasefire between the two main actors - Russian Federation and the United States. The three million people living in the ceasefire area in the northwestern region of the country, Idlib, had little hope that the agreement between the major geopolitical actors would be respected. However, both the United States and the Russian Federation, for fear of spreading the coronavirus throughout the devastated country, during the virus period seem to have given an armistice.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the month of March recorded the lowest number of civilian deaths since the beginning of the conflict in 2011 (103 deaths). Also, the multiple administrations in Syria - the government in Damascus, the Kurdish autonomous administration in the northeast of the country and the alliance led by jihadists in Idlib, in order to manage the coronavirus have reached a common denominator. “This epidemic is a way for Damascus to show that the Syrian state is effective and that all territories should be returned under its governance”, said analyst F. Balanche. However, the pandemic and global mobilization could precipitate the departure of US-led troops from Syria and neighboring Iraq, which could create a vacuum in which the Islamic State jihadist group, which still withdrew from the disappearance of its “caliphate” a year ago, could seek to intensify their attacks. For various actors on the ground - the regime, the Kurdish forces in the northeast and the anti-Damascus factions in Idlib - proper management of the epidemic would strengthen their credibility, but this would contribute to a security vacuum that would encourage a revival of the ISI (IS) group, whose “caliphate” in Syria collapsed in March 2019. In nine years, the Syrian conflict has killed more than 380,000 people, and contributed to the displacement of millions of people who are vulnerable to the effects of virus (*COVID-19: quel impact..*).

Data provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in 2019 indicates that more than 70 million people worldwide fall into the category of internally displaced persons, and this figure has certainly increased since then, especially as a result of events in Syria. History has shown that the effect of contamination is often exacerbated among people not only in ordinary places, but also in refugee camps. This risk exists for the Covid-19 pandemic, although in some regions the medical services in the camps are sometimes better than those in the surrounding region. UN officials are particularly concerned about the al-Hol camp in northeastern Syria, which is home to more than 0.000 people, including women and children who fled the Islamic State's last stronghold at the time of its fall, including Syrian, and Iraqi citizens and about 10,000 citizens of other countries (*Conflits, pollution, délinquance...).* The number of those who were forced to live a life of destitution and misery is much higher. The war in Syria has displaced more than 12 million people (half its population) both internally and externally. A total of 6.5 million people have been displaced in Iraq and Yemen. In Libya, more than 435,000 people have been displaced. The astonishing statistics continue: About 11 million people need humanitarian aid in Syria; in Yemen -- 24 million; in Libya - 2.4 million; and in Iraq - 4.1 million (*Conflits, pollution, délinquance...).* Many of the refugees sleep in fields or under trees, and the lack of running water and soap, as well as crowded homes or shelters, makes it impossible to apply basic hygiene and social distance. Test delivery was delayed by several weeks. Aid fears that a virus outbreak in Idlib will completely exceed the province's medical capacity, which would prevent the treatment of war victims. Syria's territory is currently divided into three areas: regime-controlled territories, northeastern Kurdish territory and Idlib. COVID-19 raises the prospects for another wave of refugees that extends the capacity of neighboring countries such as Turkey and Lebanon to respond to the humanitarian needs of these refugees. It also puts increasing pressure on Western groups, such as the Kurdish-dominated Syrian Defense Forces (SDF), on which the West depends to maintain operations against ISIS and manage prison cells for detained ISIS fighters. The SDF also hosts refugee camps such as Al-Hor, which hosts 70,000 refugees, including ISIS fighters and their families. Humanitarian development in Syria will worsen if these enclaves do not adopt a collective response to the pandemic. Field actors need to refrain from targeting supply lines and allow space for external assistance. Pro-Turkish forces have disrupted water supplies in Kurdish-owned areas in the northeast, compromising the ability of humanitarian agencies to protect vulnerable communities during the pandemic. Meanwhile, the Assad regime has refused to extend the support it receives from the WHO to areas outside its regime. This implicitly becomes a WHO indictment, which refuses to operate beyond Damascus. Such institutions are paralyzed and inadequate to conflict zones by design because of international norms that limit them from working under the limits of sovereignty, even though the Assad regime should certainly no longer enjoy the benefits of state sovereignty, having in view of its irregular behavior (*Alaadin R).*

Also, security barriers in areas currently affected by the conflict may impede measures to combat Covid-19. Thus, Syria and Yemen have already suffered health crises during the civil wars. The case of the polio epidemic in Syria in 2013-2014 and the cholera epidemic in Yemen in 2016 slowed down violence in the area.

The war that has been going on since 2015 has brought an already very weak health system to Yemen. More than 24 million people are in need of humanitarian aid. The Covid-19 epidemic could quickly overwhelm relief efforts and could cause one of the worst humanitarian disasters in the world. In Yemen and beyond, internally displaced persons, asylum seekers and refugees due to their precarious living conditions and limited access to healthcare are particularly vulnerable to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Saudi-led military coalition, which operates in Yemen in support of government forces, has announced a ceasefire, saying that the unilateral decision is to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The Houthi rebels, backed by Iran, have not yet responded. „We are preparing the ground to fight COVID-19 disease", said Saudi officials. Despite a UN ceasefire in March, 2020 violence has risen in the country, which has been been led by a five-year armed conflict. In recent years, negotiations have stalled in Yemen, which has suffered the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, according to the UN. Yemen also has a poor health care system, while 24 million people, more than two-thirds of the population, need humanitarian assistance, according to the UN (*COVID-19: quel impact..).*

The Yemeni government and Hutus rebels initially responded to the UN call for a ceasefire, as neighboring Saudi Arabia did, this one leading a military coalition in support of the government. That rare glimmer of hope in the five-year conflict was short-lived. The Saudi air defense intercepted ballistic missiles on Riyadh and a border town ceded to Iran-backed rebels. The Saudi-led coalition retaliated by hitting rebel-held Huthi targets in the Sanaa capital. Repeated discussions have failed. However, under the created conditions, the UN representative, M. Griffiths, organizes daily consultations in an attempt to cease fire at national level. As the world fights the pandemic, according to the Griffiths position, the parties must focus on mutual confrontation to ensure that the population does not face even greater risks. More violent outbreaks in Yemen could generate a humanitarian crisis and cause a coronavirus outbreak of catastrophic proportions. In a country where health infrastructure has collapsed, where water is a scarce commodity and where 24 million people need humanitarian assistance, the population is afraid of being destroyed if it does not stop fire and will not receive adequate help. "People will die on the streets, corpses will rot in the open air", said Mohammed Omar, a taxi driver in the port city of Hodeida from the Red Sea (*COVID-19, accélérateur*.)

Unlike China, Europe and the USA, these countries are not affected by COVID-19. A spread in these often poor countries in conflict could have devastating consequences. The pandemic can lead to aggravation of conflicts, the humanitarian situation as well as the migration flow. The disease could also reduce the energy of belligerents who will fight, say some experts. According to Robert Malley, chairman of the Washington-based International Crisis Group, the virus will certainly diminish the capacity and will of states and the international system. These conflicts, brutal and violent as they are, will become imperceptible and inaudible to many states. However, the UN representatives, who are struggling to cope, are monitoring the evolution of conflicts and the situation of countries in crisis (*COVID-19, accélérateur*..).

In some sub-regions of the Middle East, there are conflicts with high rates of violence, social instability and fragility in political structures, circumstances that contribute to creating scenarios of misery and devastation, under the control of external actors and institutional vulnerability which are considered an opportunity for terrorism to return to its agenda. The Islamic State can reorganize and take advantage of the situation to resume strategic positions in Iraq and Syria, an opportunity that is combined with the withdrawal of international forces following the resolution of the Iraqi parliament in January 2020 or the unrest in Idlib and Homs in Syria. The outbreak of COVID-19 in the region is a possibility of violence in the future.

Terrorism occurs in the chaos of the world. When history itself inherits war and decay, combined with circumstantial facilitators, regions become areas of risk and threat; they become a fertile ground for the emergence of new violence or the consolidation of old crime.

There are cases where there is a perception of a cooling in tensions or international conflicts in itself, a secondary effect that is often temporary, because the actors have to return to participate in internal complications. However, when the situation resumes, the initial conflict conditions change also ot they can stop which may have different dimensions of temporality or severity. This makes the conflict not be the same after the conflict, exceeding the variable that interrupted it.

It can be the case of the conflict between the United States and Iran, which reached a critical point in January 2020, with the conduct of several conventional and unconventional military operations. Direct confrontations led to a slight recession, military activities were limited to offending Allied militias on other fronts in the Middle East, expanding to cyber actions, and the point of greatest pressure shifted to diplomatic and economic spheres. Iran faces four sides that add to the severity of the impact of COVID-19: one that comes from economic sanctions and restrictions; the derivative of the volatility of fossil fuel prices; increasing social discontent; and the latent - though seemingly passive - military threat to its regional rivals. On the other hand, the United States has become the most affected country in recent days in terms of the number of infections and deaths on the planet. For these reasons, both countries have taken a mandatory step back to solve their internal problems, creating a temporary relaxation that will present different conditions after its resumption. On the other hand, the temporary elimination of the conflict does not mean the dissolution of military action (*El COVID-19 y el estado…*). Western countries have been hit by the pandemic, which could lead them to divert both military resources and the ability to mediate peace. Iraq is no longer in full conflict, but remains vulnerable to a resurgence of Daesh in some regions. With most non-US troops that are formed by the coalition of France and Britain now gone and some bases evacuated, US personnel is regrouped in some locations of Iraq. Washington has launched Patriot air defense missiles, sparking fears of a new escalation with Tehran, whose representatives blame them for rocket attacks on bases housing American troops.

Similar to the situation in Yemen, the main protagonists of the Libyan conflict initially welcomed the UN call for a ceasefire, but quickly resumed hostilities. Fierce fighting has shaken southern Tripoli's capital, suggesting that the risk of a major outbreak of coronavirus is not enough to silence the weapons. Turkey has played a key role in the conflict, throwing its weight behind the government. Thus, according to F. Balanche's position, the accelerated disconnection of the West from the conflicts in the Middle East could limit Turkish support for the GNA. This could ultimately favor forces loyal to the powerful of Eastern origin, Khalifa Haftar, who launched an attack on Tripoli in 2019 and has the support of Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. Western countries have been hit by the pandemic, which could lead them to divert both military resources and the ability to mediate peace from external conflicts. A report by the International Crisis Group said that European officials had reported that efforts to ensure a ceasefire in Libya were no longer effective due to the pandemic (*What impact is..*).

The protagonists of Libyan conflict welcomed the call of the United Nations in March 2020 for a ceasefire. The fight, however, intensified, affecting several residential areas in the Capital. The violence has displaced 200,000 people since the beginning of the year, the vast majority in the capital, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Agilities have damaged a hospital in Tripoli where COVID-19-infected patients are being treated. “There is still a huge gap between statements and actions”, said Guterres, the UN envoy on the situation in Libya. In this conflict, Turkey supports the UN-recognized government in Tripoli, which has been facing an offensive against Marshal Khalifa Haftar for a year. According to F. Balanche, a Western disengagement from conflicts in the region could favor pro-Haftar forces supported by Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. Western countries have been hardly hit by the pandemic, which could push them to divert military resources from external conflicts, but also to weaken the negotiation process. According to a report by the International Crisis Group (ICG), efforts to ensure a ceasefire in Libya are “no longer receiving attention” from Western states (*COVID-19: quel impact..).*

In Libya, as F. Wehrey pointed out, the pandemic has given the militia a boost, giving them an opportunity to channel healthcare to their fighters and to instrument the crisis to reward and strengthen patronage networks and favored communities. Disturbingly, the hospitals in Libya are threatened by rocket attacks, which are aggravating the situation (*Alaadin R.).*

Iraq is no longer in full conflict, but remains vulnerable to a resurgence of IS in some regions. Iran and the United States are two of the most affected countries by the coronavirus, but there has been no sign of giving up their fight for influence, which has been largely played on Iraqi territory. With most of the non-US coalition troops now missing and some bases evacuated, US personnel are now regrouped in an area of Iraq. Washington has launched Patriot air defense missiles, raising fears of a new escalation with Tehran, whose representatives blame them for launching rocket attacks (*What impact is..).*

In Iraq, ISIS has stepped up its attacks in northern Iraqi villages and is moving to exploit the growing list of crises in Baghdad - from escalating US-Iran, falling oil prices and nationwide protests. During a public health crisis, ISIS can revive and expand its influence by responding to the needs of local communities in a way that other authorities - such as the Baghdad government – didn't do. At least, the failures in Baghdad allow ISIS to position itself as a viable alternative (*Alaadin R.*). Even though the war in Iraq has already ended, the country remains threatened by a resurgence of IS in some regions, while tensions between the United States and Iran show no signs of a possible compromise. Washington has just deployed anti-aircraft batteries, raising fears of a new escalation with Iran, whose Iraqi deputies are responsible for the missiles launched on the Green Zone in Baghdad, where the US embassy and bases hosting US soldiers are located (*COVID-19: quel impact..*).

Fear of the pandemic has not stopped ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan, and leaders of the extremist group of Islamic State have openly encouraged supporters to launch global attacks. Meanwhile, blockades, quarantine and travel bans can weaken ceasefire monitoring and peacekeeping missions in conflict zones around the world (*Peace and the pandemic…).*

The peace process launched between the Taliban and the government of President Ashraf Ghani on the background of the virus seems to be successful. There are chances of a ceasefire in Afghanistan. President Ashraf Ghani is facing an ongoing political crisis, US anger over a frightening peace process and a growing coronavirus epidemic, which officials fear could upset the country's prisons.

Talks on the exchange of detainees between the Kabul government and the Taliban insurgents hit a roadblock after the insurgents left the dialogue, rejecting the release of Kabul as captives as „unacceptable". The Taliban plan to release 5,000 of its fighters in exchange for 1,000 Afghan soldiers according to the US-Taliban agreement. Kabul wants to release fewer fighters, the release being done in stages. He also wants the intra-Afghan talks to be successful until the release of the last Taliban fighters. The Taliban group is willing to temporarily suspend fighting against Afghan forces in areas hit by the coronavirus, rejecting news reports that the group could declare a ceasefire amid the pandemic (*No Ceasefire For..*).

Fear of the COVID-19 virus promptly shut down the flow of migration to the Greek-Turkish border. Fear of contamination has convinced Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish president, to close the border posts with Greece, which have been opened a week earlier on March 18, providing a corridor for tens of thousands of trouble-free migrants and asylum seekers in Turkey to move to Europe. Thus, the Coronavirus defeated one of the most authoritarian leaders in the region - President Erdogan (*Conflits, pollution, délinquance..*).

Against the background of the coronavirus, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict does not bring any respite. Israel continues its attacks on occupied West Bank villages and towns and calls for the release of about 5,000 Palestinians from Israeli prisons. The requests were rejected by Tel Aviv. Palestinians have launched a plan demanding $ 137 million from international donors for their response to Covid-19, but officials say there is little funding available as Western countries tackle their own crises. The Palestinian government could struggle to pay full salaries to its employees, but tens of thousands of Palestinians working in Israel to support their families returned home with no payment during the crisis. Despite the coronavirus, Israelis and Palestinians do not seem to break the ice on difficult issues.

In the context of the analysis of the COVID-19 virus repercussions on the conflictogenic areas, the Kashmir area also deserves attention. Thus, Indian-administered kashmere is equally affected by the virus. Covid-19 hit the most militarized area in the world. India has not paid attention to the UN's "ceasefire" call, as its military continues to besiege villages and the state internally. Despite the pandemic and the region's poorest health infrastructure, India has also launched a new "settlement" plan to allow non-local Indians who meet certain criteria to take up jobs and properties in the disputed region. India also rejected calls for the release of thousands of Kashmiri prisoners in Indian prisons. Meanwhile, the armies of Pakistan and India, de facto, have skidded on the border-Line of Control that divides Kashmir into administered portions of Pakistan and India (*What impact is..*).

As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads to conflict areas, the impact will be unpredictable and catastrophic. These areas are usually inaccessible, dangerous and politically complex. COVID-19 is already beginning to expose fractures, prejudices and weaknesses among many marginalized or conflict-affected populations. Existing discrimination against minority ethnic or religious groups is intensifying as they are considered to be spreading the virus. In Pakistan, Shiite minority Muslims have been accused of importing the virus from Iran, creating serious implications for community tensions and a challenge for those who organize a comprehensive response (*Peace and the pandemic…)*. From urban neighborhoods in India to rural areas in Asia South-East - advice from UN and WHO officials on COVID-19 was rejected.

This example shows how sudden crises can break patterns of behavior, sometimes generating a common interest in ending violence. In other cases, a major crisis such as COVID-19 can lead to more conflicts. Governments are already taking advantage of emergency legislation and a distracted international media to suppress their rivals. In February 2020, the Government of Myanmar carried out air and ground attacks on a group of Arakan's army in a heavily populated area of Rakhine State, which struck hard while the world was distracted (*Peace and the pandemic…).*

No less worrying is the situation in the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh: more than a million people live in overcrowded shelters and sanitation services are kept to a minimum. Because the government bans internet access and mobile phone services in camps, residents have limited access to information on disease prevention, which could save lives. At the same time, the high rate of malnutrition can increase the risk of contagion between refugees and the local population. If Covid-19 enters the camps, according to humanitarian mission representatives, the virus will spread, which could trigger a hostile reaction from Bangladeshis living in the surrounding areas and already exasperated by the prolonged presence of refugees.

There is growing concern about a possible outbreak of Covid-19 in Bangladesh-Rohingya's largest refugee camp. Dhaka has detained nearly one million refugees in Myanmar's Rakhine state. According to humanitarian agencies, approximately 350,000 displaced people are vulnerable to the disease. Experts have warned that Cox disease in Bazaar (Bangladesh) could spread rapidly through crowded, sewer-soaked alleys, where the persecuted Muslim minority is housed in canvases and bamboo boats (*Deportation and…*). The Bangladeshi government has also restricted mobile internet access for nearly 900,000 Rohingya from refugee camps around Bazaar. People suspected of carrying the virus are stigmatized, which leads to underrepresentation of symptoms and failure to seek treatment.

There are precedents for the cooperation of states with the aim of resolving or reducing the intensity of conflicts. International agencies have supported cooperation between the lines of conflict when organizing mass vaccination campaigns. Non-state armed groups have already assumed some responsibility for COVID-19 responses. Myanmar's strongest non-state armed group, the Wa Wa State Army, quickly introduced travel restrictions and launched public health information campaigns (*Peace and the pandemic…).*

In Mali, the situation remains also tense. Mali held late parliamentary elections, despite an insurgency in the central and northern regions. Mali's main opposition leader, Soumaila Cisse, was ambushed in March, 2020 while campaigning in the northern region of Timbuktu. The attackers killed his bodyguard, taking Cisse and six members of his delegation hostage (*How Covid-19 is…*).

Since 2004, southern Thailand has been fighting a bloody confrontation between local armed cells and the Thai army. Hundreds of shootings, bombings, reprisals and revenge attacks have killed more than 7,000 people. The threat of COVID-19 has led to a minor decrease in the situation, as the main rebel faction has informally decided to postpone hostilities until the pandemic is present (*Peace and the pandemic…).*

In the context of the emergence of the COVID-19 virus, the African continent is now the prelude to a possible tragedy. States on this previous continent have faced diseases such as Ebola, AIDS or malaria. Government capacities in many cases are unable to help due to internal concerns, the reduction of the COVID-19 outbreak. Although the epidemic could disrupt some of the violence and terrorist insurgencies in the strip stretching from Somalia to Senegal, this is by no means a consolation, because, in a likely emergency, the violence will take on a different dynamic. There are conflicts and violence that are just beginning. The challenges that now threaten global public health as severely as the international economic system will have difficult-to-diagnose implications for the development of pre-existing conflicts. The „civil" war in Libya, beyond showing signs of distinction, has increased in intensity, despite the growing number of outbreaks in North Africa. Both the UN-recognized Tripoli government - backed mainly by Algeria, Qatar and Turkey - and Khalifa Haftar's national army - backed by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, France and Russia - know they can't stop the conflict even in the event of a pandemic. In this case, the emergence of COVID-19 can act as a catalyst for conflict (*El COVID-19 y el estado*).

Somalia, the country in the Horn of Africa, is also affected by the virus. Coronavirus could, in fact, be more widespread and could soon overwhelm the health system of a country that has been in conflict for almost three decades. Somalia was plunged into chaos with the fall of autocrat Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991, and is now facing regular attacks by the al Qaeda-linked militant group Al Shabab.

Defense forces in southern Cameroon (SOCADEF) are noticing a temporary ceasefire due to the coronavirus outbreak. Its leader, Ebenezer Akwanga, said his group would cease fire between March 29 and April 12, 2020 in order to allow humanitarian assistance and testing the people in the area. According to SOCADEF, the majority French-speaking nation has been marginalized. For three years, Akwanga's group has been fighting government forces in English-speaking regions trying to create a separate state called „Ambazonia". However, there is no indication that the Red Dragon, Tiger and Ambassador Defense Forces - major rebel groups seeking independence in Cameroon's English-speaking areas - will cease fire on the back of the coronavirus (*How Covid-19 is.*.).

Northern Mexico is a no less pessimistic picture. It gives the image of a state whose population is economically affected, a circumstance that reflects the strengthening of groups associated with criminal acts against society in regions where there is a lack of governance. Mafias dedicated to the production or distribution of illicit substances in the world, as well as those responsible for the illegal trafficking of goods, have been affected by the sharp drop in demand. The reaction of each organization will depend on their specific circumstances, in some cases they will have to migrate to other illegal activities, such as theft, extortion or cybercrime; in other cases, they will become more violent and try to use the opportunity to expand. Otherwise, in some regions of Latin America or Asia, criminal groups will become important allies in monitoring compliance with social isolation (*El COVID-19 y el estado).*

In Venezuela, as the Crisis group announced in 2016, the clash between the Chavist government and the opposition has compromised health services. States trying to stop the spread of the virus will certainly be worried about the arrival of new flows of refugees. Colombia and Brazil, for example, which initially welcomed those fleeing the crisis in Venezuela, have closed their borders, but the need to escape the worsening poverty and health risks in Venezuela could lead to the illegal crossing of Venezuela border of an increasing number of migrants.

The Covid-19 crisis could also worsen the humanitarian crisis in Central America, partly linked to the Trump administration's immigration policies, and increase the already high number of violent crimes. After announcing the closure of its southern border for all traffic, starting March 21, 2020 the United States is looking for measures to prevent the flow of migrants and refugees from Central America. El Salvador and Guatemala banned all flights of Central American nationals expelled from the United States in mid-March. The ban has been lifted in Guatemala, but it is unclear whether the United States can continue evacuations while the two countries have banned all international passenger flights.

In a context in which Central America's already fragile economies are under strong pressure, expulsions from the United States and Mexico could expose an increasing number of these displaced populations to a cold reception in their country, as national populations can be worried about spreading the virus. Many deportees may have no choice either to return to the border with the United States, using human trafficking networks, or becoming victims or accomplices of criminal groups and gangs that are present throughout the region.

One of the largest centers of virus spread in Europe was Italy. Rome's decision to quarantine the entire country and isolate the population - 60 million people - provoked an immediate reaction from neighboring states. Austria, Slovenia, Hungary and Switzerland are strengthening control at the Italian borders, checking the health of passengers and requiring medical certificates. Flights and travel are limited. As of March 16, Germany has closed its borders with Austria, Denmark, France and Switzerland. The virus virtually eliminates the European free movement area (*Коронавирус влияет*).

The coronavirus pandemic did not cause the disappearance of international conflicts, but the intensity of some became lower. Thus, according to the statements made by S. Markedonov, an employee of the Euro-Atlantic Security Center MGIMO, due to the spread of coronavirus, international conflicts have not disappeared - the conflict continues in Syria, Donbass and Nagorno-Karabakh. For example, in Donbass there was an exchange of prisoners of war, people returned to their families. But many problems remain unresolved. In addition, as Markedonov noted, the COVID-19 virus has not affected the confrontation between the Russian Federation and Western countries, and no one has begun to lift sanctions from Iran in the midst of a pandemic (*Эксперт оценил..).*

Conclusions

To date, large outbreaks of COVID-19 have occurred in prosperous and relatively stable countries - these are China, Iran, Japan, Italy and South Korea. Each of these states has a strong central government and organized medical services. But in countries with less developed health systems, the virus will be harder to fight and detect. This is true for some African states, as well as for the war-torn territories of Syria, Libya or Yemen. Another major problem is the many refugees in the Middle East in Europe. In fact, these people were beyond any social guarantees. They live in crowded camps, in poor sanitation. This makes them the most vulnerable target for a pandemic. Millions of immigrants are scattered in Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, Syria and Iran. The uncontrolled movement of people without access to basic care will only increase the spread of the disease .

Thus, analyzing the situation in conflict zones, we can mention that the repercussions of COVID-19 virus can be devastating not only for poorly developed states, but also for developed ones.

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VII. EVENT

RESEARCH ON WAYS TO DEEPEN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP FOR 2020 AND BEYOND

Eliza VAȘ [*]

The European Institute of Romania (EIR) is implementing the project „*Consolidating and promoting Romania's position as a relevant actor in the decision-making process at the European level*" code SIPOCA 400 / code SMIS2014+ 115759 in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (project leader), the Secretariat-General of the Government and ÉcoleNationaled'Administration from France.

With the main objective to develop a public policy in the field of European affairs, the project also includes a series of thematic analyses together with the organisation of workshops and public debates. In this regard, EIR has launched a public call in 2019 and selected five research teams that are in charge with drafting the thematic analyses and presenting the outcomes in the scheduled events.

One of the research teams was tasked to look into ways of deepening the Eastern Partnership (EaP) for 2020 and beyond.Coordinated by Professor Mircea Brie, University of Oradea – Faculty of History, International Relations, Political Science and Communication Sciences, the team also gathersseveral specialists on EaP from the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration:Lecturer TeodoraBițoiu, Lecturer MirunaButnaru-Troncotă, Lecturer Ana-Maria Costea.

Thus, the first stage of the research process consisted of a workshop organized in Bucharest, from 5 to 6 February 2020, when more than 25 governmental representatives and other stakeholders joined the discussions facilitated by the team of authors. The main elements of the workshop were focused on: discussing the first stages of the thematic analyses, including the data associated with the Eastern Partnership Index, and testing the five scenarios on the evolution of EaP; validating the recommendations for the reform of EU instruments under the post-2020 EAP initiative; completing an individual questionnaire regarding Romania's interests within the EAP as well as inter-institutional coordination in the management of the EaP by the Romanian institutions.

[*] Expert within the European Institute of Romania

In the months that followed the workshop, the researchers worked to develop the first draft of the thematic analysis that was later presented for feedback in a public debate, organised online. On June 4, approx. 50 participants joined the event and engaged in the debate moderated by the team of authors.

The aim of the event was to test the scenarios on the evolution of the Eastern Partnership and to present the conclusions and recommendations from the thematic analysis, such as:

- The Eastern Partnership should be defined as a governmental priority for Romania and integrated in a specially designed strategy;
- Romania should focus on several areas of interest for the Eastern Partnership, such as security or energy, respectively on shaping strategic projects for increasing regional cooperation;
- More attention should be paid to Romania’s trade ties with the EaP countries, especially those focused on exports(goods and services);
- There should be set in place a framework for civil society, Romanian citizens and cultural agents to engage in good neighbourly relations with EaP partners.

Following the public debate and the favourable feedback received, the team of authors will further develop the final draft of the thematic analysis and present it to the European Institute of Romania and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the end of July, this year.

VIII. HONOURED PERSONALITY

LAUDATIO

At the award of the title of Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of Oradea to Professor Richard SAKWA

The Senate of the University of Oradea, at its meeting of September 26, 2019 decided to award the title of Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of Oradea to Professor Richard Sakwa, from the University of Kent (UK) based on the decision 82/23.07/2019 of the Council of the Faculty of History, International Relations, Political Science and Communication Sciences, at the proposal of the Department of International Relations and European Studies.

The unanimous decision of the Senate of the University of Oradea was based on the appreciation of the scientific and didactic activity of Professor Richard Sakwa and the prospects of collaboration with the University of Oradea and especially with the Department of International Relations and European Studies.

The Senate decision was brought to Professor Richard Sakwa's attentionby address from October the 17th, establishingNovember the 7th, 2019, 10.00 AM for the public award ceremony.

Professor Richard Sakwa is one of the most outstanding political scientists in the world, specialized in the post-Soviet space, Russian and European politics. Since 1987, he has lectured at the University of Kent, Canterbury (UK), at the Department of Politics and International Relations, where he is a permanent and invaluable member of the academic board of the University. He finished his doctoral studies at the University of Birmingham (UK), successfully defending his thesis entitled *The Communist Party and War Communism in Moscow, 1918-1921* in 1984. Besides being an alumnus of the University of Birmingham, where had also finished his master studies at the Centre for Russian and East European Studies (CREES), he was awarded a BA (Hons) Degree in History at the London Schools of Economics and Political Science (UK). Moreover, Mr. Sakwa was the Head of School of Politics and International Relations, in the 1 August 2010 - 31 July 2014 period, and Head of Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Kent, in the 1 August 2001-31 July 2007 period, giving evidence not only of prolific teaching skills, but also of excellent organizational competence.

The introduction of a new BA in European Politics, running from October 1998 and of a new MA course called 'European Politics and Democracy Studies' from October 1996 could also be enumerated amongst professor Sakwa's directorial achievements.

He has been a visiting professor at the University of Essex (UK), University of California, Santa Cruz, (United States), at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris (France), and at the the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (formerly of Lille 2).

Professor Sakwa is a member of various associations and organizations, such as:

- International Laboratory on World Order Studies and the New Regionalism, Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs, National Research University-Higher School of Economics, where he is a Senior Research Fellow and co-director;
- Faculty of Political Science, Moscow State University, where he was awarded the title of Honorary Professor;
- Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, where he holds the title of Associate Fellow of the Russia and Eurasia Programme;
- Since 2002, he has been a Programme Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences (FAcSS);
- Since 1998 he has been an Honorary Senior Research Fellow of the Centre for Russian, European and Eurasian Studies (CREES), University of Birmingham etc.

As a result of his excellent scientific, teaching and editorial work, professor Sakwa is the noble holder of various academic awards, distinctions and prizes, varying from honorary professorships (Moscow University), senior and associate fellowhips (Senior Research Fellow and co-director of the International Laboratory on World Order Studies and the New Regionalism, Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs, National Research University - Higher School of Economics; Associate Fellow of the Russia and Eurasia Programme at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House etc.) to distinguished chairmanship (Chair of the Advisory Board of the Eurasian Political Studies Network (EPSN) etc.

He is a member of numerous scientific groups and editorial boards of journals:

- Review Panel of the Finnish Academy of Sciences
- Founding Series Editor for the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES) publications
- East European Politics
- Siberian Historical Research
- eJournal Politics and Governance,
- Russian Academic Journal (Moscow)
- Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society book series (Stuttgart)
- Perspectives on European Politics and Societies
- Review of Central and East European Law
- Europe-Asia Studies (Glasgow)
- Russia and Eurasia Programme of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London)

He has been involved as coordinator or expert in numerous European projects, of which we mention:

1. Principal Investigator, for the following project: 'Eurasian Political Studies Network: Developing comparative studies of regime transformations in multicultural societies and state and nation building processes in the post-soviet region'.(2004-2007) - University of Kent at Canterbury - United Kingdom (lead) whit universities from Armenia, Belarus, Czech Republik, France, Kyrkystan, Kazakstan, Lithuania, Russia and Ukrain.
2. Co-investigator on the project 'Modernizing the Russian North: Politics and Practice',

2011-2013. Coordinated by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.

Although, rather versatile and always novatory during his decade long research, his main fields of interest could be grouped around 5 main themes, namely:

- Problems of European and global order
- International politics and the second Cold War
- Political development in Russia
- Nature of postcommunism
- Global challenges facing the former communist countries

These themes are reflected in 11 books, the latest of them *Russia's Futures, Polity,* 2019 - dozens of articles, which complement this laudatio.

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Consequently, without diverging in biographical or catalogue examples of the works, the Senate of the University of Oradea concludes by expressing its firm belief that the award of the high degree of Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of Oradea, to Mr. Richard Sakwa, is not only a profound gesture of appreciation for one of the names of international reference in the field of International Relations and especially those in our immediate vicinity, but at the same time it is also an opportunity for the group of teachers and students from the Department of International Relations and European Studies to have potential collaborations with first-class personalities from all around the world. At the same time, for the University of Oradea, the award of this title to Mr. Richard Sakwa represents an honour to count among its members one of the most influential representatives of the academic environment from the United Kingdom.

Oradea, 7th November 2019
The Senate of University of Oradea

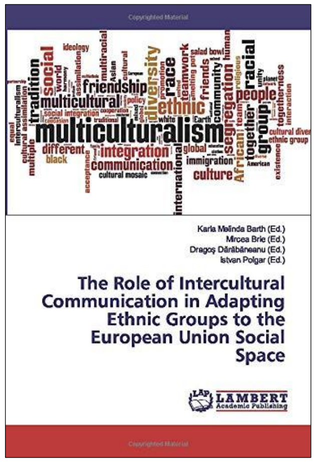
IX. BOOK REVIEWS

Analele Universităţii din Oradea, Seria Relaţii Internaţionale şi Studii Europene, TOM XII, pag. 295-303

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION SOCIAL SPACE

Anca Oltean*

Book review of Karla Melinda Barth, Mircea Brie, Dragoş Dărăbăneanu, Istvan Polgar (eds.), *The Role of Intercultural Communication in Adapting Ethnic Groups to the European Union Social Space,* (Lambert Academic Publishing, 2019). ISBN 978-620-0-45841-4.



The book coordinated by Karla Melinda Barth, Mircea Brie, Dragoş Dărăbăneanu and Istvan Polgar (editors) with the title *The Role of Intercultural Communication in Adapting Ethnic Groups to the European Union Social Space* and published at Lambert Academic Publishing in 2019 is divided into several sections: intercultural dialogue and interethnic coexistance in the European Union (after a comprehensive introductory study), the role of intercultural communication and European Education, and, last but not least, Social values, integration and multicultural compatibility in Europe.

The book starts with the introductory study "The role of intercultural communication in adapting ethnic groups to the European Union Social Space. Introductory Study" written by Karla Barth, Mircea Brie, Dragoş Dărăbăneanu and Istvan Polgar. The authors state that the world of the European culture is a world of cultural homogeneity, a fenomenon connected with the process of globalisation and cultural diversity. In the process of globalisation which implies standardization and uniformization of cultural norms, the regional specificities and the local culture are somehow undermined. The authors consider that "Cultural diversity, pluralism and multiculturalism are specific elements of the European space" (Karla Barth et al, 2019: 11). Refering to the integration of Muslims in Europe, the author state: "If Europeans are able to assimilate Muslim immigrants, or if there will be a conflict of values remain an open issue" (Barth at al., 2019: 12) This integration of different ethnic groups in Europe happends in the context of consolidation of economic, administrative and political bodies in the European Union. The opinion of the authors is that "Interethnic and intercultural relations are meant to ensure openness and cooperation between Europeans, this being the only way to strenghten a European welfare state" (Barth at al, 2019: 13) Intercultural communication in the university makes the stakeholders to ask themselves about the cultural dimension of their existence. Reffering to Romania, the authors state that here we deal with a multicultural social space where lived together Romanians, other ethnic groups that brought their contribution to the development of Romania.

The first theme approached by the volume was "Intercultural dialogue and interethnic coexistance in the European Union" focuses on the form of interaction of the

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ethnic groups, including the emergent groups in the European Unionn which aspire to get a desirable social status in the European Union. It comes up the issue of Roma minority, the issue of migrations in the Republic of Moldova, the social and cultural values of the catalans. Last but not least, it is discussed the role of the church in the life of different minorities. The second theme approached by this volume is "The Role of Intercultural Communication and European education". It is important to have a pedagogical approach which to make cultural differences compatible. (Barth at al., 2019: 15) Intercultural education should not be implemented only by the educational institutions but as a form of social pedagogy (Barth et al, 2019: 15) The authors consider that education in general terms and intercultural education have an important role in determining social behaviour. Another aspect emphasized by this volume is about how schools in Romania will assume European values and how can be these transposed into society by means of intercultural diaogue. The third theme approached by the volume is "Social values, integration and multicultural compatibility in Europe". The idea of social space of the European Union and of multicultural compatibility are realities and patterns for the European Constitution.

The first section of the volume has the title "Intercultural dialogue and interethnic coexistance in the European Union" and it starts with the paper of Dragoș Dărăbăneanu, *Intercultural Communication and the European Social Compatibility in the Romanian Society*. The author underlines that intercultural communication is essential in the globalization process (Dărăbăneanu, 2019: 23) It is necessarry the adaptation of different ethnic groups to European Union social space, concludes the author. The author worns his readers upon a danger "We must also emphasize that ethnic purity sometimes develops into tensions and this takes place everywhere, due to the nature of man and the basic attributes of human society. This is why multicultural relations must be cultivated, monitored and evaluated". (Dărăbăneanu, 2019: 24) The author underlines that integration is not possible without intercultural communication and that the humanity pursued the phenomenon of interpersonal communication allways. The author focuses the two types of social communication: formal interpersonal communication and informal interpersonal communication. Dragos Dărăbăneanu shows that the context of many crisis in Europe is not only financial, but also "political, social, mental and even, ideological". The author consider that the need for self-knowledge takes place in the context of interpersonal communication by communication interactions. Last but not least, the author Dragoș Dărăbăneanu quotes Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann who was the witness of the process of intimidationg the Jewish minority during the World War II. In the opinion of Newman, public opinion represents a social force, a mechanism of social controll.

Ana Damaschin in the article *The Essential Role of Intercultural Dialogue in Social Cohesion, Equality Promotion, Reconciliation between Peoples and Peace among Nations*, asserts that the purpose of the article is to analyse the role of intercultural dialogue as a social phenomena in the European Union. In the actual conflictual context, in the present day European societies, it becomes obvious that the promotion of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity must be a priority of the European mandate. The author considers that in the actual context "the acknowledgement of diversity, the promotion of intercultural dialogue and the essential protection of human rights are the main parameters for the consolidation of democracy, freedom, respect, equality, peace and social cohesion". (Damaschin, 2019: 39) But the present day reaction on the European continent is contrary to integration, is the opinion of the author. It develops to grow a "self-protection feeling" because of nationalization and internalizations of borders. Xenophobia, racism and discrimination increased. In the part of conclusions, Ana

Damaschin asserts that "cultural diversity is not a problem in itself" but it often gives rise to conflict and misunderstandings. In the European integration process, different nation-states must work together in order to achieve common goals. The issue of cultural diversity must be adresssed by a strong and cohesive Europe. (Damaschin, 2019: 50) By means of intercultural dialogue migrants and refugees are involved in the process of building an integrated union. Last but not least, the author said that the intercultural dialogue implies the acceptance of diversity, difference and otherness. (Damaschin, 2019: 50)

Christian Bergmann in the article *Switzerland- a multilingual state, not a nation state,* starts by analyzing the historical background of Swiss multilingualism, focusing on the most important pinpoints from the history of Switzerland and concluding that multilingualism in Switzerland dates back more than 1000 of years ago as any citizen master at least two national languages. The author points out that in 2019, Switzerland is still divided in three language regions, as for instance one for the German speaking population, one of the French speakers and one for the Italian speakers. German language is spoken by approx. 63% of the population, French is spoken by 22.7% of the population and the Italian is spoken by 8.1 % of the Swiss population. (Bergmann, 2019: 58-59). In what it concerns the religion, the linguistic border do not correspond with the religious boundaries, asserts the author (Bergmann, 2019: 61).

Elsa Pollozhani in the article "Distinguishing the multicultural from the multiethnic and EU integration: Albanians in the Republic of North Macedonia" talks about the multhiethnic and multicultural aspect of the Republic of Macedonia. The author raises the question of what will we choose between multiculturalism and multiethnicity? Her research method in this study is qualitative research method. The author starts by making the historical analysis of the Republic of Macedonia. After the demise of communism, the pluralist system imposed in Macedonia. It followed a process of socio-economic and political transition. The author concludes: "The trajectory of socio-political developments during the last three decades in RNM- revolves around the triangle-ethocentrism-multiculturalism-bioethnicity whereas political discourse is continuously flooded by syntagmas such as multiethnicity and multiculturalism". (Pollozhani, 2019:88) The author underlines the complexity of state reality in Macedonia which is revealed on different planes: the multhiethnic, multicultural, multilingual, multi-confessional. There are several ethnicities in Macedonia, asserts the author: Macedonians, Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Roma people, Serbs, etc. (Pollozhani, 2019: 89) There are present several religions in Macedonia: Orthodox religion, Islam religion, Catholic religion, other small religions. Concepts like "communication", "intercultural dialogue", "inter-ethnic coexistance", "cooperation" are not approached accordingly not even in present days, is the opinion of the author. (Pollozhani, 2019: 90) The author focuses its attention on the theme "discrimination based on ethnicity" by saying that marginalisation or exclusion of a certain group from a certain society is a phenomenon encountered in contemporary societies. In the Republic of North Macedonia is present the discrimination on the basis of ethnicity. Such cases of discrimination, it shows the author are present in employment in public and private sector. Roma people are more marginalized in the Republic of North Macedonia than other ethicities. Other kind of discrimination is, in the opinion of Elsa Pollozhani, the discrimination based on ethnicity. The author created a survey where the majority of respondents believed that the phenomenon of discrimination is encountered in the "health sector, education, judiciary and security/ police". Political discrimination is hapenning around the election campaigns.

In the part of conclusions, the author states that the Republic of Northern Macedonia is facing a paradox oscillating between its evolution towards a multiethnic and a multicultural society and the dominant monolithic, mono-ethnic and mono-cultural state. (Pollozhani, 2019: 98)

In the paper of Jusuf Zejneli and Faton Shabani, "Macedonia-Greece dispute resolution agreement and the constitutional amendments", the authors focus on the challenges of the signing of the Greece-Macedonia agreement and its priorities. In 1995, Grrece and the Republic of North Macedonia signed an Interim Agreement and in 2004 a "Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of Offices for Consular, Economic and Trading" in Thessaloniki and Bitola. The author conclude the roads of these agreements: "On January 11, 2019, the Macedonian Assembly with 81 votes for, no vote against and restrained adopted the constitution changes envisaged by the Prespa Agreement and subsequently promulgated it. In this case, the new name will be: the Republic of North Macedonia. It is noted that these changes pave the way for membership in NATO and EU. During the constitutional changes, the opposition was not present in the Assembly Hall" (Zejneli & Shabani, 2019: 104) In the Republic of Northern Macedonia there are encountered ellements of parliamentary system of government together with ellements belonging to the presidential system. The power of the state is based on the system of separation of powers. Concerning the official relations of the Republic of North Macedonia in 2001 it was signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement and in 2005 the country get the status for EU membership, two notable achievements. (Zejneli & Shabani, 2019: 110) In the part of conclusions, the authors stress that the mutual pact achieved by Macedonia and Greece opens the way for Macedonia to join NATO and to begin negociations with the EU, a notable historical achievement. The country accepted the name of Republic of North Macedonia which replaced the previous name of Yougoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Natalia Putină in the article *Republic of Moldova's Policies in the context of liberalization of regime of the visa regime with the EU –The Impact on the migration process* asserts that the EU is negociating visa liberalisation dialogues with some countries not belonging to EU in the continuation of the policy of Schengen acquis, issuing short-term visas from 90 days during half a year. Several countries led the negociations for visa liberalisation such as: Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, the former Yougoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and another three countries which signed the Eastern Partnership such as Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. The implementation of visa liberalization agreements happened 5 years ago. The author focuses later on on the relations with the EU's Eastern Partners. The author focuses on the importance of Eastern neighbourhood for the relationships of the European Union with these countries. Regarding the visa policy, firstly were integrated the Baltic states, then the Republic of Moldova. Not the least, Natalia Putină focuses on the countries of destination for Moldovan migrants. Both EU and Russia, asserts the author, are countries of destination, for Moldovan migrants. There is a third actor which whom Moldova has migratory ties, namely Ukraine. The traffic Russia-EU requires law expenses, visa-free entry on Russian territory and knowledge of Russian, and this is why so many people use it. EU, is a target region for labour migration who work mostly in Italy, France, Portugal, United Kingdom, Greece and Romania. The migratory moldovan ellements in EU are older and better educated, remarks the author. Later on, the author Natalia Putină focuses on the impact of the implementation of the visa free regime for Moldovans. In this sense, the author focuses "on the analysis of the statistics on migration and demographic circuit combined with quantitative sociological research". She used a questionnaire to collect data. 273 respondents were used in this questionnaire. By the introduction of visa free regime for Moldovan citizens, freedom of movement became a real freedom for the citizens of this country.

Emilia Nicoleta Șchiop in the article *The cultural values of the accession negociations between North Macedonia and the European Union* mentions that a top priority of the European Union was its extention in the Western Balkans. But because the internal crisis, in this region, the enlargement was postponed. The author draws the historical context in which developed the attempt of EU to extend in the Western Balkans. Last, but not least, Emilia Nicoleta Șchiop focuses on the European Enlargement Policy, as a main priority of the EU. The author emphasizes the important role played by the association agreements: "Association agreements provided the legal framework for relations with potential members until accession, even after they were advance to membership: candidate status and pre-accession alignement" (Șchiop, 2019: 142) Last but not least, the author focuses on the current state of accession negociations on an analysis on North Macedonia. The author quotes a report from 2015 when North Macedonia seemed to be at a high level of preparation for the development of a market orriented economy. There is a regress in public finance management. But in turn profit increased, intvestment increased, industrial production recovered, but labour market were affected by structural impediments and the unemployment rate increased, tax discipline evolved negatively in 2014 and 2015, points out the author, the budget deficit increased. Government-business cooperation decreased and the banking system remained stable. After the analysis of the current state of Serbian integration in the state of limited progress with the neccesity of certain fields in conformity with the acquis (legislation on short term capital, agriculture and payments system), the author concludes that states outside of Europe can cause reasons of insecurity in the region and the fact that the region of Western Balkans has more chances to integrate but integration process postponed.

Irina Pop in the article *Lack of the intercultural dialogues as a room for xenophobia* emphasize an important conclusion, Western Romania shows anti-migrant attitudes without potential migrants. The government assigment of a quota of 600 migrants for the North-Western Romania pose the problem of the creation of a centre for migrants in Satu Mare, idea rejected by Petre Toba, secretary of internal affairs. A similar quota of 600 refugees is designed also for Bihor county. The author defines intercultural dialogue according to 2003 Opatjia Declaration: "Intercultural dialogue is an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's global perceptions". (Pop, 2019: 160) The author brings into discussion hard intercultural dialogues of the prominent actors of the public life: "the officials, political parties actors, NGO's actors, cultural actors, universities' actors, religious actors, etc." Other kind of dialogues defined by the author are soft intercultural dialogues, organized ussually by same public actors, caractherized by a "wise selection", "a climate of dialogues", a "savoir faire"). A third cycle of dialogues emphasized by the author is "mono-cultural monologues on intercultural dialogues", expressed by the same actors. The author defines them as "they simply focus on imposing their perspectives, interests and values on the public sphere diversity" (Pop, 2019: 164)

Osmad Mohamed Elmahdi in the article *Refugee students education requirements in EU, example, deterioration of education in Syria* shows the consequences of Arab Spring in Tunisia with the Tunisian revolution from 2010 which spread in Syria, Libya, Yemen, Egypt, Bahrain, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia. After providing the number of victims in the Sirian society in the years of the revolution, the author focuses on the educational crisis in Syria. Because of he war, several school buildings were destroyed and many children have no possibilities to attend the school (2.8 out of 3 million) and 50% of the refugee kids have the possibility to attend school in their refugee camps. The author suggests that the refugees camps from EU should be prepared with teaching staff, places, facilities, giving the example of the German refugee program, Ankommen. The author makes a trip to Bucharest were 5 Islamic-Arabic multicultural schools were registered (visited by the author and 12 school were rabic in total in the city) and study the activity of these schools.

Istvan Polgar in the article *Tools and models of minority integration in the European Social Space* talks about demography and migration as elements of modern society that impose the need to integrate the minority communities. The national state is considered by some authors as a bypassed model. The author tries to identify the obstacles existent at the Eastern and Southern Border of EU, considering that "the way that ethnic minorities are included in the democratic process strongly influences the inter-ethnic relations at the state level and the creation of an inclusive society is an important task for any democratic government". (Polgar, 2019: 184-185) The author intends to focus on the financial instrument that allows to the traditional and new minorities to be integrated into the European societies. Minority unemployment rates increses the rate of unemployment in the European Union. In the member states of the European Union, they are many states that have to assist migrants. Such funds are: European Structural and Investments Funds, Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation, Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, Health for Growth programme.

The second part of the book is entitled "The role of Intercultural Communication and European Education" starts with the paper of Maria Cristina Florescu and Sorin Ioan Cuc, "Theoretical aspects of Romanian vocational education in European Context", emphasizing the Liberal-English system, the Etatist-French System and the Dual-German System. Loredana Muntean and Adina Vesa in the article "Intercultural education through Art" presents, firstly some key concepts such as "intercultural education", "intercultural communication", "multiculturalism". The second part of the paper presents art as a form of communication in multicultural education , point out the authors. (Muntean & Vesa, 2019: 221) Another paper presented in this section is the one of Georgeta Bara and Marioara Roșan, "Intercultural education in educational institutions in Romania. Various activities based on intercultural projects in the kindergarten. The authors consider that it is important to "learn to live together" with the development of communication skills with a case study to achieve intercultural goals in kindergarten bringing together ellements of interference of different cultures (Romanian, Hungarian, Slovak). Claudiu Gabriel Bonaciu wrote the paper, "Educational cultural development in the rural environment in the European context". The author asserts that the education is a component of the rural space. Education through the intermediation of European Funds in the rural areas is a good premise for development. Adela Bradea and Valentin Cosmin Blândul wrote the article "Teaching and learning in special education with information communication technologies project – A way of intercultural research". The article intends to present some issues of the education of students with disabilities with the help of ICT. Adela Bradea wrotes the article "Interculturality- a new general competence in the study of Romanian language and literature at the secondary education". One of the competencies that the children in secondary education learn after pursuing the course of Romanian language and literature is intercultural education, point out the author, intending by this article to make a qualitative analysis of Romanian language and literature curricula and textbook from the secondary education. Nicoleta Ramona Ciobanu in the article “The Multicultural Dimension of storytelling in the teaching and learning process” gives priority to the literature in the education process.

The other papers focuses on the issue of ethnicity, multiculturality and education in the continuous communication processes. The volume remarks through diversity, variety of approaches, openness towards “the other”, interculturality, and different ethnic background of the authors which surely brought their contribution to the issue of intercultural communication in the various social spaces of the European Union.

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MIGRATION CHALLENGES FOR EUROPE

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Review of: Hans Winkler (2015), *Herausforderung Migration*, Graz: Leycam

The migration phenomenon represents one of the most important challengesin the last decades for the European countries, most of them being underincreasingly intensity ofemigrant's flows, a challengeto which a coherent and unitaryreaction of policymakers in European Union is tardily.

Winkler in "*Herausforderung Migration"*, as a consequence of migrants flows intensification in the latter part of 2014 and the early of 2015, analysed the process of migration, starting from the sources of emigrants and influence factors, finishing with the recognition process of refugee status in the country of destination, presenting a multitude of data and facts, stating in the conclusionten theses of migration.

More than 20 000 000 emigrants from Libya and the Horn of Africa, the Near East and Afghanistan, are on the move, aiming for the Europe territory. The number of emigrants will increase with the passing of time, one the one hand, due to conditions in countries of origin, civil wars, economic situation, political and social systems, disasters of nature, demographic explosion in Africa whose population is projected to reach 2 billion by 2050, respectively due human capital necessarily of a Europe on an ageing trend of the population, seeking to balance its deficit through these influxes.Modern means of communication and transport, led to the amplification of migration, through the easy transmission of information about "Life in Europe", in conjunction with the lack of perspective in the native countries of the remaining people, sparked the attraction and led to the willingness to pay the price of emigration, risking their lives and financial resources. Migration has become a global phenomenon, with around 60 000 000 people moving, according to the UNHCR report for 2014, 19.5 million emigrating from native countries, 38.5 being internal migrants, Syria occupying with 11.6 million emigrants by far the first place among thestates considered a source of emigration. Europe is not the only one exposed to the phenomenon of migration, USA is confronted with the flows of emigrants from Mexico and Central America, Australia has taken special measures to reduce the number of immigrants, by intensively combating the phenomenon in the countries of origin of migrants through anti-emigration promotion programs. Another measure was to fund Papua New Guinea and Cambodia to take over some of the number of those arriving in Australia.

Migration became a business, the most important beneficiaries being "die Schlepper", persons who are involved in the illegal migration activity, helping and offering for a heavy fee, support, routes, hosting and transport for migrants, in order to

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reach one of the countries of destination. The testimonies of immigrants from refugee centres about the journey to Europe, without giving too much information about traffickers, appear to be the same, night marches, transportation in lightless cars, crossing the Mediterranean Sea, registration in refugee centres and the journey to the final destination. For these, each emigrant must pay around 10, 000 euros, most of them borrowed,having the obligation to return the loans once they are settled in the West. The duration of the journey may take between two months and three years depending on the available resources.

One of the negative aspects of migration and travel to Europe is the death of emigrants in the "Tomb of the Mediterranean", thousands of people findingannuallytheir end here. After the fall of the Gaddafi regime, Libya became a favourable place for traffickers, developing here the main starting point for crossing to Europe, the Libyan coast Guard being unable to cope with traffickers due to precarious technical facilities. The boats used for crossing are not specific to the carriage of persons, being also overloaded, leading to tragedies such as the famous cases of the summer of 2014 in which 700 people lost their lives and the one inApril 2015 when 800 people died in the waters of the Mediterranean See. If in 2012 the number of those deceased in the Mediterranean waters account 39 for 1000 persons transported, in the first part of 2014 their number fell to 4 for 1000, in the second part of the year climb sharply to 50.The reduction of the number of deaths was due to the action ,,Mare Nostrum", initiated by Italy, through which the boats of the financial guard met and took over the refugees, unfortunately this operation was replaced by the Triton programme managed by the external border service of the European Union, the negative resultsbeing observed.

The European Union was surprised unprepared. The large influx of emigrants, from both routes used, the Balkan or Mediterranean, caused serious problems for the states, that received them, or it was transited by the emigrants. The preferredemigrant's destination being the states with friendly policy for refugees and a social system built pro emigrants, such as Germany, Sweden, and Austria. In Austria the number of asylum requestsreached 28,000 in 2014. The European Union had to find a solution in order to balance the distribution, on one side, of the refugees in the overcrowded centres in Greece and Italy, respectively those who opted for refugee status in a high proportion in countries such as Germany, Sweden, Austriaor those who are waiting in France around Calais.The measures took by the European Union include: a common agenda for migration policy, more efficient strengthening and protection of external borders, reduction of illegal migration, a common asylum policy and a new migration legislation. Regarding the redistribution of migrants, two measures were taken, Relocation, based on article 78 of the EU Treaty, which provides the distribution of migrants based on quotas in all EU countries, respectively Resettlement, an operation under the aegis of the UN regarding migrant's redistribution.The proposal for quotas has encountered adverse reactions among EU member states, if countries like Austria have gladly received the relocation based on quotas, thereby reducing the pressure on overcrowded refugee centres, others have had vehement reactions against, countries like Spain, Poland, Hungary or the Czech Republic that refused this system, nor the Dublin agreement, with subsequent amendments, regarding the migration and asylum policy did not bring to much satisfaction in Italy, Greece or Malta, which was considered to be a major disadvantage for them.

Measures taken at the European Union level have been unsatisfactory for many member countries, forcing them to act individuallyso that they defendtheir own national interest. These measures include the construction of protection fences applied by the states as Hungary, Bulgaria and Spain in its enclave in Morocco in order to halt the entry of emigrants into their territories and the transit. Another measure considered was the reintroductionof customs control in Schengen member countries, endangering the current format of this free movement system.

Regarding Austria, asylum applications doubled over a year, reaching 28 000 in 2014, data for 2015 showing anincreasing tendency. A detailed analysisreveals surprising information, with men representing 75% from the number of applicants. Impressive is also the number of unaccompanied minors, which amounted over 2000. Regarding nationalities, in the top three ranked, Syrians represents the largest group with 3424 people, followed by Afghans 2393 and Kosovo 2206. Each immigrant must go through the mandatory stages, in order to receive the status of refugee in Austria. The first step is to register in one of the three EAST centres (first assignmentcentre) which are in Traiskirchen, Thalham and Vienna International Airport.It followsa verification of the refugee status under the Dublin II Treaty, after which the person is entrusted to care centres. Following a positive decision, the person whit an asylum status receives the right of residence and travel within Austria. Even those with a negative response, who are in the situation that insecurity conditions in their countries don't allow repatriation, receive the subsidiary right of protection including the right of residence for a specified period of time within Austria.Particular attention is given to Syrian refugees, due to the dramatic conditions in the homeland, nearly half of the 23 000 000 citizens of the country are leaving their homes due to the civil war and the actions of the Islamic state. Most of them have fled to other areas of the country or in neighbouring countries, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, about 150 000 starting towards Europe, using the Balkan route and through Libya. For them, a special humanitarian programme has been created since 2014, with 1500 people being accepted by redistribution by the UN Migration Agency. This programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Interior, the UN Migration Agency and the Catholic Church in Vienna.

When we talk about migration and Austria, the first thing we think about is that migration is generated from areas such as Africa and the Near East, but the reality proves something else, namely that more than 60% of people of foreign nationality established in Austria in 2014 comes from other member states of the European Union, the first place occupied by Romania, followed by Hungary and Germany, 80% of European citizens coming from the new EU-joined states. Half of the foreigners living in Austria in 2014 were citizens of other member states of the European Union, accounting 518. 670 people, among the largest communities counting Germany, Croatia and Romania.In the field of university studies, 68% of the number of students enrolled at a public university is represented by EU citizens. 72.4% of the persons with a residence right from other EU countries were active on the labour market, above the rate of inclusion of Austrian citizens which is at 71.1%. The unemployment rate among European citizens established in Austria amounted 25% of all registered unemployed. They are not only the most frequently met among the unemployed, but a third amongst the beneficiaries of the social system are being registered for receiving the guaranteed minimum income granted to all non-employed persons or unemployment aid. Family aid is another component of the social system, whereby families with precarious incomes are financially supported, representing an attraction for social migration. Data on migration and their correlation with the beneficiaries of the social system in Austria, challenged Sebastian Kurz, the minister of foreign affairs at the moment, to seek an analysis and a reform of social systems within the EU in order to reduce migration caused by most favourable social systems.

Moderate actions are not a solution to solvethe migration. All the organizations empowered, all political and religious debates acknowledge that the resolution of this phenomenon can only be done by direct intervention into the generating source, but without doing anything or establishing a concrete action plan. Some sustain the variant of financial investments in the poor countries but ignore the fact that billions of dollars were invested in Africa for more than half a century, loans are granted at low interest rates, and now the African continent is worse than before. External financial aid is less costly than cleaning up those states, either we talk about the countries affected by internal conflicts such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria or the poor states from the Horn of Africa, Libya, or West Africa undermined by corruption. The solution would be to create a social and an economic environment through external intervention so that emigration no longer represents the last option for citizens of these countries. Europe's human capital needs for labour market were expected to be covered by these migrant flows, wanted to be assimilated as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, the evidence showed that only a small percent of them are skilled and can be integrated into the labour market.

The economic aspects of migration are complex with certain benefits for countries of emigrants. Money transfer from the West, made by the immigrants integrated into the labour market, helps to balance the financial deficits of the countries of provenance, for some poor countries like Lesotho or Moldova representing the main source of the gross domestic social product. It also contributes to support the cost of living for the remaining family members or in some cases to fund the journey to Europe for the other family members. These money transfers solve partial the problems in native countries, having just local and temporary development effects. For a significant improvement in domestic conditions, measures should be needed to tackle poverty at a general level.

The 10 theses of the migration policy set out by Winkler are:

1. *Migration is not a crime*, a lot of people made this statement with pathos, but it has a confusing underneath, referring to the fact that every person can travel anytime, anywhere to seek happiness. Indeed, migration cannot be considered a crime, but it is also true that rejecting migrants based on objective considerations is not a crime. Europe cannot be the rescue station of all the world's under-privileged.

2. *Both, illusions and twinge of conscience are not a good basis for politics*. What is happening in the Near East, the Iraq crisis, the civil war in Syria, or the disputes between Iran and Saudi Arabia are not only due to the interventions of the West, but also a consequence of disputes in the Islamic world and the terror installed by the Islamic State. The failure of post-colonial development and the sense of guilt for European colonialism in Africa cannot last forever, Europe as an emigration destination, cannot be the saviour’s hero of millions of people from the African continent.

3. *Current migrations cannot be compared with those from the past*. Current emigrants wishing to reach Europe have different kind of motivations, from poverty, political instability, civil wars and Christian persecution. In the past, immigrants who arrived in Austria from Hungary and Yugoslavia were motivated by revolt and war pressure, their exceeding the actual number of emigrants, however fear and reluctance to the current migration is much higher. The answer lies in the fact that the number of those from Hungary and Yugoslavia was limited and could be approximated, much of them returning to the native countries after conflict dissipation, while the number of actual emigrants cannot be estimated, how many will be and how much will keep the migration,

being expected that a llarrived will remain. Another factor is that the emigrants in Europe came from the same cultural area.

4. *There is no mention in human rights that provides the right to life in Europe*. There is provision in human rights regarding protection against persecution, but there is no provision on the fact that man must and can live in a country he chooses. Being poor does not automatically mean that you have the right to emigrate to what country you want, and that country is obliged to approve the asylum request. The solution is that poverty should be combated in the country of origin by creating the premise of a satisfying life.

5. *Who opens the boundaries for all, compromises the right to asylum*. The right to asylum should have persons in urgent situations where their survival depends on this measure. Compromising the chances of all those who can and have the right to benefit from such a measure is possible by granting the rights of asylum and immigrants for economic and social reasons to other categories than that in question. In order to solve the problem for the other categories of asylum seekers, Europe should develop a strategic selection system in refugee centres in African countries of origin and transit countries, throughmore intensive cooperation with those countries on this issue.The selection and framing of a certain category of asylum-seekers should be made in these places, so it can be noted whether the person can be accepted as a refugee, a qualified person for work, covering the argued human capital deficit of EU member countries, or the request is denied.

6. *Tabuu falls under the pressure of reality*. One of these examples is the transfer made by the Austrian authorities, who have acted for political reasons and under the pressure of the organizations than from the willingness to help, of 500 asylum seekers in the centres of Slovakia, where they have to wait for procedures finalisation which grant asylum right for Austria, procedures which are carried out in Austria.

7. *In order to reduce immigration in the social state, Austria must reduce its attractiveness.* Austria is known among emigrants as a country, which in addition to the rule of law and the protection it offers, is also a state that provides social assistance as few countries in Europe do. With the recognition of the asylum status, the person is integrated into the social system, receives financial support to ensure the guaranteed minimum living level, and material, aid that can be equivalent with the income of anormal employee. The money received are not used for professional training, required for integration in Austria and the labour market, but is transferred to the remaining family members and used to ensure their living. This is a distortion of the purpose for which financial support is granted. A solution to this problem would be to replace financial aid with the provision of goods, services and food.

8. *Those who have received a negative answer on their asylum applications should be repatriated*. Rejected persons must be sent either in the country of origin or in the first country in which they entered in the EU, thus respecting the treaty of Dublin. Unfortunately, this is not the case because emigrants are reluctant to disclose their routes and the country in which they entered the European Union for the first time.

9. *If the EU does not reinforce external borders, the internal borders will reappear*. The security of the external border was the guarantor of free movement within the European Union. The members of the Schengen area have been accustomed to free movement at border crossings, but lately this routine has changed, the old controls being reintroduced at some points. This is a phenomenon that intensify if serious measures are not taken to strengthen the external border and neutralize illegal migration.

10.*Migration must be combated at origins.* It is clear that Europe is not an option of saving emigration for all the poor population in Africa, but it will always remain an attraction especially for those who have noalternative in their country. Billions of euros invested by the EU in Africa were not used just for development, some of them being access by corrupt people and systems for individual purposes. Where the EU is financially involved, should do something more, to demand good governance, the key of development. African States will only have a chance if they are integrated into the globalization system, implicitly in the system of world labour division.

This analysis provides concrete data on migration and it can be stated that presently has become a global phenomenon, influenced by a multitude of factors (economic, social, political, natural, etc.) that put pressure on developed states, especially EU member states as consequence of an attractive social systems and pro-migration policies. In order to balance the migration, two types of measures should be implemented. The first category of measures are the internal measures across the European Union to revise migration policy, a uniformity of social systems and the improvement of the external border. Second category of measures relate to actions that combat migration in countries considered sources of migrants, through investments and measures that lead to the improvement of social and security conditions so that emigration becomes unwilling. Improvements of current conditions will require important resources and extended period of time tillgeneral significant results will be observe, costs that industrialised countries should be willing to commit.

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THE EU – ROMANIA'S CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

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Review of: Alina-Carmen Brihan (coordinator), *The EU – Romania's Centennial Celebration, 100 steps towards an active European citizenship*, Tritonic Publishing House, 2018

To date, much research has been conducted as regards the meaning of active European citizenship. Against such a background, this paper addresses two issues from the perspective of a major political event in the history of Romania, namely the celebration of 100 years from the fulfilment of the Romanian national state with the unification of historical provinces in a single state, called Romania. The innovative and unique character of this work is given exactly by the themes it approaches.

This paper represents, as pointed out by the coordinator herself, the framework of a project that seeks to capture structures and themes from different levels of the European Union governance. In terms of structure, it includes an Introduction, an introductory study, two chapters and the Conclusions. The theme of each chapter in this study is presented extensively in several studies, signed by several specialists and practitioners in the field of European affairs.

The first chapter is suggestively entitled *Between the Internal and the International Dimensions of the European Union: Institutions, the Decision-making Process, Policies, Channels and Means of Participation*. Here, the coordinator of the paper discusses issues such as: the Presidency of the EU Council, the activity of a Member of the European Parliament, the Jurisprudence of the Court of Justice, Financing from the European Union Budget, the Role of non-governmental organizations, and last but not least, the European Service for External Action (EEAS). All the topics discussed in chapter onecontinue to be considered significant forcurrent theoretical approaches, all the more so as they are debated in the process of active citizenship in the European Union. In order to provide a deeper understanding of the topics addressed in the opening chapter of the study, the coordinator of the paper refers to the Romanian Presidency of the European Union Council with the beginning of the first semester of 2019. In that context, Romania had to manage important issues such as: completing the Brexit process, advancing negotiations with regard to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, the definition of a new Ten-Year Strategy, the post-Europe 2020 Strategy. Nine specialists, who are also practitioners of European affairs, belonging to both European and national institutions, the private sector, NGOs and academic environments, presented their

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professional experience in a language as accessible as possible for the Romanian citizen. The coordinator of the book, by including these nine articles in the volume, aimed at informing citizens about various structures and topics that have as subjects information at European level and stimulating citizen participation, promoting active multilevel citizenship by showing channels and means whereby citizens can participate in the various stages of European decision-making and European policy-making.

The chapter continues with the presentation of the way in which the European Parliament, as the only European institution directly elected by the European citizens, is organized and carries out its activity. The topic of the European Parliament was approached from the perspective of how its attributions evolved during the formation of the European Union. Last but not least, the topic is discussed from the perspective of the attributions held by the Romanian Presidency during its mandate as regards legislative and non-legislative causes, looking also at its role in the consolidation of the European project, in the context of the debates on the future of Europe. Currently, a more active involvement of European citizens in the process of decision-making at the European level is perceived as necessary.

The coordinator of the publication proceeds to discuss the Jurisprudence of the Court of Justice, which establishes the citizens ‘rights. In this section, the contribution of theCourt of Justice jurisprudence is discussed from the perspective of active European citizenship development by means of the preliminary sending procedure. The first part of the article describes the major role played by the Court in the progressive ensuring of direct protection of individual citizens rights, based on the interpretation of fundamental treaties. The second part of the study illustrates the fact that the contribution of the Court was possible largely due to the close collaboration with national instances as part of the preliminary sending procedure. This aspect is discussed as the most important instrument available to the national judge.

The study continues with a description, by the coordinator, of financing at the level of the European Union, which is regarded as a practical perspective. The analysis aims at contributing to the expansion of such an understanding, by demonstrating the entire life-cycle of such projects, while also presenting a practical alternative on the different stages. The author of the study, Mrs Anamaria Magri Pantea, defines active citizenship as an essential aspect in supporting the relevance of the European Union in a world that is both globalized and divergent.

The next study, written by Mrs Roxana Turtoi, The European Service for Extreme Action is presented as an institution with an instrumental role in the implementation of external and security politics of the European Union, carried out in the context of the Policy for Security and Common Defence. The study includes two parts: a brief presentation of the European Service of External Action, focusing on the institutional side and a revision of the Policy for Security and Common Defence, with a focus on the decisional and the procedural framework whereby missions and operations are launched with the view of managing the different crises that emerge in region of maximum interest for the European Union.

The second chapter presents the topic - The national and local level of governance in Romania: Institutions, Subsidiarity, Mechanisms and Tools for influencing the European decision-making process. The coordinator of the volume continues to present the role of the Chamber of Deputies in the European decision-making process and finally discusses the Romanian local public authorities in the multilevel governance of the European Union. As for the role of the Chamber of Deputies in the European decision-making process, the author of this article, Mrs Roberta Anastase, presents, from the perspective of her professional experience, the key moments of the institutional reform process at the level of the Chamber of Deputies. It describes the role played by the Chamber of Deputies in the European decision-making process. The Committee on European Affairs, as the Committee on European Integration used to be called, was a common structure of the two chambers of the Parliament. After the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, the role of this committee has greatly increased. The Lisbon Treaty gave national parliaments a decisive role in the decision-making process.

In the article entitled: Romanian Local Public Authorities in the Multilevel Governance of the European Union, the coordinator of this book expresses her opinionthat Romania's accession to the European Union was of particular importance, as it led to important transformations and challenges both in terms of the national decision-making process, and as regards the place and role of Romania in influencing the European decision-making process. The author of the article, Mrs Alina-Carmen Brihan, university lecturer, presents the way in which the Romanian local public authorities exercise their role and place within the EU multilevel governance and the European decision-making process.

The article is divided into three parts discussing: the structure of EU multilevel governance, the place and role of the county council in the structure of local public administration, and a case study on the positioning of county councillors from Bihor County within the EU multilevel governance; the role of the county council in influencing the European decision-making process. The correlation of the theoretical framework with the data from the sociological survey shows that, at European level, an issue has arisen: that of increasing the role of local and regional authorities in the process of decision-making at the European level; at national level it is necessary not only to increase the level of information but also to develop effective collaboration mechanisms with the actors placed at different levels and belonging to different sectors.

At the end of the volume, the coordinator includes both aspects that relate to the European level of the multilevel EU governance, and to the national and the local level of governance. Thus, within the single system of multilevel governance of the European Union, at a moment when the profile of Europe is configured for the future, both the Romanian and the European citizen should rethink and develop skills for drawing, as efficiently and responsibly as possible, the way in which rights and competences will be exercised at all decisional levels – local, national, European.

With the publication of this volume, useful information has been provided as regards the mechanisms whereby governance is structured at different levels. It was also highlighted how decisions are made and influenced and, last but not least, how the voice of the European citizen is taken into account so as he/she can become involved in the future evolution of Europe in a way that is as efficient, complex and constructive.

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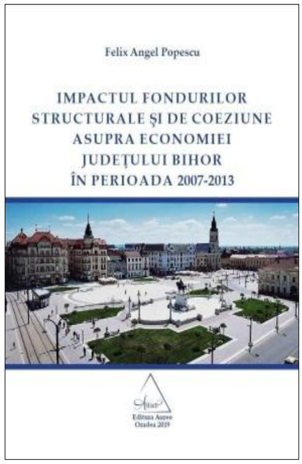
THE PARADOX OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S FINANCING POLICY: BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND REALITIES

Laurențiu PETRILA*

Review of: Popescu, Felix Angel, *Impactul fondurilor structurale și de coeziune asupra economiei județului Bihor în perioada 2007-2013*, Oradea: Aureo Press, 2019, ISBN: 978-606-794-213-2



Together with the introduction of social and economic cohesion policy in the European Union in 1986, and later on by the establishment of the multiannual financing cycles starting in 1988 (7 years successive programming periods), there came along a new preoccupation among theoreticians and practitioners from various fields of social sciences: how can Structural and Cohesion instruments can reduce the gap between more and less developed regions across E.U.? There was developed even an interesting branch of science, namely the impact evaluation field, with its specific hypotheses, assessment models and questionable results.

The author, Felix Angel Popescu, has tried to give a punctual response to the above stated question by doing doctoral research in the field of economic sciences where he used recent informatic - macroeconomic assessment tools developed by the European Commission. Putting together his multidisciplinary academic background, the author wrote the book in a dual manner – on one side, he used a set of prerequisites from the international economy field – but, on the other side, the book might be as well understood by the international relations and/or political sciences students, academics and researchers.

The book, entitled "The impact of Structural and Cohesion funds on the economy of Bihor county during the 2007-2013 period" (English translation of Romanian title) addresses, analyzes and interprets information, statistics and issues in the implementation of Structural and Cohesion funds. The idea of focusing the space of the research on Bihor county was outlined by the author in the sense of having a clear geographic delimitation, adequate economic and financial analysis instruments and available data on European funded projects. The concept of economic geography in relation with European funds is also stated in other authors works, like Ionescu-Heroiu et al. (2013) from World Bank, in their study about competitive cities in Romania.

The impact of European funds on a local, regional or national economy is rarely studied in terms of concrete achievements, so many authors bring into attention not only the economic and financial impact side (which can be translated into numbers or indicators), but also the social impact side (Tavistock Institute, 2003; Gârboan, 2006). After reading the scientific literature analysis made by Felix Angel Popescu in his book, it can be stated that the impact evaluation theory provides mainly 3 major directions of

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research bibliography: firstly, there are authors which deal with the method of ex-post cost benefit analysis; secondly, there are authors, which deal strictly with the method of theory-based evaluations; thirdly, there are the ex-post evaluation reports of operational programs, rural development programs and cross-border cooperation programs prepared by the relevant institutions in each Member State, which use the counterfactual evaluation method (the 'with funding' scenario versus the 'without funding' scenario).

From the point of view of the relevance of such research, whereas the theoretical aspects of the Structural and Cohesion Funds in the 2007-2013 programming period are made available by the European Commission and are well known and accessible in a large proportion, the book of Felix Angel Popescu focuses on studying and interpreting the counterfactual impact evaluation method, as well as on adapting, improving and applying specific simulations of macroeconomic models in order to validate this method. The book has a logical chain, starting with a comparison. at community level, continuing with an in-depth study at national level and culminating with a case study of impact evaluation on the North West region and on Bihor county.

The predicted difficulties regarding the research are highlighted by the author in various stages of his research. It should be noted that the evaluation of the 2007-2013 programming period means, in reality, the full study of the 2007-2016 time period (the n+2, n+3 rule), given that Romania sent the final balance of payment to the European Commission at 31st March 2017, for the closure of the respective programming period.

In the first chapter, the author highlights the difficulty of addressing the issue of absorption of Structural and Cohesion funds at Community level and triggers the need to compare Romania's position only with Member States that joined the European Union either in 2007 (Bulgaria) or in 2004 (Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia) and only those that have in common a development model similar to that of Romania. In the author's opinion, general statistics related to the implementation of projects can indicate certain results of implementation and can be interpreted in relation with well-defined financial indicators, but it is very difficult to quantify an overall economic impact at national level (e.g. the long debated topic about the impact of European funds on national GDP, over-promoted by many authors).

In the second chapter, regarding the analysis of the absorption of Structural and Cohesion funds between the regions of Romania, the author shows that it is difficult to assign a degree of regional competitiveness in the implementation of these funds, given that Romania does not have yet a fully functional administrative regions system (e.g. like Poland, as mentioned by Felderean, 2018), and it is difficult to determine to what extent the financial allocations for projects were made in order to reduce the regional development gaps and to gradually eliminate the rural-urban socio-economic disparities. An obvious difficulty is to compare the degrees of absorption by operational programs at regional level, it is also almost impossible to quantify the impact of projects implemented through the Operational Program Human Resources Development, the Sectoral Operation Program Environment and the Operational Program Administrative Capacity Development (programs which functioned during the 2007-2013 programming period).

In the third chapter, at the level of the macroeconomic analysis of Bihor county, the author suggests that it is difficult to establish if the development objectives of the county are correlated with the projects financed by Structural and Cohesion funds of both public beneficiaries and private beneficiaries. The author analyzes the economy of Bihor county and reflects on the development strategies of the county for the 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 periods, bringing to the fore the financing needs and priorities of the county.

The author revealed the strengths and weaknesses of the economy of Bihor county, interpreted the development indicators of the county and their evolution and made an individual debate for all the cities and some of the communes of the county.

The fourth chapter addresses the case study in order to provide a clear and intelligible perception of the concept of assessing the impact of Community funding at regional and county level. The author's own contribution to the understanding of this phenomenon is reflected in the impact evaluation made at regional level - North West region (NUTS 2) using the RHOMOLO model and at county level - Bihor (NUTS 3) using the TIATOOL model. Input variables were introduced, simulations were run and interpretations were performed on the output variables. The results are very pragmatic and essentially demonstrate that on the long term, the effects of European funds on local level (region or county, in this case) have the ability to grow or fade through the evolution of economic indicators (like GDP, investments, imports, exports, unemployment rate, etc).

As a concluding remark, the book has lots to offer to any interested reader, from a basic knowledge on the influence of the absorption of European funds in the economies of the Member States, towards a general knowledge on the dynamics of the Romanian economy in relation with the absorption rate of European funds and towards an in-depth knowledge of the financial, economic and social impact produced by the implementation of Structural and Cohesion funds in North-West region and Bihor county.

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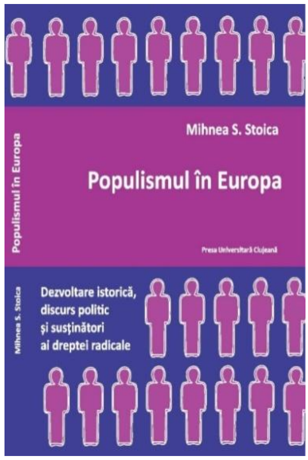
THE POPULISM IN EUROPE: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT, PHOLITICAL SPEECH AND SUPPORTERS OF THE RADICAL RIGHT

Ovidiu LUNGU [*]

Review of: Mihnea S. Stoica, *The Populism in Europe: Historical development, pholitical speech and supporters of the radical right*, Cluj-Napoca, The University Press, 2017, ISBN: 978-606-37-0175-7



Mihnea Simion Stoica is currently a university lecturer at the Science Administrative politics and communication Faculty within Babeș Bolyai University, in the communication and public relations departament. During his university studies, Mihnea Stoica had as a main focus the study of political parties, the political phenomenon and the political ideologies. The far-right and the populism are the topics that specifically caught his attention and also the ones that represent the main subject of his thesis, which later materialized in the book that now stands as the object of this review.

It can be seen, even after a simple analysis, that during his last years, the term of populism/populist becomes more and more used within political speech, on media or in the studies of specialists in the socio-human sciences area. Most of the times, on the political stage, the leaders of the political parties or the ones that represent them, accuse their opponents by saying that they practise populism or that they see them as populists. More than that, some parties and their leaders assume their populist title in the public speech, talking about the approach of the people's needs.

The magnitude of the phenomenon can be observed by looking at the last election cycles that took place on the European continent. Within more states of the continent, upon legislative elections, the populist parties have exceeded the electoral threshold and obtained seats in the legislative gatherings. More than that, on some European political stages, these managed to take a place on the podium of the most important legislative parties. In some cases, the populists are part of the government coalitions owning important portfolios within the government.

The work is structured in two big parts, called: „*The theoretical approach*" and „*The empirical approach*".

The first one, according to its name, aims to achieve an analysis according to the phenomenon. At the same time, this integrates several chapters in which the main focus is the clarification of several aspects about the definition of the concept, the history of the phenomenon, the geographic area where the populism has taken place, demographic

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theme, but also a detailed description of the populist movements from different European countries. The second part of the work, the empirical part, is focused on the phenomenon analysis itself. With other words, this concentrates on the collection, quantification and the presentation of the dates. Therefore, Stoica aims to outline the socio-demographic profile of the populist party electors, so as their opinions about some topics of current importance from the cultural, economical, and European sphere, in relation with the other parties.

Returning to the theoretical approach, but in a more detailed manner, the first chapter is dedicated to defining the concept of populism. The author points out the lack of an unanimously accepted definition by the majority of socio-human science researchers, a reason for which there are several types of understanding of the term. (Stoica, 2017, p. 25). Same as Mihnea, the majority of the authors in the social sciences field, that focus on the study of the populism, admit the difficulty of identifying an unanimously accepted definiton. For example, in the „Sociologia populismului" translated by Dan Burcea, the author Guy Herment points out the absence of a common point of view in defining the political current. (Hermut, 2007, pg. 36-44) Also stands in the ”Populismul Contemporan. Un concept controversat și formele sale diverse" work, coordinated by A. Caprinshci, G. L. Stoica, L. D. Dârdală, the absence of a common agreement on the term explication is highlighted. (A. Caprinschi, G. L. Stoica, L. D. Dîrdală, 2012, pg. 9-11) Another example is the „Populismul în Europa și cele două Americi: amenințare sau remediu pentru democrație", in which the same idea is mentioned, a wide variation of distinct meanings of the phenomenon. (Author Akkerman, Tjitske. Bruhn, Manfred. Deegan-Krause, Kevin. Mudde, Cas. Rovira, Kaltwasser Cristóbal. Tăut, Codrin. Juverdeanu, Emil. Şandru, Daniel. Mişcoiu, Sergiu. Gherghina, Sergiu, 2015, pg. 7-10) The ambiguity of the populism term and the different connotations that it can have are also pointed out in „Extrema dreaptă azi: ideologie, discurs, electorat" work by Lavinia Florea (Florea, 2006, pg. 15-17)

In the first sub-chapter, Mihnea focuses on the historical-geographical approach of the concept. On a different note, he comes back to the origins of the populism in the 19th century, from where a chronological approach begins and it holds up until this day. The geographic areas included in the study covers the following continents: Europa and North America, more exactly, Rusia and Romania in Europe, and USA in North America. According to his opinion, the populism consecutively develops from the temporal point of view, both in the Tzarist Empire and USA, and it is the expression of farmers riots from the two states previously mentioned. Its first attestation on American realm is appreciated as being the second half of the 19th century, following the Civil War, as a result of agrarian riots started by farmers, as a reaction to the governmental policies which were unfavorable for them. (Stoica, 2017, pg. 26-33) A short incursion in the history of populism is also made by the author Lavinia Florea, having a similar approach from the point of view of the origin of the phenomenon and its chronological evolution. (Florea, 2006, p. 17)

In the Tzarist Empire, the populism is commonly known as narodnicism, and as in USA, has its origins in the farmers riots. Also, the phenomenon was maintained by cultural groups made of aristocrats, small bourgeoisie and young people. The Narodnicism was an expression of the agrarian riots, but we also have to remind the fact that it developed a strong anti-Tzarist current. These aspects which the Russian populism can be identified by, were also scattered by the socialism, the reason why the most part of the supporters emigrated there. (Stoica, 2017, pg. 33-35) A special attention is directed to the Russian populism, in the historical approach of the phenomenon and the author Guy Hermut, having a sub-chapter about it. This illustrates the Russian narodnicism in a similar form to Stoica's approach, presenting its origin, the manifestation type and its evolution in the tzarist/soviet space in a more detailed manner. (Hermut, 2007, pg. 145-147)

The author also discusses the Romanian populism, known as poporanism, which has manifested itself on the territory of our country at the end of 19th century. Among specialists there are two sides of poporanism's origin. Some believe that its origins come from the Russian narodnicism, while others agree on the fact that this appeared in a natural way due to the favourable weather conditions. The poporanism supporters didn't create a political formation ,through which they could have sustained their ideas, so they promoted it through the PNL party, made up by more inner circles and opened to some extent, to support some ideas of populist nature. The end of poporanism, coincides with the transfer of ideas and their supporters in the National Peasant's Party. This step led to dilution of the group and the ideas of the poporanists (Stoica, 2017, pg. 36-51)

Regarding the populism's origins, Stoica and the majority of the science-politics authors agree that this started in the second half of 19th century and is one of the farmers riots result.

The next sub-chapter focuses on the linguistic evolution approach. On the other hand, Stoica, presents the semantic meaning of the term during time, pointing out its volatility. The populism term can be found in close contact with the following concepts: people and democracy. The first one can be considered the root of it, because all of the actions carried out by the current supporters are in the name of the people. At the same time, democracy is another concept that is closely connected with the populism. Sometimes, the adherents of this political current appeal to it, and not to democracy generally, but to direct democracy, which they consider to be the only and most useful form of people manifestation. (Stoica, 2017, pg. 51-64)

The chapter entitled „The Contemporary Populism- a concept under the sign of controversy" is focused on explaining some important aspects of today's populism. Therefore, in the first sub-chapter it is widely debated the framing of the political current, namely: are we talking about an ideology or a political strategy? Mihnea Stoica claims that the populism is a political supra-strategy and not a political ideology, because it doesn't include all of its characteristics. (Stoica, 2017, pg. 64-96) One of the main concerns of researchers' who focus their attention on populism, has to do with the current political framing, which raises some important question signs: are we talking about political ideology? are we talking about a political strategy? are we talking about something else? Specialists' opinions are divided in this way. For example, in „Extrema dreaptă azi: ideologie, discurs, electorat" work made by Lavinia Florea, the fact that populism is a „meta-doctrine" is mentioned, which translates through a general ideology. (Florea, 2006, p. 15) A similar opinion is also found in the „Sociologia populismului", by Guy Hermut, translated by Dan Burcea, in which the difficulty of framing populism among ideologies is due to the „doctrinal poverty". On a different note, it is said that populism is only limited to an idealization of people which leads to the doctrine idea. (Hermut, 2007, p. 45)

Later on, in the two following sub-chapters, two important concepts, tightly connected to each other, are debated, and those are: people and democracy. The last sub-chapter is allocated to the political topics used by populists to appeal the electorate, among which the following: media-the centrism/leader's image; the clericalism/ the appeal to religion; political reductionism; anti-elitism/conspiracy; stigmatization; the appeal to the absolute direct democracy. (Stoica, 2017, pg. 64-96)

In the last chapter of the theoretical approach, Stoica teacher, focuses all his attention on presenting the main populist parties from Europe, and those are: National Front (France);The Liberty Party from Austria (Austria); The Party for Liberty (Holland); The True Finns Party (Finland); UK's Independence Party (UK); So, the author illustrates an evolutionary image of populism over time, both on particular case, on state level, and also on continent level, outpointing today's populism image in Europe. (Stoica, 2017, pg. 96-180)

The first chapter of empirical approach is dedicated on identifying the socio-demographic profile of populist party supporters. The variations that have been taken in consideration by Mihnea for building the profile are: age, gender, religion, job status, education, interest in politics. The socio-demographic analysis is made on the basis of some statistics, provided by EUvox platform and made through European parliament election opportunity from 2014. As a result of the research, some common characteristic of the populist electorate supporters are identified, which can be found in the majority of the cases analized, like: the most part of the populist electorate is made of men, in more of the cases over 70%; the supporters are specially from the country side and the small urban side; they have average studies; they are employees or retired, they show a considerable interest for the politics; they belong to the developed regions of the countries etc. Of course, a fact has to be reminded; which is that in the studied cases, differences between populists can be noticed, an aspect found in Mihnea's analysis. For example, in the age variation case, differences between populists party supporters can be noticed. In France and UK, the populists electorate is made of old people, meanwhile in Osterlich and Finland, the electorate is made by young people. (Stoica, 2017, pg. 181-226)

In the last chapter of the empirical approach, the author is focusing on the analysis of opinions of the cultural, economical and European populist party supporters. The study is made for the populist parties which represent the object of the research. The cultural opinions of the populist electorate are in opposition with: immigration, which has to be reduced; the minorities in any shape or form; preserving the immigrants' culture, populists believe that immigrants must acquire their culture; the marriages between same gender people; the women's right of deciding on abortion. From the economical point of view, the populists' supporters agree with the fact that: the state should not intervene in economy; wealth should not be redistributed; the loans form the IMF and World Bank are not useful for the economy; and Russia should not be economically penalized. In relation with European Union, the populism adepts believe that the European bureaucracy is ineffective; the currency solely is not useful; the accession to the European community was not a good decision; the European integration should not continue. (Stoica, 2017, pg. 226-331)

As far as I am concerned, the work is professionally done, and it is very useful to the ones who embrace political interests. The structure is very well outpointed, and it gives the reader a chance to logically follow the study of the political phenomenon. The theoretical part creates a political image of the political current, which takes the reader on a documentary trip from where the populism started until this day. Later on, the complex populism and its different meanings are presented. Also, the author expresses his own thoughts and opinions about what populism represents and stands for today. All this, helps the reader create a wide perspective about the political current, which will help him to deepen the research developed in the empirical part. The empirical approach is also conceived, using the method and instruments most suitable for the research in question. The object of the research is carefully chosen and it includes a significant number of populist parties from several European countries. The data used by the author is collected form highly reliable qualified platforms and processed with particular attention and the results obtained shall be presented.

The conclusions are expressed in a concise and clear way, in addition to the author's opinion. The bibliography is well-selected, including numerous books, scientific articles, studies and electronic sources, from both national and international literature.

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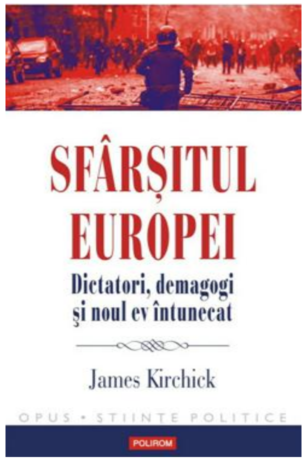
THE END OF EUROPE: DICTATORS, DEMAGOGUES, AND THE COMING DARK AGE

Ramona SFERLIC [*]

Review of: James Kirchick, *Sfârșitul Europei. Dictatori, demagogi și noul ev întunecat* [The End of Europe: Dictators, Demagogues, and the Coming Dark Age], Polirom, 2018



The End of Europe appears translated in Romanian at Editura Polirom in 2018, written by American writer James Kirchick, a former journalist for *New Republic* and an active researcher on European issues. The book is an interesting introspection, sprangled with subjective notes, of what the European Union is today and of what the European Union is about to become, in the absence of measures to strengthen ties between states and diminish the wave of exaggerated populism.

The stability of the European Union has been questioned for a number of years. If some say that there is a need for "more Europe" others are firmly saying that the European Union is down. Kirchick constantly states in the book that the European Union must now be more united than ever. The book, though it may be misunderstood, if we judge it by the title, is a pro-European volume and can be regarded as an invitation to uniting efforts, an encouragement to hope. *The End of Europe* is a book of the present, part of the family of books that open the reader's horizon of thinking, and the author is one of the writers studying European Union issues from an active observer perspective.

The volume is structured in 8 chapters: European Nightmare, Russia: on the edge of Europe, Hungary: Democracy Without Democracy, Germany: A New Rapolli, European Union: Tribulations in Paradise, France: Without Jews, Brexit: from Great Britain to Little England, Greece: From Polis to Populists, Ukraine: The New West Berlin. Each chapter is dedicated to the crises identified in the territory of a state, the problems presented are some that affect the state and the European Union.

In addition to the issues listed above, Kirchick also pays extra attention to US-European relations. He argues that America and the European Union must continue to blend the common values, values that have underpinned the latest modeling of history. Thus, the importance of the Europe-America alliance is treated with great seriousness by Kirchick. He states that the outcome of the US elections could not come at a more inappropriate moment, and the Trump's support to the pro-Brexit camp, the fracture of the European continent, cooperation with Russia and Syria could create irreconcilable ruptures. After over 70 years of mutual support, the withdrawal of American support is triggering an alarm signal. The author argues that in the absence of constant ties between the two powers, Russia will cure its authoritarian values.

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The author points out very well that Russia goes on the slogan to divide and conquer, taking advantage of all the existing crises of Europe, seeking to amplify them, concentrating on the destabilization of the European continent on all fronts. The issues in which Russia interferes are the inability of states to assimilate immigrants, the ever-increasing nationalism that is beginning to feel its presence in almost all states.
Kirchick also reminds of Russia's involvement in all actions aimed at destabilizing the order of European politics, recalling the occupation of Crimea in 2014, the invasion of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. Through these actions, Russia demonstrates that the transatlantic partnership is no longer present, being scarred by resources.

Not to be missed are Russia's attempts to intimidate NATO member states in its attempt to prove that art. 5 of NATO is worth neither the paper on which it is written. Russia is tackling aggressive tactics to weaken the transatlantic partnership. In other words, Russia wants to take part in the game without respecting the rules of the game. What Kirchick manages to demonstrate through this volume is that we are witnessing a paradigm shift. Until recently, the supremacy of the powerful states was the source of the main conflicts, we are now witnessing a new kind of Threat to the stability and security of the Union. Weak states such as Ukraine or Georgia have become the new sources of conflict between global power poles. Non-state actors are the ones who change the dynamics of security policies, Kirchick offers us examples of terrorist organizations as well.

Europe is now home to simultaneous crises, at a time when the sustainability of the economy, social cohesion, the eurozone and security are its most problematic chapters since World War II.

The author places the events, from the collapse of traditional liberal and conservative parties, to the rise of populist parties (Le Pen-France), the Syriza party in Greece. The book presents the common and fundamental values of states, values that need to be strengthened and defended against imminent risks to which they are subjected to.

The chapters dedicated to Greece and Brexit do not analyze in depth the problems of states. The author does not come up with a clear solution to resolve crises in the two states. In the case of Brexit, he recounts the groundless arguments of Nigel Farage and the UKIP Eurosceptics without the rhythm of one or the other, stating only that the UK has never been fully integrated into the European Union and that because it was not part of the Eurozone and Schengen.

Regarding the situation of Hungary, the author encourages Orban to recognize and accept history as he was, without continuing this demagogue role, by renouncing the Hungarian victims' complex and admitting that Hungary has never been more prosperous and more democratic as in the last years.

Illiberal democracy is another aspect that Kirchick approaches. The governments of Hungary and Poland are increasingly targeting extremism and populism, and this is due to the illiberal democratic wave. The West no longer trusts its own forces, and no longer has the force and resources to fight against the fanatical enemy. The volume is current, very well documented and structured, presenting Europe's current situation, the causes of the past that have led to the emergence of these problems, and outlining the measures needed to create a new Europe, a united and involved Europe.

The author argues that the elimination of populism inspired by a new generation of European leaders, starting from Le Pen and ending with Orban or Zeron, may be the solution to the balance of Europe. Kirchick makes an interesting parallel between the European Union and the fall of the Soviet Union, saying that, as no one expected the

Soviet Union to be, it was equally believed in Europe's political, social, economic and military stability until Brexit appeared.

Kirchick stresses that we must not forget that the European Union is the consequence of and the result of all the negative episodes of the past. He argues that since the past has spawned division, the time has come for the European Union to solve its problems in a collective manner, creating coherent fiscal policies, controlling borders in a common manner, updating asylum policies, encouraging trade.

The author asserts that more Europe, the solution that has always been used to respond to the crises of Europe, should not be understood in the form of a growing power delegation to Brussels, but in the form of increased cooperation based on the principle of Europe of the states of the nations.

The volume ends in an optimistic note, continuing with Winston Churchill's approach, and stressing that the EU may be the worst system of governance but is better than any of the alternatives.

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