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LA ROUMANIE, LA POLITIQUE ENERGETIQUE DANS LA ZONE DE LA MER NOIRE ET LE CRAYONNAGE DE L'IDENTITE REGIONALE

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Subjects of interest: Romania in the context of international relationships, history of foreign capital in Romania, relationships between Romania and Italy.

Abstract: *By making use of its status as riverine country to the Black Sea, Romania operates as an important actor of stability and security for this area, trying to act more and more like a real regional power, by signing new cooperation agreements and partnerships.*

Key Words: geopolitics, energetics security strategy, regional leader

1. La géopolitique de la Mer Noire

Le fait d'aborder la problématique de la zone pontique est, certainement, complexe, et les considérations de l'historien Gheorghe Brătianu concernant le destin de la Mer Noire sont très éloquentes: «le théâtre offert par le bassin de la Mer Noire favorise [...] des considérations qui dépassent les problèmes régionaux et qui se rapportent aux forces qui agissent sur l'histoire universelle»[1].

Situé à l'interférence de trois zones d'importance majeure – l'Europe (qui a ses sous-régions, l'Europe Centrale, l'Europe du Sud-Est, l'Europe Occidentale), le Moyen-Orient et l'Asie Centrale – l'espace de la Mer Noire est une aire importante de manifestation de quelques risques et de quelques foyers de conflit, ayant un impact substantiel sur la sécurité euro-atlantique. Loin d'être considérée comme une simple zone-tampon ou périphérique, la région de la Mer Noire est un connecteur d'importance stratégique, situé sur le corridor qui lie la communauté euro-atlantique (facteur fournisseur de sécurité et consommateur d'énergie) et le Moyen-Orient – la Région Caspienne – l'Asie Centrale (facteur fournisseur d'énergie et consommateur de sécurité) [2].

La géopolitique de la Mer Noire a donc une composante politique et de sécurité militaire, mais aussi énergétique, auquelle participent à la fois des états qui appartiennent à la Région Etendue de la Mer Noire et de grandes puissances[3], étant reflétée par des accords, par des partenariats stratégiques ou par le tracement des axes géopolitiques. La redéfinition de la

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[1] Gheorghe I. Brătianu, *Marea Neagră. De la origini pînă la cucerirea otomană,* Bucarest, Meridiane, 1988, p. 34.

[2] *Strategia de Securitate Naţională a României,* Bucarest, 2007, p. 32 [www.presidency.ro /static/ordine/SSNR/SSNR], 20 mars 2012.

[3] L'identité géographique de la Mer Noire est délimitée par les six états riverains – la Bulgarie, la Roumanie, la Turquie, la Russie, l'Ukraine, la Géorgie – qui constituent le cordon terrestre de son bassin maritime, auxquels on peut ajouter, selon les spécialistes du domaine de la sécurité et de la géopolitique, la zone étendue de la Mer Noire (ZEMN), c'est-à-dire la proximité immédiate de cette mer: la République de Moldavie, la région caspienne (l'Arménie, l'Azerbaïdjan) et la région balkanique (la Grèce, l'Albanie, la Bosnie-Herzégovine, la Serbie, le Monténégro, la Macédoine, la Croatie et la Slovénie).

problématique de la zone en tant que conséquence du processus de globalisation, mais aussi d'intégration régionale, a provoqué l'intérêt de quatre grands acteurs géopolitiques – l'Union Européenne, l'OTAN, les Etats-Unis et la Russie – chacune de ces puissances étant un promoteur de quelques stratégies propres concernant la Mer Noire.

L'Union Européenne est préoccupée par la géopolitique concernant la Mer Noire pour des raisons de sécurité et de stabilité (en ce sens, la Politique éuropéenne de Voisinage inclut aussi une stratégie pour l'Europe de l'Est et la Mer Noire) et pour des raisons économiques, étant donné la dépendance relative de l'Union vis-à-vis des ressources énergétiques russes.

La présence des Etats-Unis dans cette zone vise la consolidation de son statut de grande puissance, la politique de sécurité et la lutte contre le terrorisme asiatique, mais aussi la stimulation de l'accès libre aux ressources énergétiques de cette région.

L'Organisation du traité de l'Atlantique Nord s'est étendue sur la partie de l'Ouest et du Sud du bassin de la Mer Noire par son inclusion dans ses structures et par un Pacte de stabilité avec: la Turquie, la Roumanie, la Bulgarie et la Slovénie. En plus, les ex-républiques sovietiques: la Géorgie, l'Azerbaïdjan et l'Arménie ont exprimé en 2004 leur option d'adhérer à l'OTAN.

La Fédération Russe, la principale force économique et militaire de la zone de la Mer Noire, au moins jusqu'à la désintégration du communisme, a été confrontée, pendant les dernières années, à la tentative de trouver une nouvelle identité géopolitique; c'est une préoccupation qui a inclus essentiellement la maintenance – par l'intermédiaire de la Mer Noire – de l'accès aux «mers chaudes». Du point de vue économique, la politique agressive des compagnies russes Gazprom et Lukoil sur le marché énergétique de la zone étendue de la Mer Noire: la Bulgarie, la Grèce, la Turquie et la Roumanie. Enfin, pour un contrepoids à l'extension de l'OTAN et de l'Union Européenne, la Fédération Russe a consolidé sa collaboration avec les pays CSI – Bélarus, le Kazakhstan, le Kyrgyzstan, le Tadjikistan –, par la création de la Communauté économique eurasiatique (2005) et ensuite par l'initiation du projet de création d'un système monétaire unique (2010).

La Turquie, un pivot géopolitique dans la zone de la Mer Noire avec l'Ukraine, l'Azerbaïdjan, l'Ouzbékistan et le Kazakhstan[4], a été l'initiatrice de plusieurs projets institutionnels dont la Roumanie est aussi une partie: l'Organisation de coopération économique de la Mer Noire (1992), le Groupe de Coopération Navale de la Mer Noire (*BLACKSEAFOR*, 1998) ou *Black Sea Harmony* (2004), représentant des opérations de combat du terrorisme de la Mer Noire. Malgré le fait que ce pays a bien intensifié ses relations avec l'Union Européenne (les négociations d'adhésion ont commencé en octobre, 2005), la Turquie promeut cependant une politique en quelque sorte contradictoire par l'essai de maintenir la Mer Noire comme une «mer fermée»[5].

L'association des états dans des axes géopolitiques vient consolider le soutien réciproque en ce qui concerne la promotion de quelques buts communs dans la zone étendue de la Mer Noire. L'un des axes géopolitiques qui ont un potentiel considérable en Europe est l'axe Rhin-Main-Danube-Mer Noire (l'Allemagne, l'Autriche, L'Hongrie, la Roumanie), qui offre à l'Allemagne l'ouverture vers la Mer Noire, qui valorise le canal stratégique Danube-Mer Noire et qui facilite aux états participants l'accès vers la mer Caspienne. La constitution de cet axe met en évidence encore une fois l'importance de la zone étendue de la Mer Noire comme une aire tactique (des échanges classiques de marchandise et de services), mais aussi stratégique (l'existence des conduits de gaz/de pétrole, des voies d'accès maritimes, terrestres, aériennes, des flux financiers).

Les autres axes qui impliquent l'interférence dans la zone pontique sont l'axe Mer Caspienne-Mer Noire-Mer Méditerranée de l'Est, «un couloir d'aduction des macro-intérêts»[6], et l'axe Espace baltique-pontique-adriatique, qui réunit des zones ayant des intérêts économiques communs, mais aussi des confrontations militaires fréquentes. Étant donné l'existence de ces deux axes traditionnels, la Roumanie se trouve, selon quelques analystes, sous la pression géopolitique provenue de l'Ouest de l'Asie et de l'Est de

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[4] Zbigniev Brzezinski, *Marea tablă de şah. Supremaţia americană şi imperativele sale geostrategice*, Bucarest, Univers Enciclopedic, 2000, p. 53.

[5] Mihail E. Ionescu, *Marea Neagră de la „lacul bizantin" la provocările secolului XXI*, Bucarest, Militară, 2006, pp. 382-383.

[6] Vasile Marin, *Elemente de geopolitică şi geostrategie*, Braşov, Ed. Universităţii Transilvania, 2007, p. 259.

l'Europe; l'équilibration de ces pressions se produit en quelque sorte, plus facilement, dès l'entrée du pays dans les structures de l'OTAN[7].

2. La politique roumaine externe et la sécurité énergétique

Pour la Roumanie, le processus d'intégration a déterminé non seulement des transformations profondes sur le plan interne, mais aussi des effets réflexes sur le plan externe. Le nouveau statut acquis, mais aussi la position géo-stratégique reconnue ont été des facteurs favorables pour l'augmentation du degré de son implication dans différents contextes géopolitiques: la zone des Balkans, la zone étendue de la Mer Noire, la proximité de l'Europe de l'Est[8].

D'ailleurs, les objectifs établis par la Stratégie de Sécurité Nationale (2006) ou le document-projet du Ministère des Affaires Externes, *Repères pour une décennie de politique externe: Intérêts, Valeurs, Instruments* (2007), réfèrent à la dynamique communautaire et intracommunautaire, la relation transatlantique, la région de la Mer Noire, la proximité de l'est, la Fédération Russe, la proximité du sud – le monde islamique, le dialogue méditerranéen, le Moyen-Orient[9]. Les documents précisés dessinent, essentiellement, même s'il y a assez d'imperfections conceptuelles ou structurelles, le nouveau paradigme de la sécurité nationale (inclusivement énergétique); la construction de l'identité régionale, l'influence sur les nouveaux voisinages.

L'évolution des relations internationales des dernières années, les nouvelles tendances dans l'économie mondiale et la redéfinition de la sécurité énergétique imposent toutefois une revigoration de la politique roumaine externe: l'accentuation de la collaboration transatlantique sur le plan stratégique, mais auquelle il faut ajouter une composante économique plus forte, par l'attraction des investisseurs américains; la consolidation de la

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[7] Ib., pp. 259-260.

[8] Paul Dobrescu, *Geopolitica*, Bucarest, Comunicare.ro, 2003, p. 135.

[9] *Repere pentru un deceniu de politică externă: Interese, Valori* [www.mae.ro/politica-externa-repere-strategice], 10 mars 2012.

collaboration avec la Chine, un état marqué par une forte expansion concernant les investissements et la technologie; la reprise constructive du dialogue avec la Fédération Russe, l'exploitation maximale du potentiel géopolitique concernant la Mer Noire.

La vision concernant la politique externe et les réalités géopolitiques ou géostratégiques permettent des appréciations concernant l'importance de la Roumanie en qualité d'acteur international[10]. Une telle démarche suppose aussi une certaine difficulté au niveau conceptuel et au niveau de l'interprétation événementielle. Dans les documents officiels internes, la Roumanie est un «état qui a des compétences spéciales dans la zone de l'Europe de l'Est», qui assume un «rôle proéminent dans la région de la Mer Noire»[11].

L'utilisation de quelques termes très vagues («vecteur de la sécurité dans la zone de la Mer Noire»)[12] crée des confusions concernant le rôle de *puissance* ou *leader régional* de la Roumanie, un rôle auquel le président Traian Băsescu a fait référence plusieurs fois[13]. Selon les officiels roumains, l'état roumain pourrait être une puissance régionale par l'assumation d'un rôle pro-actif dans la sécurité de l'Europe Centrale et du Sud-Est. La presse roumaine ou étrangère admet la possibilité de la Roumanie de devenir une puissance régionale, prenant en considération sa position géostratégique concernant la Mer Noire[14].

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[10] Il faut faire la différence entre le concept de géopolitique et le concept de géostratégie. La géopolitique réfère à la relation entre la politique internationale, la puissance et les caractéristiques géographiques et concerne l'ensemble des conditionnements qui déterminent une certaine évolution au niveau de la politique territoriale des états (des personnes, des conceptions, des institutions). La géostratégie vise l'administration stratégique des intérêts géopolitiques et représente une méthode de l'action politique dans un certain espace (Brzezinski, 2000, p. 43). En fait, la géopolitique étudie les intérêts des acteurs dans un espace donné et élabore le scénario, la géostratégie indique les voies et les moyens nécessaires pour les réaliser (Hlihor, 2002, p. 38). Pragmatiquement, la géopolitique doit étudier le projet, et la géostratégie doit étudier l'exécution.

[11] *Strategia de Securitate Naţională a României,* Bucarest, 2007, pp. 29-37 [www.presidency.ro /static/ordine/SSNR/SSNR], 20 mai 2012.

[12] Ib.

[13] *Băsescu negociază cu Bush statutul de lider regional*, martie 2005 [www.ziaruldeiasi.ro /.../basescu-negociaza-cu-bush-statutul-de-lider-regional], 20 mai 2012.

[14] Carmen Rudnitschi, *O şansă pentru România: statutul de lider regional* [www.studiidecaz.ro /index.php], 20 mai 2010; *Le Temps: Romania îşi afişează deja ambiţiile de putere regională* [www.romanialibera.ro/.../le-temps-romania-isi-afiseaza-deja-ambitiile-de-putere-regionala-82093.html], 20 mai 2012.

Étant donné la relation solide entre le pouvoir et la sécurité régionale, la littérature de spécialité considère que la Roumanie a toutes les prémisses pour devenir un **pivot géopolitique** ou même une puissance régionale[15]. Le concept de puissance régionale regarde les composantes classiques d'un état (comme la surface, le nombre d'habitants, la force armée, l'économie ou la stabilité politique), mais aussi le rôle majeur qu'il peut jouer dans l'assurance de la sécurité de la zone, l'interférence avec les intérêts de quelques grands acteurs géopolitiques et la reconnaissance de son statut par les autres puissances de la région[16].

L'entrée dans les structures de l'OTAN, l'adhésion à l'Union Européenne ou l'interaction avec les grandes puissances régionales ou globales ont ouvert, indoubitablement, le chemin de la Roumanie vers une autre affirmation géopolitique ou vers une autre reconnaissance internationale. Certainement, la Russie continue à se sentir dérangée par l'ascension de la Roumanie dans la région; en plus, les ambitions énergétiques de Bucarest sont perçues comme des mouvements qui attaquent les projets russes. Entre la Russie et la Turquie, les deux grandes puissances pontiques, la Roumanie s'interpose de plus en plus souvent comme un acteur militaire et économique, soutenu par les Etats-Unis.

3. Le rôle de la politique énergétique dans la zone de la Mer Noire et la formation du statut de puissance régionale

Évoquant l'assertion de Gheorghe Brătianu qui dit que «l'histoire roumaine ne pourrait être comprise sans tenir compte des chemins et des influences qui s'intersectent [...] dans la zone de la Mer Noire»[17], il faut mentionner le fait que l'état roumain a l'intérêt de

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[15] Zbigniev Brzezinski, op. cit, pp. 54-60.

[16] Marius Hanganu, Cornel Marinescu, Ion Chiorcea, *Interesele României la Dunăre şi Marea*

Neagră. Proiecţia puterii navale, Bucarest, ed. Universităţii de Apărare „Carol I", 2007, p. 7.

[17] Gheorghe Brătianu, op. cit., p. 35.

s'affirmer dans la maintenance de la sécurité militaire, mais aussi dans la gestion de ses propres intérêts énergétiques dans la région[18].

L'importance stratégique de la zone étendue de la Mer Noire est donnée par les ressources énergétiques trouvées dans son périmètre, sur la plateforme de la Mer Noire ou par celles trouvées dans l'espace élargi, dans les républiques caspiennes Kazakhstan, Azerbaïdjan et Turkménistan.

En qualité de promotrice de la politique de l'Union Européenne dans la zone de la Mer Noire, la Roumanie affirme la nécessité de la transposition concrète des principes de la Synergie de la Mer Noire (2008) et du partenariat de l'Est (2009) dans différents domaines: le management des frontières, l'énergie, le milieu de vie, la politique maritime, la migration.

Pour la diversification des sources et des routes d'approvisionnement en hydrocarbures, la diplomatie énergétique roumaine soutient, comme stratégie de sécurité énergétique, la consolidation du corridor du Sud nécessaire dans le transport du pétrole (l'oléoduc PEOP), la matérialisation du gazoduc Nabucco, la finalisation du projet de transport du gaz naturel liquéfié Azerbaïdjan-Géorgie-Roumanie (AGRI), l'interconnexion du système national de transport du gaz naturel avec ceux des états voisins.

Le projet concernant la réalisation du conduit pétrolier paneuropéen Constantza-Trieste (le Système de Transport International du Pétrole et du Gaz, PEOP) a été initié en 2005 et vise le transport des ressources de pétrole de la mer Caspienne (Bakou, Azerbaïdjan) vers l'Europe, par l'intermédiaire des terminaux Supsa (Géorgie) et Constantza (Roumanie). Le conduit de 1.360 km, une moitié se trouvant sur le territoire de la Roumanie, a une capacité de 112 millions tonnes de pétrole et fonctionne à partir de 2010.

Sur le plan géostratégique, ce conduit contribue à la réduction de la dépendance de l'Europe à la zone pétrolière du Moyen-Orient et conduit à un décongestionnement du trafic par les détroits Bosphore et Dardanelles. En ce qui concerne la Roumanie, le conduit paneuropéen consolide le rôle majeur du port de Constantza dans cette région, le plus

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[18] *Strategia de Securitate Naţională a României,* Bucarest, 2007, p. 32 [www.presidency.ro /static/ordine/SSNR/SSNR], 20 mars 2012.

grand port de la zone de la Mer Noire et le quatrième port de l'Europe en ce qui concerne les dimensions, se trouvant sur l'axe des corridors paneuropéens de transport 4 et 7[19].

Dans le transport du gaz naturel il faut souligner l'importance des conduits qui fonctionnent: Crimée-Turquie et Russie-Grèce, la dernière transitant par le territoire de la Roumanie et assurant l'alimentation en gaz naturel d'une source unique (la Russie). L'un des plus importants projets concernant la construction des conduits de gaz terrestres doit relier la Russie à la Turquie, la zone Caspienne à l'Autriche, l'Allemagne à l'Italie via la Turquie, la Bulgarie et la Roumanie. Le projet Nabucco, qui est entré en viguer en juillet 2010, a une longuer totale de 3296 km (460 km se trouvent sur le territoire roumain) et représente, en tant qu'élément central du Corridor du Sud, une priorité pour la Roumanie et pour l'Union Européenne.

Dans la zone caspienne, la Roumanie a des intérêts économiques qui concernent la valorisation des ressources énergétiques et des intérêts stratégiques qui visent l'axe Le Golfe d'Aden-Le Golfe Persique-Shanghai. Azerbaïdjan est le point de départ d'une nouvelle route énergétique par l'intermédiaire de laquelle la Roumanie espère renoncer, en perspective, aux importations du gaz russe et réduire le marché européen appartenant à Gazprom. Ainsi, après avoir signé en 2009 un partenariat stratégique avec Azerbaïdjan, la Roumanie a eu l'idée d'un nouveau tracé énergétique par lequel le gaz caucasien peut arriver en Europe sans traverser les trois grandes puissances de la Mer Noire: la Russie, l'Ukraine et la Turquie.

On parle des connexions établies par la signature d'un partenariat stratégique avec l'Azerbaïdjan (2009) et la fondementation du projet AGRI (l'Azerbaïdjan, la Géorgie, la Roumanie, l'Hongrie). Le projet AGRI (2010) suppose l'apport du gaz de l'Azerbaïdjan, du gisement de Shaz Deniz, par le gazoduc Bakou-Tbilissi jusqu'au littoral géorgien, afin d'être liquéfiés; ensuite, le gaz sera transporté par des navires de grand tonnage à Constantza et redistribué vers l'Ouest, par l'Hongrie, et vers le Sud, par la Bulgarie.

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[19] En conformité avec la Conference Pan-Européenne de Crete (en 1994), les corridors paneuropéens de transport 4 et 7 sont: Berlin – Nurnberg – Praga – Budapesta – Bucarest – Constantza – Salonic – Istanbul, respetivement Constantza-le Canale du Danube-Mer Noire - Danube - Main – Rihn - Rotterdam.

Enfin, l'intention de la Roumanie de s'impliquer dans la dynamique des stratégies énergétiques de la zone pontique et caspienne et de devenir un acteur important dans ce périmètre est aussi une conséquence des partenariats établis avec quelques acteurs géostratégiques.

L'état roumain a accordé une attention particulière aux rapports bilatéraux avec les Etats-Unis par la signature de l'Accord Commercial (accorder réciproquement la clause de la nation la plus favorisée, 1992), du Partenariat stratégique et de l'Accord concernant les activités des forces des Etats-Unis stationnées sur le territoire de la Roumanie.

La décision d'emplacer le «bouclier antimissile» en Roumanie, prise en février 2010, a plusieurs significations qui dénotent: la consolidation du partenariat géostratégique avec les Etats-Unis, le désir de la Roumanie d'être un acteur régional important dans la zone étendue de la Mer Noire, la contribution à l'augmentation de la sécurité de l'espace pontique et de l'espace européen en général. Le Conseil Atlantique, qui s'occupe de l'assurance de la qualité de *leader*[20] des Etats-Unis dans le monde, a rappelé, dans le contexte de la sécurité transatlantique, l'idée de la formation d'un nouvel axe Washington-Berlin-Bucarest, qui devrait permettre le jeu stratégique concernant la Mer Noire et les bouches du Danube[21].

La relation avec la Fédération Russe est un autre point de la politique roumaine externe, un sujet sensible et controversé, puisque, après plus de 20 ans de diplomatie et de tentatives, la reprise de ce partenariat n'a pas donné des résultats notables, mais plutôt modestes, au niveau politique et au niveau économique.

Les tendances géopolitiques des dernières années ont fait la Russie être de plus en plus dérangée par les initiatives que Roumanie a manifestées dans le secteur énergétique, par son implication active dans la zone pontique et caspienne (la collaboration avec l'Azerbaïdjan, la Géorgie et l'Hongrie). On peut ajouter aussi les mécontentements des

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[20] Le terme signifie *grande puissance*. Selon Kenneth Waltz, une grande puissance se définit par: la surface, le nombre d'habitants, la dotation en ressources, la capacité économique, le pouvoir militaire, la stabilité politique et les compétences des dirigeants, Marian Cojoc, *Introducere în relaţii internaţionale* [facultate.regielive.ro/.../introducere_in_relatii_ internationale-68307.html], 10 mai 2012.

[21] Octavian Sergentu, *România în Europa de Est: între Scut şi lider regional* [www.basarabeni.ro /.../romnia-n-europa-de-est-ntre-scut-i-lider-regional-1353], 10 mai 2012.

officiels de Moscou concernant l'augmentation de l'importance militaire de la Roumanie dans la zone (le «bouclier antimissile») et le soutien pour la République de Moldavie.

Du point de vue économique, le commerce entre la Roumanie et la Fédération Russe s'est effondré pendant les premières années après la chute du régime communiste, le trend ascendant se maintenant toujours au cours des années '90. Dans la période 2000-2008, les échanges commerciaux entre la Roumanie et la Russie ont enregistré une augmentation modeste, mais sûre, grâce spécialement aux importations du secteur de l'énergie, la Fédération Russe étant l'un des principaux partenaires d'importation de la Roumanie[22].

Dans les relations bilatérales avec l'Ukraine, il faut préciser le succès roumain dans la solution du cas de l'Île des Serpents et du plateau continental par la décision de la Cour Internationale de Justice en février 2009. La Cour a accordé à la Roumanie le droit d'une exploitation de 9.700 km carrés et, implicitement, de 80% des gisements d'hydrocarbures de la plateforme continentale de la Mer Noire, située près de l'Île de Serpents (70 milliards mètres cubes de gaz naturels et 12 millions tonnes de pétrole) [23].

Une autre direction stratégique est définie en relation avec la République de Moldavie, la Roumanie ayant le devoir politique et moral de soutenir cet état dans le processus de démocratisation et d'intégration européenne. Dans le contexte général de la politique européenne de voisinage, la cadre de la Coopération transfrontalière pour 2007-2013 prévoit le partenariat entre la Roumanie et la République de Moldavie par l'intermédiaire de deux programmes qui reçoivent un financement européen: le Programme la Roumanie-l'Ukraine-la République de Moldavie et le Programme de coopération dans le bassin de la Mer Noire[24].

La Roumanie est, indiscutablement, la promotrice des intérêts de la Moldavie en rapport avec l'Union Européenne par l'interconnexion des réseaux de transport et énergie, par la supplémentation des fonds pour le voisinage de l'Est ou par le soutien de l'inclusion de la

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[22] Anca Stângaciu, *România și dimensiunea sa europeană*, Cluj-Napoca, Argonaut, 2011.

[23] Mădălin Necșuțu, *România bate Ucraina la Haga* [madalinecsutu.blogspot.com/.../romania-bate-ucraina-la-haga-cea-de.html], 2 mai 2012.

[24] *Relațiile bilaterale, România-Republica Moldova* [www.mae.ro/politica-externa-relatii-bilaterale-republica-moldova], 10 mai 2012.

République de Moldavie dans le groupe des pays des Balkans de l'Ouest, qui ouvrira ses chemins vers une future adhésion.

En conclusion, on peut constater le fait que, sous l'impact de la globalisation et des modifications internationales, la Pologne et la Roumanie deviennent des acteurs géopolitiques de plus en plus importants, la Pologne dans l'Europe de l'Est, et la Roumanie dans l'Europe Centrale et du Sud-Est. Pour nuancer ces aspects, il faut dire que, par le développement d'un fort courant pro-américain, la Roumanie a évolué rapidement pendant les dernières années en ce qui concerne la consolidation de sa position géopolitique et géostratégique. L'intérêt stratégique de l'état roumain de s'affirmer comme facteur de la sécurité et de la prospérité dans la zone étendue de la Mer Noire s'est concrétisé par une série d'actions constructives: des médiations, des coopérations, des accords, des partenariats.

La Roumanie constitue ainsi un facteur de stabilité à proximité immédiate des Balkans de l'Ouest, c'est une partie des scénarios de l'Europe danubienne avec l'Autriche, l'Allemagne et l'Hongrie, soutient des formes institutionnalisées de dialogue et de collaboration avec les états riverains de la Mer Noire, promeut avec succès ses propres intérêts économiques dans la région. Étant donné la particularité de la Mer Noire d'être une «plaque tournante» entre l'Europe, le Moyen-Orient et une partie de l'Asie[25], l'état roumain est impliqué dans la dynamique du transit euro-asiatique des hydrocarbures (pétrole, gaz naturel) par des accords ou des partenariats économiques (l'accord Nabucco, Constantza-Trieste) qui consolident sa sécurité énergétique.

L'exploitation des avantages géopolitiques de la zone pontique par la consolidation de la sécurité énergétique, le développement des corridors de transport et énergie ou le déroulement d'une politique externe basée sur la coopération et le dialogue et aussi la présentation de la Roumanie comme le membre le plus actif de l'Union Européenne dans la promotion de l'importance stratégique de la Mer Noire constitue l'opportunité la plus notable dans la préfiguration de son rôle de médiateur ou même *leader* régional.

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[25] Gheorghe Brătianu, op.cit.,p.34.

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LOOKING BEYOND A PERPETUAL REGIONAL DEADLOCK

RUSSIA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS AND ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE BLACK SEA REGIONAL COOPERATION

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Abstract: *The present study examines whether the last evolutions in the Black Sea Region support the region-building project proposed by the European Union or it asks for a reassessment considering the last issues the Black Sea states were faced with. It also aims to determine whether Russia decided to strengthen its national identity and pursue its national interests instead of actively participating in regional cooperation projects in the last ten years and what are the major reasons behind its actions. To answer these questions the study utilizes two indicators that examine Russian involvement in regional and institutional schemes of cooperation and its regional cooperation in the energy sector. Using mainly qualitative research instruments, the study determines Russia's current position towards the region emphasizing the major issues the European Union should take into consideration when formulating a strategy for the Black Sea Region.*

Keywords: **Black Sea region, Russia, European Union, National interest, Energy security, Regional cooperation**

Introduction

For centuries, the Black Sea region was the epicentre of different confrontations between very influential international actors and gradually evolved as a geostrategic axis which connects East and West and provides the transit route for many competing pipeline projects meant to secure the European energy supplies by transporting energy resources from the East. As argued by Celikpala, the region was firstly described as "the backyard for Ottoman and Russian empires, then an extension of the Soviet sphere of influence, more recently as the frontier of Europe and finally, as the extension of the Mediterranean world."[26] Despite the great number of internal political transformation that constantly challenged its process of regionalization over time, the region never lost its geopolitical significance.

This unique interplay between divergent economic and political interests belonging to states that have very different statuses and diverse degrees of energy dependency, has created in this area the premise of a perpetual regional deadlock. Apart from sharing a border with the sea itself, the riparian states have very little in common. There is no identifiable regional identity, no shared values and norms or a common regional culture in the Black Sea area. Therefore, this region is regarded as a political construct based strictly on economical and political grounds which focus on increasing the spheres of influence and on energy games.

In this context the Black Sea can be regarded as a "means" to economic cooperation plying an energy supplying role, as a consequence of deterritorialization or as a milestone in the history of European Union integration, but it cannot be regarded as a "region" taking into consideration the theoretical definition of the term. Although there are many studies that analyze and advance different arguments for enhancing the Black Sea regional cooperation, relatively little attention has been devoted to examining the actual willingness for regional cooperation of the Black Sea states as opposed to the loyalty for their nation state politics.

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[26] Mitat Celikpala , Escalating rivalries and diverging interests: prospects for stability and security in the Black Sea region", in *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 10, no.3, 2010, pp.287-302.

Moreover, the current study argues that European Union's attempts to foster the regionalization process in this region and to encourage the regional cooperation over the last 20 years, proved to be unsuccessful precisely because it overlooked the fact that the two identified variables (the "regional cooperation" one and the "national interest") are not mutual exclusive. On the contrary, examining the position of each Black Sea country pertaining to these variables can offer a concise representation of the current profile of the region thus, determining the best model of implementing a future strategy for this region. Considering the complexity of such a scientific endeavour, the current study does not aim to exhaustively examine all the riparian states; it rather represents a starting point which applies this research framework on one of the most influential Black Sea state, namely on Russia.

The Black Sea regional cooperation has always depended on Russia's relationships with other riparian states, the EU and US and on the nature of their interactions. As one of the most significant regional stakeholder, none of the Black Sea regional cooperation schemes can exclude Russia from their geopolitical calculus.

Therefore, this study aims to identify an appropriate formula for regional cooperation taking into consideration its variation among issues and over time. It also takes into account the continuing vitality of the national idea and the national interests as opposed to the regionalism cooperation. In this respect the study utilizes two main dimensions of analysis (regional cooperation and national interests) that represent the essential drivers of the regional dynamics contributing to its definition and constructing its significance. Following the recent developments in the region the study will analyze Russia's profile considering the following indicators that will particularly highlight its position towards this region:

Table no. 1- Proposed indicators

		Regional cooperation	National interests
1	**Implication in institutional regional projects**	Number of relevant, non-ambiguous participations/memberships in important regional institutions, projects, initiatives, partnerships and agreements	Ambiguous position in various initiatives, vague commitments as a result of exposure to different levels of conditionality. Development of bilateral agreements as opposed to regional projects involvement.
2	**Regional cooperation in the energy sector**	Integration into the European energy market. Commercial politics. Signing contracts. Consistent energy security strategy. Overall convergence with EU politics.	Volatility of energy partnerships (shifting alliance, involved in competing pipeline projects. Blocking projects that do not comply with their own interests. Jeopardizing the regional energy security

These indicators were formulated in such a manner as to respond to the fallowing research questions:

- What is the impact of the two identified variables ("regional cooperation" and "national interests") on the Russian involvement in the Black Sea regional cooperation and how does this affect the Black Sea regional dynamics?

- Are they antithetical and mutual exclusive or the key to a successful model of regional cooperation?

For this purpose, this interpretative study will utilize two qualitative research methods: document and discourse analysis. The first section of this study will set the context for our further analysis, briefly underlining the Russian foreign policy towards the Black Sea region after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The next section will include an analysis for each indicator allowing us to assess the level of Russian cooperation within the region for the last 10 years and will show how this level fluctuated across time, pointing to essential events that could determine a reformulation of national policies towards this region. The study will emphasize which are the main areas that hamper the cooperation within the region and will help creating a cooperation project adjusted to respond the main problems identified.

1. Russian foreign policy and its role in the Black Sea regional deadlock

Russian foreign policy records across the time show that Russia never considered the Black Sea region as being out of its sphere of influence and consequently formulated all her actions in accordance with this belief, using interdependence constraints whenever NATO or the EU have attempted to increase their influence in the region.

As argued by Kobrinskaya, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian foreign policy towards this region has gone through at least four stages and now we are witnessing the fifth one, in which Russia has recovered its strength and confidence utilizing the energy security threat in order to maintain its regional influence and control.

1. The "initial phase" took place between 1991 and 1994 and it was characterized by the appearance of the armed ethnic conflict, their "freezing," and the establishment of a new post-Soviet status quo;
2. The "Chechen" phase took place between1995 and 2002, when Russia mainly viewed the situation in the BSR through the prism of the Chechen war;
3. The "recovery" period took place between 2003 and 2008, when Russia began acting along several dimensions. During this period the Russian president declared the Black Sea region as a zone of Russia's "strategic interests" considering the fact that this region provides Russia with a direct exit to its most important transport

routes. He also stressed that a new and effective security system is needed for the region;

4. New active regional strategy phase started in August 2008 beginning with the five-day war in the Caucasus. [27]

Four years after the beginning of the five-day war, the premises of a new phase are underlined by several Russian foreign policy actions and supported through political discourse. Taking advantage of the current economic crises that affected many EU member states, Vladimir Putin stressed in October 2011 the need for a stronger cooperation between the ex-Soviet countries, by announcing his plan concerning the construction of a "Eurasian Union". According to Putin, the union "would build on the experience of the European Union and other regional coalitions for creating real conditions to change the geopolitical and geo-economic configuration of the entire continent".[28] Furthermore, in March 2012, the former Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev announced, after a meeting with the presidents of EEC member states (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) - as well as with the leaders of the observer countries (Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine), that the new Eurasian Union will be establishes by 2015 according to the already agreed plans.[29] This new Russian plan to recreate a pseudo-Soviet Union that also includes several Black Sea countries together with its wish to control the transit of Caspian gas, places the country on a privileged position in the regional geopolitical puzzle.

Moreover, the recent Black Sea region academic literature shares a common commitment to analysing Russia's position towards this region as a key element for developing a viable scheme of regional cooperation. A similar commitment can be identified also outside the academic circle where the political debates have intensified over the new Russian plans that were expressed during Vladimir Putin's recent election campaign. Although these

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[27] Irina Kobrinskaya, "The Black Sea Region in Russia's current foreign policy paradigm" in *PONARS Eurasia Policy*, no. 41, 2008, pp. 1-5

[28] BBC translation of an Izvestia newspaper article from Russian [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15172519] 1 June 2012

[29] Turkish Weekly newspaper, 20 March 2012, [http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/132754/medvedev-new-eurasian-union-to-be-set-up-by-2015-.html] 1 June 2012

plans are very much along the line of the old Russian policies and strategies- including the increase of the energy, military and geopolitical significance of the country in the region and the exclusion of the US influence in the Eastern Hemisphere- they are expected to acquire a new level of intensity taking into consideration Vladimir Putin's return to Russian presidency.

There are already several signals that confirm such expectations, one of them being the recent announcement regarding the "790 billion $ that would be spent over the next eight years on Russia's military capabilities, including modernisation of the military- industrial complex, acquisition and operational costs"[30] Such an increase of the defence budget had no precedent for Russia and this raises a question mark regarding future Russian intensions towards West and the EU. Moreover, another recent diplomatic event offered a glimpse into the future of Russia's relationships with the West. Putin decided to decline the G-8 summit invitation this year stating that participating at this event was not his priority.

If Medvedev's mandate has brought Russia closer to the status of a semi-democracy improving its relations substantially with many international actors, Putin's return into office is seen as a restoration of isolation and authoritarianism.[31] In addition to these, Russia is currently seeking to increase its military presence in the Black Sea region by significantly growing the number of submarines until 2017 and by constructing the Novorossiysk base which could serve as an eventual deployment point for the Russian Black Sea Fleet.[32] All the above mentioned foreign policy actions seem to predict a future hostile, reserved and suspicious Russia that will retain its central position in the region trying to increase its significance as a global actor.

According to the Russian scholar, Alexandrova-Arbatova, Russian foreign policy objectives in the Black Sea region can be briefly described as it fallows:

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[30] Igor Sutyagin and Avnis Patel, *Putin's Presidential Return: Implications for Russian Foreign Policy and Missile Defence*, 2012 [http://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C4F715E6AD4D3E/], 31 May 2012

[31] Aslund Andres (2012), *Kick Russia Out of the G8* [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/05/15/kick_russia_out_of_the_g_8?page=0,1], 31 May 2012

[32] Oleksiyenko Oles (2012), *Black Sea (In)*Security, [http://ukrainianweek.co/Security/50806], 31 May 2012

1. Russia wants to retain its position as one of the most significant actors in the region, especially now that new internal (Turkey) and external actors (NATO) are intensifying their actions in the region seeking to increase their regional influence;

2. It also wants to preserve and ensure peace in the region by opposing extremism, separatism and terrorism;

3. It seeks to ensure constant and secure energy, trade, civil and military collaboration within and throughout the region and the straits;

4. It prevents the emergence of division lines within the region and the development of military coalitions which are planned not to exclude Russian full membership. [33]

These objectives have been very attentively formulated to portray Russia as an actor concerned with the regional peace, stability and unity. However, terms such as "preserve" "ensure" and "secure" are often replaced with "obstruct", "compete" and "counter", in other academic sources that are analyzing Russian interests in the region.

In the next section of the study we will utilize the already established indicators to examine whether the above mentioned interests are being supported by Russia's actions in the region and whether they encourage or not the Black Sea regional cooperation.

2. Russian implication in institutional and regional initiatives

For the last decade, EU and Russia have created tools for enhancing their own policies and strategies rather than constructing a regional forum for cooperation and partnership. As Andreiy Makarychev argues, the Black Sea institutional framework seems to be dysfunctional mainly because "the European Union's projects are more a reflection of Russia's great power ambitions in the Post-Soviet area, than a common approach jointly coordinated by all participating countries".[34] In turn, Russia decided to deliberately neglect almost all of the regional cooperation schemes in the Black Sea region even if the

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[33] Nadia Alexandra-Arbatova, "Regional cooperation in the Black Sea area in the context of EU-Russia relations" in *Xenophon Paper*, no.5, 2008, pp. 25-36

[34] Andre Makarychev, i,"Russia-EU: Competing Logics of Regions Building" in *DGAPanalysis*, nr.1, March 2012, pp. 1-22.

European Union was not the principal promoter. This was the case of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation where Russia was a founding member and the only EU involvement was the participation of the European Commission as an observer. Even in this context, Russia proved to be reluctant to support or contribute to BSEC goals and activities.

A brief analysis of Russia's involvement in the Black Sea regional cooperation schemes over the past 10 years shows that even though formal participation can be found in many cases, there is a lack of engagement in actual relevant multilateral forms of cooperation. It is important to mention that not all of these regional schemes were planned to include Russia within their framework, some of them emerged as a reaction to Russian hard security political actions. This was the case of the **GUAM- Organization for Democracy and Economic Development**, an international forum which includes Azerbaijan, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. According to Kuzio, one of the main factors that contribute to GUAM formation was the separatism promoted by Russia in the post-Soviet era which maintained the "frozen conflicts" of Azerbaijan, Moldova and Georgia. Another factor that united these four countries was the Russian military presence on their territory (Russian troops in Moldova and Georgia and the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea).[35] When Ukraine and Georgia were officially encouraged to seek NATO membership in 2008, Russia adopted a more aggressive position towards them and their issues related to separatism and energy dependency.[36]

The next regional initiative was the creation of the **International Federation for Sustainable Development and Fight against Poverty in the Mediterranean-Black Sea (FISPMED)** on 2004. FISPMED is an association of 217 members from 37 different countries (including Russia) which aims to engage in activities related to sustainable development issues and environmental problems. A closer look on the FISPMED

[35]Taras Kuzio, *GUAM as a Regional and Security Organisation*, 2008 [http://www.taraskuzio.net/conference2_files/GUAM_Azerbaijan.pdf] 2 June 2012

[36] Nadia Alexandra-Arbatova, "Regional cooperation in the Black Sea area in the context of EU-Russia relations" in *Xenophon Paper*, no.5, 2008, pp. 25-36

membership shows that from the wider East Europe and Black Sea countries macro area, Russia has one of the smallest numbers of members.[37]

In the same year, a new Black Sea region initiative appeared as a result of the discussions held at the Energy Ministerial Conference in Baku. This took the form of a policy dialogue meant to facilitate the "progressive convergence of energy policies on issues of trade, transit and environmental rules as well as standards."[38] Although the ministerial conference was attended by representatives from the Caspian littoral states and their neighbouring countries, as well as European Commission representatives, Russia expressed reservations regarding the Concept Paper of the **Baku initiative** and declared that it will not cooperate refusing to get involved in this initiative. Moreover, as a sign of its discontent, Russia participated only as an observer at the following conference in 2006.[39]

Another Black Sea region initiative emerged in 2004 and took the form of a naval bilateral cooperation. The goal of the **"Black Sea Harmony"** initiative was to establish a bilateral cooperation in the field of shipping security and track any suspicious ship that might transit the area. Although it was initiated by Turkey, the initiative was largely accepted by Russia most likely because this was a good opportunity to show that the maritime issues in the Black Sea region can be managed by the Black Sea countries themselves without the help of other external forces, such as NATO. [40] For future reference, it is important to underline that this time Russian cooperative intent was visible in the context of military exercises included in an initiative which is based on bilateral cooperation. So far, there are only

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[37] FISPMED : [http://www.mediterraneanblackseanetwork.net/associazione.php?lingua=en] 2 June 2012

[38] Ecc-platform

http://www.ecc-platfom.org/index.php?option=com_ontent&task=view&id=15178&Itemid=168] 2 June 2012

[39] Francesca Morata and Israel Solorio Sandoval, *European Energy Policy. An Environmental Approach*, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2012, p. 144

[40] Victoria Gumeniuk, *There is no single vision about the sub region of the Black Sea!*, 2009, [http://www.eu4seas.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=275&Itemid=23] 2 June 2012

three bilateral memoranda of understanding which include agreements between Turkey, Russia, Ukraine and Romania.[41]

In December 2005, a forum took place in Ukraine ending with the creation of an inter-governmental organisation, the **Community for Democratic Choice.** The organisation comprises nine countries from the Baltic, Balkan and Black Sea regions and aims to promote human rights, democracy and to ensure peace in the Baltic-Black Sea region. Russia was invited to participate at the forum but Vladimir Putin declined the invitation and sent instead an embassy official to the event. The Russian press had virulent reactions regarding this initiative which was perceived in Moscow as an opportunity to encourage Georgian and Ukrainian rapprochement with the West, and thus considered as an attempt to weaken Russia's influence in the Black Sea region.[42] Unfortunately, the CDC has failed as the participants showed little interest and commitment for its promotion.

The same happened with the **Black Sea Forum** organized in Bucharest in 2006, which was meant to consolidate the profile of the Black Sea region and foster the regional dialogue and partnership. Turkey and Russia, the two main regional stakeholders were absent. As it was already expected, Russia asked to be represented on diplomatic level, sending the Russian ambassador to participate just as an observer.[43] Although the inaugural forum was promising, no other forums were organized after.

After Romania and Bulgaria entered the European Union, the discussions concerning a future EU policy towards this region were intensified. Consequently, in 2007 the European Union launched the **Black Sea Synergy**, a path-breaking initiative which aims to develop regional cooperation, strengthen civil society and contribute to regional stability. The synergy was not created to overlap or compete with the Eastern Partnership that was

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[41] Dorin Danila, Ion Custura, "Black Sea Harmony-attitudes and perspectives" in *Strategic Impact*, no.2, 2009, pp.35-39

[42] Jean-Cristophe Peuch, *Ukraine:Regional Leaders Set Up Community of Democratic Choice,*2005, [http://www.rfel.org/content/article/1063461] 2 June 2012

[43] Tania Jagharian, *No Russian Officials at the Black Sea Summit*, 2006, [http://www.armeniandiaspora.com/showthread.php?52012-No-Russian-Officials-At-Black-Sea-Summit] 2 June 2012

launched immediately after, but to complement it and to complement also the "pre-accession with Turkey and the Strategic partnership with Russia.[44] Although, Russia did not participated at the Joint Statement discussion in 2008 (affirming that it preferred an EU-BSEC Statement), it expressed its support regarding the increased role of the European Union and agreed with document's adoption. [45]   Four years later, despite EU's great expectations, the Synergy did not prove to be an effective tool for regional cooperation and Russia's policy towards Black Sea region was not influenced by its actions. Moreover, the last registered report regarding its implementation dates back in 2008 and no over significant improvements could be observed since then. This illustrates once again the Russian role in maintaining the regional deadlock. EU seems unable to implement a regional policy within the Black Sea with or without its biggest strategic partner in the East.

The next step in the chronological scheme of cooperation was the establishment of a public-private partnership. **The German Marshall Fund** created the **Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation (2007)** in order "to promote regional, cross-border ties in the public, private, and non-profits sectors and good governance in the Wider Black Sea region, to rebuild trust in public institutions, to affirm the value of citizen participation in the democratic process, to strengthen a critical set of institutions."[46] In this initiative Russia is represented by two oblasts, Krasnodar and Rostov and if we are to interpret the BST success in these areas after the first year of cooperation, one would have to conclude that the BST strategy towards them is definitely lacking. The first year implementation report admits that the BST was designed as an "opened to see how" space in Russia and that in

[44]Black   Sea   Synergy,   Delegation   of   the   European   Union   to   Russia, [http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/fields_cooperation/regional_issues/black_sea_synergy/index_en.htm] 1 June 2012

[45] Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament , Report on the first year of implementation of the Black Sea Synergy, 2008, p. 6

[46] Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation:

[http://www.gmfus.org/grants-fellowships/grantmaking-programs/black-sea-trus] 3 June 2012

the future it has to better define what role it can play there and especially how it can make a difference. [47]

The Russian trend of reluctance or non-involvement towards Black Sea initiatives continued for the year 2008 when other cooperation schemes have emerged. Russia was involved neither in the **Union of Black Sea and Caspian Confederation of Enterprises,** nor in the **Regional Cooperation Council** and it was sceptic regarding the implementation of the Black **Sea Euroregion.**

All the forums and initiatives declined by Russia had a very short life, fading into oblivion several years after their initiation. This should be a signal for the European Union to focus its strategy towards the Black Sea region in such a manner as to offer the opportunity to collaborate with Russia in those sectors that already proved to function. In other words, before creating a strategy for the Black Sea region, EU should develop and establish a specific and constructive regional collaboration plan with Russia, other than the wider scheme included in the Strategic Partnership. This is undoubtedly a difficult mission since Russian foreign policy until now has focused on creating and maintaining security gaps leaving no alternative of engagement.

From our analysis, we can draw the conclusion that until now, cooperation with Russia could be successfully achieved only on bilateral bases and only on security and economic sectors. Despite being praised for its pragmatism and its "tenaciously realistic approach to international affairs"[48], Russia had a contradictory position regarding the differentiation between internal and external regional actors. As Makarychev argues, "Russia welcomes investment from external financial resources (from US and Japan) in regional projects, but

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[47] Mariana Milosheva and David Krushe, *Review of the first year of Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation*,

[http://www.pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADS397.pdf] 3 June 2012

[48] Joseph Wood, "The Kremlin's behaviour limits the scope of Western engagement" in *Brussels Forum Paper Series*, 2009, pp. 3-39

changes its tone when it comes to security matters, where it complains about undue and excessive external overlay." [49]

In this respect, Russia will have to make up its mind whether it continues its strategic isolation claiming that it is more entitled to deal with regional issues as an "insider", or it accepts the high level of regional interdependency and cooperates with the "outsiders" not only in economic, but also in security areas. Paradoxically, despites its riparian status, Russia itself is being perceived as an external power in the West[50], an outsider of the "European family" (because its constant refuse to adhere to the European values) and a threat for the Black Sea regional security, especially after the 2006 and 2009 gas cut-offs. As Trenin highlighted, "Russia is a major outside neither player that is an eternal fie nor an automatic friend."[51] The high level of demand-supply interdependency between EU and Russia in the energy sector should be the primary incentive for an increased regional cooperation. Russia would no longer be the dominant energy actor without the European market, as well as EU would no longer secure its energy resources without Russian supplies. The next section of the study will analyse Russian regional cooperation in the energy sector trying to observe whether we can identify patterns of regional cooperation harmonization that supports the future creation of an effective EU strategy for the Black Sea region.

3. Russian regional cooperation in the energy sector

Many studies directly or indirectly reduce the entire Black Sea deadlock to an energy security dilemma and there are sufficient arguments to validate this theory. The scarcity of energy resources has shaped the interactions between this region and the rest of the world and the ones between Black Sea countries themselves. Energy-related issues are the most

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[49] Andrey Makarychev, "Russia-EU: Competing Logics of Region Building" in *DGAPanalyse,* no.1, 2012, pp. 1-22

[50] Irina Kobrinskaya, "The Black Sea Region in Russia's current foreign policy paradigm" in *PONARS Eurasia Policy*, no. 41, 2008, pp. 1-5

[51] Dmitri Trenin, "Russia Leaves the West", in *Foreign Affairs 85*, no. 4, 2006, pp. 87-96

challenging ones for the world affairs and the current situation of the Black Sea region highly reflects it.

The new "Putin era" that has just begun its neo-imperial project relays heavily on energy for increasing Russia's geopolitical impact in the region and worldwide. For the last years, Putin definitely proved that energy can be a decisive instrument for the foreign and security policy of a country. Since Putin came to power in 2000, the Russian energy policy became centralised and controlled by its former and current president. Under his attentive supervision, the Russian government thoroughly elaborated in 2003 an energy strategy that transformed Russia into a key player of the global strategic energy game. That he would continue these policies from now on should come as no surprise. Recent events come to confirm this statement.

As Alina Inayeh underlined, Putin's proposal to create a "Eurasian Union", it is all about gas and it came as a worrying reaction to the possibility of a significant gas export decrease. One of the reasons behind this proposal might be the current Azerbaijan's discovery of a gas field that could finally represent the incentive for constructing the delayed Nabucco pipeline project.[52] However, the Ukrainian analyst, Roman Rukomeda argues that the creation of the "Eurasian Union" it is not as utopian as it initially seamed and Putin's first official visits illustrate that his proposal was not just one of the electoral promises meant to assure his return to Russian presidency. In one of his recent article he states that "the symbolic sequence of Putin's visits: Belarus-Germany-France-China-the countries of Central Asia - clearly shows what are the foreign priorities of the current Russian leadership."[53] If until now Russia was mocked for its exaggerated ambitions to negotiate with the European Union on equal grounds, soon this could become a reality and the 2012-2013 are expected to be decisive years for Russia-EU relationship and consequently for the Wider Black Sea region.

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[52] Alina Inayeh, *Russia's Putin Proposes a "Eurasian Union"- But it's all about Gas*, 2011[http://www.blog.gmfus.org/2011/10/russias-proposes-a-eurasian-union-but-its-al-about-gas], 3 June 2012

[53] Roman Rukomeda, *A more assertive Russia: consequences for Ukraine,*2012, [http://www.euractiv.com/europes-est/assertive-russia-consequence-uk-analysis-513217] 3 June 2012

Most of the Wider Black Sea countries are involved in international energy projects having different statuses. There are supplying countries (their status offers them a competitive advantage, being more powerful and able to negotiate their interests), transit countries (which struggle to promote their energy projects in order to enhance their role in the region) and consumer countries (which fight to find the best option that would decrease their dependence on imported oil and gas).

A current analysis shows that "Armenia and Moldova are entirely controlled by Russian companies, Georgia is highly dependent, and recently the key Belarus gas transit company, Betransgaz, was fully taken over by Russian Gazprom."[54] With regard to Ukraine's current situation, Russia adopted a similar strategy as it did with Belarus; more specifically, it put political pressure for undermining its bargaining opportunity. A perfect example that illustrates Russian energy blackmail potential is represented by a recent agreement between Russia and Ukraine which prolongs the stay of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea until 2042 (although initially it was supposed to stay no longer than 2017), in exchange of lower prices on the oil and gas exports for the next 10 years.[55] Russia gains 25 years of continue military presence in a key area, in exchange of 10 years discount for its energy supplies to Ukraine; one could argue that this is a rather uneven agreement. Other countries in the region have also concluded long term agreements with Gazprom in order to ensure their energetic security. This is the case of Romania, Bulgaria and Greece.

In addition to this, Russian tentacles were stretched so far as to obstruct any alternative that European Union could find for reducing its dependency on its energy supplies. Other transport corridors that aim to transport energy resources from the Caspian basin also rely on Russian downstream pipeline infrastructure. [56]

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[54] Andras Racz, "Good cop or bad cop? Russian Foreign Policy in the New Putin Era", in *Transatlantic Academy Analysis*, 2012, pp. 1-14

[55] Luke Harding, "Ukraine extends lease for Russia's Black Sea Fleet," *The Guardian*, April 21, 2010, [http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/apr/21/ukraine-black-sea-fleet-russia] 3 june 2012

[56] K.Henderson and C. Weaver, *The Black Sea Region and EU Policy: The Challenge of Divergent Agendas,* 2010, p. 140

As much as the European Union would want to deny its dependency on Russia's energy supplies and to undermine Russia's central role in the broader energy game, we can find contradictory arguments even at a discourse analysis level. As argued by Papava, the" alternative" term used to often in European Union official statements, "consciously, or unconsciously reflects the confrontation between Russia and the rest of the world in energy related issues."[57] The only Black Sea country that could have a bargaining potential seems to be Turkey, who succeeded to reduce the Russian monopoly over the external transport routes by transporting Azerbaijan oil and natural gas through Baku-Tibilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. Turkey also represents the link between Middle East energy supplies and the European market given its strategic importance for the Nabucco pipeline project (see the annexes). [58] Although it represents the main alternative that for the European Union, Nabucco encountered numerous difficulties ranging from a lack of financial sources to cover its cost, to the question of whether it will succeed to secure the promised volume of natural gas supplies. In 2010, a leading energy expert talking about the probability of Nabucco pipeline construction stated that the project has "no demand, no supply, and no money."[59] The same opinion was shared by the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, who affirmed that there can be no competition between South Stream and Nabucco (the Russian competing pipeline project) since "one project has the gas and the other does not."[60] However, the long stagnation of the Nabucco projects was partially determined by Russia's counter-proposals which succeeded to constantly delay its implementation, so that in 2010 "EU planning called for construction of the 1.1 tcf-capacity Nabucco pipeline to begin in 2012 and for shipments to begin in 2017. In 2011, new higher cost estimates for building the pipeline appeared to place these plans at risk, pushing back shipments until 2019."[61]

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[57] Vladimer Papava, "The economic challenges of the Black Sea region: the global financial crisis and energy sector cooperation", in *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, no. 10, pp.361-371

[58] Oktay F. Tanrisever, "Turkey and Russia in the Black Sea Region: Dynamics of Cooperation and Conflict", in *Black Sea Discussion Paper Series*, no.1, 2012, pp. 1-26

[59] Katinka Barysch, "Should the Nabucco pipeline project be shelved?" in *Transatlantic Academy series*, 2010, pp. 1-13

[60] South Stream Gas Project Defeating Nabucco by Default," in Eurasian Daily Monitor (EDM), 2008 [www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2372856] 4 June 2012

[61] Michael Ratner, Paul Belkin and Jim Nichol, *Europe's Energy Security: Options and Challenges to Natural Gas Supply Diversification*, CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, 2012, p.14

Meanwhile Russia is pushing ahead with the planned South Stream pipeline which has a similar route but it runs under the Black Sea, bypasses Ukraine and Belarus and replaces Romania with Serbia. In this case there is no concern regarding Russia's capacity of providing the planned amount of natural gas, therefore Russia intends to start its construction in 2012 and begin deliveries by 2015.[62]

The self-interested actions of Russian foreign policy in the energy sector highly contributed to the regional disunity. In fact, "divide et impera" seems to be the main Russian strategy towards the Black Sea region.

To conclude, Russia's foreign policy approach towards Black Sea region is constructed in zero-sum terms which leave little space for genuine regional cooperation. Not only that it obstructed the majority of the regional and institutional schemes of cooperation, but it also maintained a tensed climate within the region by contributing to a clash of interest in the energy sector. Instead of supporting a European energy integrated space in the Black Sea region, Russia crafted its energy policies in order to serve its own national interests, in particular, those of becoming an energy superpower by dominating European and Eurasian markets. We cannot talk about regional energy cooperation but rather about Russian political pressure to comply with its norms in its own terms. Taking into consideration the unfortunate gas cut-offs in 2006 and 2009, EU's plan of creating a new energy architectural environment would have to include also a set of common norms that will ensure a high level of predictability and reliability.

Conclusion

Benefiting from a favourable financial position as opposed to the other European countries and remaining committed to its Black Sea regional objectives, as well as to its leader-Russia emerges as a new pole in the international arena. In her article suggestively entitled "Putin after Putin", Ambassador Paraschiva Badescu, claims that given the current political life of Russia, many politicians, analysts and journalists consider that there is a great

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[62] Idem, p.12

probability for Russians to agree upon extending the presidential term from four to six years, permitting to the actual president to lead the country until 2018, with the possibility of winning a second term until 2024.[63] According to these political forecasts, Putin "is here to stay" and as long as he remains committed to his current foreign policy objectives, Russia is expected to do its utmost to maintain and increase its influence in the Black Sea region for the years to come.

The Black Sea regional cooperation varied among issues and over time, but the above analyses identifies a Russian pattern of reaction towards regional and institutional initiatives that came from other external or regional actors. Russia it is not willing to sacrifice its national interests for the regional cooperation purpose, but this does not necessary mean that there are no solutions for breaking the regional deadlock, or that joint gain cooperation is impossible. EU should be very attentive to understand Russian current perceptions, to correctly interpret its political ambitions and analyze its current perspective on recent history. It is of paramount importance to be receptive to its sensitivities and work together towards desecuritization of the region and towards creating a new paradigm of energy cooperation.

These goals are not easy to achieve since Russia's renewed self-confidence after a post-imperial trauma, estranges itself from the core European values. That is why the European Union still shows evident hesitancy to approach the Black Sea area. European Union's indecision is most visible if we analyse the long timeframe necessary for the elaboration of the newly coined EU strategy for the Black Sea region. A year and a half has passed since the European Parliament called for the adoption of such a strategy and the question of its creation still stands.

As it could be recently seen at the 2012 EU-Russia Summit, the 2010 initiative "Partnership for modernization" and visa restriction issues were being discussed, confirming that there is a reciprocal interest towards upgrading EU-Russia relationship

beyond economic cooperation. Quoting the Russian author, Alexander Pushkin, Barroso

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[63] Paraschiva Badescu, "Putin after Putin" in *Journal of European Studies and International Relations*, vol. II, Issue 2, 2012, pp. 1-12

ended the event on a positive and optimistic note: "We can try and fail, but we should not fail to try."[64]

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[64] Roman Goncharenko, *EU-Russia summit steers clear of controversy*, 2012, [http://www.dw.de/dw/article/0,,15998552,00.html] 3 June 2012

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Annexes

1) Black Sea region power balance

Source: http://ukrainianweek.com/Security/50806
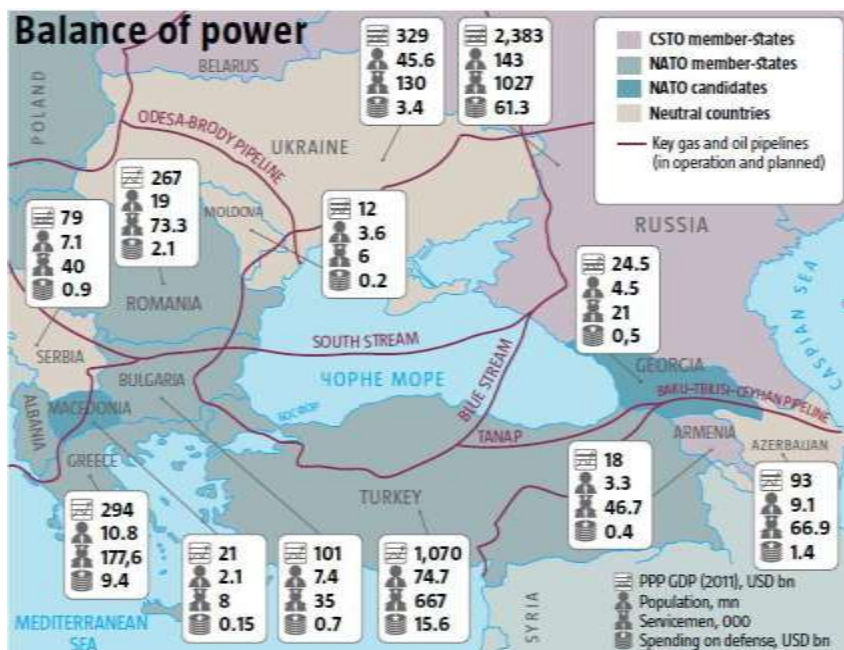
EUROPEAN REGIONAL POLICY.

HISTORICAL AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract. *European Regional Policy is an important tool of European Union in reducing the development gaps between regions. In order to understand how this policy works today and to establish the efficiency of this policy at European and regional level, a deep analyze of the history and evolution of European Regional Policy is absolutely necessary.*

Key words: European integration, European Regional Policy, Cohesion Policy, regional development, North-Eastern Region.

The European Regional Policy is the policy created by the European Communities with the purpose of supporting sustainable development in all European regions within the Community area. Therefore the main aim of the European Regional Policy is to identify and implement, at community, regional and local level, all of the necessary actions for an economically and socially united and unified Europe. This objective was first declared in 1951, when the process of European integration began.

The concept of a unified Europe, which remained the basis of the European Union, had and has as a main task reducing an eliminating where possible the large discrepancies in development between the member states. Reaching this objective was necessary in order to apply a consistent policy that would have the same results in all member states. Therefore the Treaty of Rome on the founding of the Economic European Community which was

signed on the 25th March 1957 and ratified on the 1st January 1958 by the German Federal Republic, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg is the first ever judicial document which brings to the table the discussion on the possible elaboration of a European Regional Policy suitable for the entire Community. Moreover the Preamble of the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community brings to light for the first time the need to create a European Regional Policy which could ensure „*an overall harmonious development as well as a reduction of the disparities between the levels of development of the various regions*".[65]

The development of the European Regional Policy, the creation of a legislative, institutional, budgetary and implementation framework for this policy will soon prove to be an extremely difficult and continuously changing process, much like the process of the European Union itself. The European Communities defined by their structure and objectives, the Single Market and the Economic and Monetary Union could not ignore the major differences between the various regions. Such economic, demographical, or infrastructural disparities demonstrate the fact that not all Community members benefited from the same advantages. It all depended on the region they were from; therefore a homogeneous development of the regions became the main objective of the Communities.

Throughout the process of establishing the European Regional Policy we distinguish three chronologically important stages: the Early Draft of European Regional Policy (1957-1986), the defined Economic and Social Cohesion Policy (1986-2006) and the current Cohesion Policy (2007-2013).

The Early Draft of European Regional Policy (1957-1986) represents all the efforts made by the community's newly created institutions as well as by the member states with a view to setting up the necessary framework for this to be implemented. Although in the historical period 1957-1986 we cannot refer to a self-sufficient European Regional Policy, we can identify a series of events which have influenced the course of this policy.

Chronologically, these events may be grouped as follows: the need to create a European

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[65] Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community, 25th March 1957, Preamble 12, [http://eurlex.europa.eu/ro/treaties/dat/11957E/word/11957E.doc], 1st June 2012.

Regional Policy within the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community (1957), the development of a General Course of this Regional Policy which is responsible for the measures taken to the aid of the economic and social development of the regions (1967), the establishment of the Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics with the purpose of providing the subdivisions within Community territory with accurate general statistics (1970), the setup of the European Regional Development Fund with the purpose of financially supporting the achievement of the objectives set by the European Regional Policy (1975) as well as redressing regional imbalances due to the expansion of the European Union from six states (1951), to nine states, with the lineup of Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland and Denmark (1973) and then to twelve states, with the lineup of Greece (1981) and Spain and Portugal (1986).

We can only fully address the European Regional Policy at Community level starting with 1986. Here is when a key event takes place and the Single European Act is signed on 17th February 1986 and ratified on the 1st July 1987. This Act practically meant the first judicial document where the European Regional Policy is clearly specified and where the need for such a policy is addressed.[66] This is why the Single European Act is considered de facto and de jure the birth document of the European Regional Policy. Through it, the Policy was postulated and institutionalized and it became a policy that was true to the purpose of the Community. Therefore Title V, Article 130 A within the Treaty „*aims to reduce the imbalances between the levels of development of different regions and the negative gap of the disadvantaged regions, including the rural regions in order to promote a harmonious development of the Community as a whole.*"[67] As a result, the previously mentioned Title states the three most important fundamental characteristics of the European Regional Policy around which it has been consolidated and justified: economic cohesion, social cohesion and the reduction of the imbalances between regions by supporting disadvantaged regions. Due to the new element of the economic and social cohesion brought by the Single European Act, as well as to the preservation of the old one of reducing discrepancies between regions from the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community, the

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[66] Sven Czekalla, *European Cohesion and Funding Policies*, Verlag: Grin, 2011, p.5.

[67] The Single European Act, 1986, Title V, Article 130 A, p. 25, [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/treaties/dat/11986U.doc], 1st June 2012.

European Regional Policy became more important and turned into a basic structural policy of the European Communities. This made the European Regional Policy much more complex and it allowed it to include all the elements of consistent sustainable development in the Community area. Therefore the need of a reform appeared. This was meant to extend the range of action of the European Regional Policy from regional development to competition, transport or environment. This is the reason why, starting with 1988 the European Regional Policy becomes the European Community Cohesion Policy, a much more elaborated and complex policy which could be effective in reaching the main objectives at community level: liberalizing trade, creating the Single Market, and the Economic and Monetary Union. Therefore, the Cohesion Policy is that specific European Policy with the general objective of *"reducing the discrepancies in the levels of development of various regions, in order to consolidate economic and social cohesion"*.[68]

Although, starting with 1988, we have used various names for the European Regional Policy – like „Regional and Cohesion Policy", „Economic and Social Cohesion Policy" or strictly „Cohesion Policy" (the latter being preferred by European institutions), we have to mention the fact that this policy has preserved its core element, the region. Therefore, the Cohesion Policy adapted to change without losing sight of its basic orientation, that of acting in support of a balanced development within European regions.[69]

The years 1988-2006 bring upon two important reforms of the Cohesion Policy, with the sole purpose of transforming this policy into a powerful political and especially financial instrument. Therefore, the European Council released in 1988 the first Regulation which integrated three structural funds: the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Guarantee Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund under the name of „Structural Funds", and subordinated them to the Cohesion Policy. Furthermore, the Regulation established a period of availability of five years (1988-1993) for these funds. The two chronological reforms of the Cohesion Policy

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[68] Politica de Coeziune 2007-2013, [http://eufinantare.info/politica-coeziune.html], 1st June 2012.

[69] Wolfgang Petzold, *"The EU Cohesion Policy between 1988-2008: an investment in the Europe's future"*, *Inforegio Panorama*, No. 26, June, 2008, p.1, [http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/panorama/pdf/mag26/mag26_ro.pdf], 1st June 2012.

in between 1994-1999 and 2000-2006 focused mainly on the reinforcement of the principle of economic and social cohesion by modifying the objectives of the Cohesion Policy in order for it to suit the development needs of old and new member states: Austria, Finland and Sweden (1995), and Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary (2004), as well as by increasing the budget corresponding to the Cohesion Policy.

Therefore, the role of the Cohesion Policy throughout 1988-2006 was that of supporting the 25 member states in view of reducing the discrepancies in development at regional level by achieving certain objectives, like development aid and structural adjustment for more disadvantaged regions, supporting development and structural adjustment of regions with low density (1); aid for the support of acclimatization of industrial regions which are declining, promoting rural areas by encouraging diversity and distancing them from traditional agricultural activities (2); adjusting and modernizing professional development and policies to suit the work force (3) and granting a total budget of 500 billion Euros for the period 1988-2006.[70]

If we were to look at the Cohesion Policy from a current perspective, we would notice a tendency of simplifying and accommodating it to the development needs of the member states. Therefore, with a total of 27 member states (Romania and Bulgaria joined on the 1st January 2007), the period 2007-2013 can be described within the three new major principles of the Cohesion Policy: the principle of equality, effectiveness and solidarity, as well as the three new objectives: Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment, and European Territorial Cooperation. Moreover, the structural funds which were meant for the policy in this period were the Cohesion Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund, and the current budget of the policy amounted to a total of 347,411 billion Euros.[71]

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[70] Helen Wallace, William Wallace, Mark A. Pollak, *Elaborarea politicilor în Uniunea Europeană*, Bucureşti: Institutul European din România, 2005, p. 218.

[71] The Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, Financial resources, p. 24, [http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/decoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2007/publications/guide], 1st June 2012.

A frequently asked question regarding the Cohesion Policy is whether it has generated the desired results in it's almost twenty five years of existence. How about in the context of European Integration expansion towards the Eastern countries, and in the economic crisis of 2007-2008? According to European Commission statistics, the Cohesion Policy significantly increased economic growth and human development in the last quarter of a century. Between 1988-2008, 1,870,000 jobs were created and 1,520,000 of small and medium sized businesses were invested in. Moreover, over 40,000 kilometers of highway and roads were built, and the GDP increased between 1.3% and 6.2%[72] in the member states – all this through the Cohesion Policy and the EU financial instruments. Hence, at Community level, we are dealing with an effective policy, but we must certainly take into account regional and local specifics, with their endogen and hexogen factors, which could lead to good or less good results. This observation raises another question: why is the Cohesion Policy more effective in some regions than in others? This is the case if the North-Eastern Region - the least developed of the eight Romanian development regions, which has had the most difficulties and the least effectiveness in implementing the Cohesion Policy. These difficulties were due to regional peculiarities, such as a predominantly rural environment, autarchy agriculture, under-qualified workers, low productivity, non-competitive products, lack of outlets, low level of infrastructure and utilities, lack of resources for sustainable investments, and poor regional management, especially when it comes to disseminating information regarding Structural Funds, supporting entrepreneurship, facilitating access to mortgages, insuring good project management, transparency in handling funds, and minimizing corruption. Consequently, the North-Eastern Region set as primary goal for 2010-2013 the elimination of all difficulties in the way of absorption of Structural Funds. Thus, regardless of the obstacles in the way of proper implementation, the Cohesion Policy has had a great contribution to the economic development of the North-Eastern Region in the last five years. Our statement is supported by statistical data as follows: 5,000 new jobs in the last five years,

3,000 participants in professional trainings in the most popular fields, the employment rate decreased from 9% (2004), to 6,4 % (2011); 141 small and medium sized businesses have received Cohesion Policy funds; regional GDP/capita increased from 2,517 Euros (in the year 2000), to 5,070 Euros (in 2005), and presently reached 6,925 Euros; due to the

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[72] Wolfgang Petzold, *doc. cit.*, pp. 13-25.

Cohesion Policy, the North-Eastern Region, which in 2003 was the least developed region in Europe, is now in second place, while its old place was taken by the Severozapaden Region in Bulgaria.[73]

Beyond the implementation difficulties from some regions, the Cohesion Policy proved to be an overall effective policy, which actually contributed to a more equal development of regions in member states, as its role became increasingly important in the expansion of the European Union borders.

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[73]Eurostat. Statistics Explained. Tables and database, March, 2011, [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/GDP_at_regional_level/ro], 1st June 2012.

THE EUROPEAN UNION'S SYSTEM OF VALUES: A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND DECISION MAKING AND INTEGRATION

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Subjects of interest: the system of values in the European Union and around the globe; the values crisis in the EU; Romanian values.

Abstract:

The following paper casts an overview over the values systems present in the European Union. In this sense, a brief analysis of the meaning behind the concept of value is conducted from the points of view of sociology, psychology and philosophy. The origins and evolution of the system of values present at the core of the Union are also discussed, while also focusing on the system's impact over decisions taken in regard to the EU's expansion and its policies. Finally, the paper emphasizes the necessity of networks such as RICHIE as perfect means for exchanging ideas, knowledge and increasing awareness on the matter of the EU's system of values.

Keywords: values, European Union, decision making, value systems, integration.

It can be safely said that European member states – along with an entire myriad of countries dotting the globe – currently consider democracy as the best means of

governance.[74] This is an already well-known fact, and anyone who is currently up to date with even the most accessible information from the political world, or has manifested some degree of interest for events happening in the societies of the 21st century, knows. As such, it is of little or no meaning at this point in time to convey any additional effort into presenting why a democracy - promoting freedom, the rule of law, pluralism or equality - is more preferable than a socialist regime (such as the one in Cuba), or a de facto absolute monarchy (the classic example here being North Korea), where concepts like freedom or human rights are almost always shunned.

In fact, the objective of this work is not at all to talk about democracy in the following pages, nor to compare it to other political ideologies or regimes. This egalitarian form of government was merely our starting point on the path of discussing one of its defining characteristics: the core values which are rooted in its beliefs, and the role these values play in the democratic governance process of the European Union. To be more specific, the purpose of this paper is to bring into focus the relevance of studying and researching the evolution and history of the fundamental set of values promoted by the European Union for over 50 years now.

As mentioned above, democracy is the pillar on which the Union was built. Add to this form of governance's main characteristics (freedom, equality, the rule of law, respect for human rights, etc.) a strong support for lingual, cultural and ethnic diversity across its Member States and a strong sense of unity as their common goal, and a *sui generis* entity is born. While, frankly speaking, this political and governmental being was mainly founded based on economic motivation (the immediate goal in the 1950s being the economic redressing following World War II and the reconstruction of European society), it cannot be argued that there were also a series of ideals behind its creation as well. These started to manifest as European states began to see the dust of war settle, and all the horrors that armed conflict had brought them. The second great war of the century had both an immense psychological and economic impact upon all the parties which were involved.

Even today the seemingly inconceivable massacre of an astounding 65 to 75 million

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[74] Delegation of the European Commission to the United States, "The EU: A Community of Values" in *EU Focus*, November, 2005, pp. 1-2.

people[75] (roughly 3% of the globe's population) that once took place across Europe and the rest of the world is remembered. Many monuments, such as the wall reading "Never Again" at the former concentration camp in Dachau, Germany, have been erected in order to honor the memory of those dead and to serve as a grim reminder for future generations of the atrocities bore by war.

It is furthermore important not to mistake the European Union for simply a geographic or an economic accomplishment[76]. It is much more than that. First and foremost it is a community of states united and driven by a common system of values gained after a hard learned lesson, and with much toil. But, while the values and ideals which the Union follows were not expressly stated in the first generations of its founding documents, over the last 20 years the Union has certainly conferred to them an important place in its treaties – namely in their opening articles. The Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (article I-2)[77], the consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union (articles 2,3 and 6 being of major significance)[78], and the amendments brought on by the Treaty of Lisbon (articles 1a and 2)[79] all pay special attention to the recognition and enforcement of the following values: respect for human dignity, liberty (ranging from freedom of travel and work to that of market economies), democracy, equality, the rule of law, respect for human rights (including those of persons belonging to different minorities), pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and diversity. There has even been an idea to reconstruct these values into ten commandments, comparable to those give to Moses by

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[75] Milton Leitenberg, "Deaths in Wars and Conflicts in the 20th Century, 3rd ed." in Peace Studies Program Occasional Paper, Issues 29, 2006, p.9.

[76] Delegation of the European Commission to the United States, "The EU: A Community of Values" in *EU Focus*, November, 2005, p. 5.

[77] EUR-Lex, "Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe" in *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 310, Volume 47, 2004, p. 11.

[78] EUR-Lex, "Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union" in *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 115, Volume 51, 2008, pp. 17, 19.

[79] EUR-Lex, "Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, signed at Lisbon, 13 December 2007" in *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 306, Volume 50, 2007, p. 11.

God[80]. One can see just how much importance has been given to these moral guiding lines. It is essential to note however that these values do not only provide the common guiding lines for the Union's Member States, but are also constantly present in its portfolio of foreign and diplomatic relations with the rest of the world.

Despite the fact that in recent decades the European Union has become several states larger (currently numbering 27 members with several more planned to accede in the future[81]) and now covers a massive 4 million square kilometers which are home to nearly 500 million individuals[82], the base values which its creators envisioned have not changed. Even now the values which have backed all of the Union's foreign and domestic policies serve as an example to nations across the globe. The aid given to countries in need, the encouragement of cross-border relations, the offering of democratic models to former communist states and the facilitation of relations between Eastern and Western Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall are but a few examples.[83] Needless to say, this strong set of values was the very key to over 50 years of solidity, prosperity and, most importantly, peace.

Decision taking without a strong value base is just like acting without thinking, with devastating consequences in the long run. For example, a great extent of the process of European integration is based on the candidate's state capacity and willingness to adhere to the value system that governs the European Union (we find this in the case of Turkey, who has had difficulty adopting the system of values required to becoming a Member State[84]). If its united governments were to disregard commonly adopted values as a mandatory criterion, then the process of European integration will be driven purely by factors such as economic importance, commercial potential or geographical and strategic position. This

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[80] Michael Emerson, "What Values for Europe? The Ten Commandments" in *CEPS Policy Brief*, No. 65, 2005, p. 1.

[81] European Commission, *Enlargement – Candidate Countries*, 2012, [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/index_en.htm], consulted on 30.05.2012.

[82] *Living in the EU*, [http://europa.eu/about-eu/facts-figures/living/index_en.htm], consulted on 30.05.2012.

[83] Delegation of the European Commission to the United States, "The EU: A Community of Values" in *EU Focus*, November, 2005, p. 2.

[84] Chase Cavanaugh, *Turkey's Difficult Entry into the European Union*, 2011, [http://www.thewashingtonreview.org/articles/turkeys-difficult-entry-into-the-european-union.html], consulted on 17.05.2012.

whole process in which culture, history, creed and ethics play a pivotal role would become just a rigid, calculated checklist. Thus, the idea of a Union based more on values and common political goals, than on natural borders such as rivers and mountains or on economic interests, would be no more.

This is the very reason why values have earned a central place in all things European and why a keen understanding of them is necessary. A careful study of their history and evolution can reveal many of the reasons behind major decisions taken on all levels the Union. In the following pages of this paper we plan to discuss why it is imperative for European integration specialists to allocate room for the study of values, alongside that of other disciplines such as economy, international relations or European history. In this sense networks such as LISBOAN or RICHIE, the latter aiming to provide a platform that encourages study and idea exchange on European matters between young specialists, represent an essential component. While there has been increasing talk of late in the media concerning a potential crisis of values that the Union's Member States have been suffering from (most recently attributed as a side effect of the latest economic crisis)[85,8687,], we will not, however, be deliberating the state of affairs of the value system in each Member Country, nor on the influences it holds at this point over their citizens. Whether there is or not a crisis of values that the Union is suffering from at this point is a whole different topic; one which can be discussed in another paper. For now we will refrain from delving into this subject and continue with presenting several key arguments why European integration specialists should not overlook or place at the back of their studies the topic of values.

In order to properly understand the significance behind values though, we will first and foremost need to shed some light on the concept of "value". We cannot start talking about a topic if we do not know the meaning behind its defining word. And since we have begun

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[85] Susi Denison, *A crisis of values?*, 2010, [http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_a_crisis_of_values], consulted on 09.05.2012

[86] José Ignacio Torreblanca, *Five reasons Why Europe is cracking up*, 2011, [http://www.opendemocracy.net/jos%C3%A9-ignacio-torreblanca/five-reasons-why-europe-is-cracking-up], consulted on 17.05.2012.

[87] *A solution to the crisis of values: more Europe*, 2012, [http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/NewsManager/EMB_NewsManagerView.asp?ID=7685], consulted on 30.05.2012.

talking about defining words, we would like to first point out the definition of the concept of "value" according to the Oxford Dictionary. As a mass noun, value can either indicate something of importance, something that has material or monetary worth, something that is useful, or even the numerical amount of an algebraic term. In its plural form, "values", the concept gains whole a new meaning, that of *principles or standards of behavior* or that of *one's judgment of what is important in life*. The latter meaning is the one we are interested in. It is plain to see that "values" are something inextricably linked with an individual's life, whether we are talking about a moral code or about prioritizing those things that are important to us. In fact, values are occupy such a vital role in our live that sociology, psychology and philosophy have turned much of their attention to better understanding this concept, how it is formed, and the role it plays both on a societal and individual scale.

Sociology defines them as something which is mutually intrinsic to each individual and is an influencing social factor, being both manifested as and at the same time created by customs, practices or different creeds.[88] The discipline of psychology sees values as a decoding lens through which individuals interpret the world around them and derive the benefits which an action might incur for themselves and others. As is usual in such scientific fields, there are some further contributions by researches which should be mentioned alongside the above ideas.[89] Rockeach speaks of value systems which come together from values belonging to specific domains (work, family, religion, etc.). Kluckhohn on the other hand talks about values orientations, which influence human behavior in relation with nature and others. Talcott Parsons saw values as the driving force behind the actions of individuals and groups; their adopted attitudes towards something being the direct manifestation of their values.[90] Finally, Peter Ester on the other hand provides a definition which is closer to the area of philosophy. He believes that values are

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[88] Bogdan Voicu, Mădălina Voicu, "Introduction. Romania and the comparative study of values", in Bogdan Voicu, Mădălina Voicu (ed.), *The values of Romanians: 1993-2006. A Sociological Perspective*, Iaşi: Institutul European, 2008, p. 12.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Bogdan Voicu, "Valorile şi sociologia valorilor", în Lazăr Vlăsceanu (ed.), *Sociologie*, Iaşi: Polirom, 2011, p. 253.

criteria which individuals and groups employ to help distinguish between good and evil, beauty and ugliness or that which is desirable and undesirable.[91]

From the philosophical point of view, there are a number of schools of thought which have tried defining the concept of values. For example, cognitivists considered that values exist as is, and that they can be learned by having them proven as true. Non-cognitivists on the other hand considered that values are linked to emotional processes, for example with emotions.[92] Existentialists, the most notable here being Nietzsche, believed that values are in fact an illusion, describing them as a representation of reality determined by an individual's personal interests and motives.[93] A somewhat similar perspective was shared by Marx; however he concluded that an individual's values originated from the interests of the social class to which he belonged to, and not from his own personal interests. While the list of perspectives on the origin of values and that of definitions regarding this concept can be continued to great lengths, we will hold the above ideas as sufficient in order to form an impression about what the concept of "values" stands for.

From the above we can derive just how much a crucial role values get to play for the shaping of societies and individuals. For example, many of the historical events occurring around the world in the 20th century have sent ripples across several countries' system of values. For instance, on the one hand there were the capitalist countries of the "free West", which have maintained a strong system of values embracing democracy and freedom; and on the other hand there were the countries belonging to the "authoritarian and totalitarian world of the East".[94] However, in the wake of the revolutions of the late 1980s and early 1990s a phenomenon had begun to occur in the countries belonging to the latter group: a state of reversal in which federations as old as World War I were disbanded, and formerly

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[91] Bogdan Voicu, Mădălina Voicu, "Introduction. Romania and the comparative study of values", in Bogdan Voicu, Mădălina Voicu (ed.), *The values of Romanians: 1993-2006. A Sociological Perspective*, Iaşi: Institutul European, 2008, p. 11.

[92] Tănase Sârbu, *Etică: valori şi virtuţi morale*, Iaşi: Editura Societăţii Academice "Mateiu Botez", 2005, p. 20.

[93] Bogdan Voicu, "Valorile şi sociologia valorilor", in Lazăr Vlăsceanu (ed.), *Sociologie*, Iaşi: Polirom, 2011, p. 252.

[94] Tănase Sârbu, *Etică: valori şi virtuţi morale*, Iaşi: Editura Societăţii Academice "Mateiu Botez", 2005, pp. 4-10, p. 173.

communist countries were redefined, becoming more and more individualized and regaining their cultural identity. Much of this was attributed to the spreading influence that western values had over these territories. A major part of this influence, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, was directly attributed to the European Community.

Thus, it is no wonder why the European Community, and later on the European Union, assigned an all-important place for values at the forefront of its treaties, and why these moral guidelines play a major part in the decisions and policies adopted both on a domestic and foreign scale. Just as we mentioned in the first pages of this paper, even if it would be of great economic and territorial interest for Turkey to become one of the Member States, due to the country's struggles with adhering to the Union's system of values promoting freedom of speech and equal rights for men and women its acceptance is still being postponed even after 10 years have passed since having applied for membership.[95] This is a strong example illustrating just how much importance the European Union places on its core values when taking a decision. Nevertheless, the influence of values is not only limited to those decisions or policies regarding a country's acceptance into the Union. They are also present in the area of foreign affairs, especially in relations to countries which have been stricken with poverty, war, disease or calamities.[96] A major course of action is the humanitarian aid offered each year by the Union to states around the world through its dedicated branches, a most notable model in this sense being the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). In 2010 alone, 1.115 million Euros were spent on dealing with newly emerged and with already existent global crises.

The above examples account for just two of the many instances which have caused the EU to be seen as more than a political or geographical entity. It has become the embodiment of a community of values and laws promoting peace, common goals and protection; a community based on the solidarity of several distinctly unique communities; and, last but not least, a community with a rich spiritual, cultural, philosophical and ideological

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[95] EurActiv, *EU-Turkey Relations*, 2012, [http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/eu-turkey-relations/article-129678], consulted on 20.05.2012.

[96] *Raport anual privind politicile Uniunii Europene în materie de ajutor umanitar şi de protecţie civilă şi privind punerea lor în aplicare în 2010*, 2011, [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0343:FIN:RO:HTML], consulted on 20.05.2012.

inheritance.[97] In fact, the European Union does not end where the historical borders of Europe were placed. One can conclude that the European Union ends where its underlying values are not shared any longer.

Throughout this paper we have had a brief - albeit exemplary - look at just how important a system of values is, and how it has managed to become a vital part of the European Union. This is the very reason why it is imperative for young European integration specialists to learn about the place and role of values in the European Union. This is also the reason why learning and information exchange networks such as RICHIE need to distribute and extend their efforts into the area of teaching and studying the Union's system of values and its continuous influence over all areas of conduct. While political, historical or economic aspects should remain primary concerns, ways in which values impact and influence them also need to be studied on an equal scale. If the RICHIE network manages to encourage its young members to take an interest into this area, then the all-round European integration specialist could be formed. In turn, this expert will always know to look for the moral and ethical impact that a decision taken by the Union or its Member States will incur, and will always raise the valid question of whether or not the decision is aligned to the set of values that were envisioned as the core of the European Union which we are part of.

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[97] The joint Task Force for European Values and Identity of the European Ideas Network composed of: the Századvég Foundation, Austrian Institute for European Security Policy, Constantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy, Free Europe Centre and SPK-Europe, *European Values and Identity. A reflection for an Indispensable Discussion*, 2005, p. 4.

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EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE-A TOOL FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The title of European Capital of Culture (ECoC) is considered to bring many positive cultural, economic or even political effects. The article represents a closer study to identify the role of ECoC in regional development, the region on Transylvania. For a better understanding of the ECoC's role and impact in regional development, we will present further on the case of two Romanian cities: Sibiu, which in 2007 received the title of ECoC, and Cluj-Napoca, which hopes to be rewarded with this title for the year of 2020 and which candidates to the title together with other two Romanian cities .

Keywords: European City, Cultural city, improved European image, economic growth.

Introduction

European Capital of Culture represents a project conceived to bring Europeans closer together by highlighting the diversity and richness of European cultures and raising awareness of Europeans' common values and history. We consider that the need of citizens' togetherness is linked to the need of a common European identity, an identity that can be shaped through culture.

Nowadays, an increasing trend of using cultural policy to stimulate urban development and economic growth across Europe[1], determined many cities to aspire to the title of European Capital of Culture (ECoC). This desire is founded on a vague yet growing understanding which presents the European cities as caught up in inter-urban competition[2]. Also, another belief is that cultural policies, if used properly, can achieve economic, social or political objectives[3]. To sustain the above-mentioned argument, we would refer to the Palmer's Report on ECoC which evaluates a number of twenty one European Capitals of Culture projects, and which concludes that almost all of the candidate cities improved their image and achieved urban regeneration[4]. One of the cities submitted to the report was also Sibiu.

Sibiu was the first city that received the title of European Capital of Culture in Romania and also the first city ever that received this distinction at the same year when its country became a European member. The distinction had a great importance for Sibiu and it brought many positive effects not only for the city, but for the entire region and for the new member state as well. It did not only place the city of Sibiu on the map of European Cultural Cities, but also helped improving the state's image among Europeans, it let to economic growth and social cohesion.

On the other hand, Cluj-Napoca represents a candidate city to the title of ECoC for the year of 2020. In 2010, the city expressed its intend in standing up for the title, and at the same time initiated some procedures, brought together a working group which begun to think to a strategy for this purpose[5]. Further on, we will start analyzing the two cities above-mentioned and we will focus on five main subjects: economic impact, tourism

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[1] Thomas Helie, *Des politiques culturelles de façade? Les effets sociaux ambivalents des opérations de régénération urbaine par la culture*, 2009 [http://www.congresafsp2009.fr], 25 February 2010], 1 June 2012

[2] Alan Harding, 'Urban regime in a Europe of the cities?', in *European Urban and Regional Studies*, No. 4, 1997, pp.291-314

[3] R. Griffiths, K. Bassett, I. Smith, 'Capitalising on culture: Cities and the changing landscape of cultural policy', in *Policy & Politics*, No. 2, Vol. 31, 2003, pp. 153-169

[4] Rae Palmer, *European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study Prepared for the European Commission*, 2006, [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/pdf/doc654_en.pdf], 1 June 2012

[5] Information obtained from an interview with Florin Moroşanu, former director of the Cultural Department at the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca

development, cultural impact, increase, visibility and the infrastructure impact. We have decided on these two cities because we would like to better understand from two perspectives, the role of ECoC in development of a geographical area For Sibiu case, we would analyze the impact after the cultural year, while for Cluj-Napoca we will focus on the impact and the regional development resulted before the ECoC title, a development born throughout the simple desire of receiving the title of Capital of Culture. We also preferred that the two cities to be cities of the same country and even more, cities from the same region. We will consider both cities as being relevant for the region of Transylvania.

1. Economic Impact

One of the most important aspects of the ECoC is given by its impact on the hosting city economy, which in all cases led to more or less sustainable economic development. This category of impact is usually reflected in visitors' expenditure, because they are a factor of new money infusion in the local economy and also is reflected in new businesses initiated by investors that redirect their activities to this kind of area because they are attracted by the positive effects mirage of such an event.

In 2007, according to Mrs. Stela Matioc, in Sibiu the total effect directly attributable to visitors staying was approximately 19 million EURO[6]. In the following table, based on data of local economy turnover over two years (2006, 2007), we can observe an economic increase of almost 10% in 2007.

Table 1: Economic impact of the ECOC - 2006 compared to 2007

Turnover of the local economy	€ 2006	€ 2007	% increase
Production and cultural services	9,398,786	10,109,335	7.6
Hotels and pensions	5,078,987	5,612,280	10.5

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[6] Information obtained from an interview with Stela M. Matioc-Head-office of the Chamber of tourism promotion and development, City Hall of Sibiu

Restaurants and Bars	16,162,843	17,439,708	7.9
Tourism Companies	3,118,924	3,546,216	13.7
Transport Companies	24,210,094	26,848,994	10.9
Rentals	3,654,337	3,946,684	8
Total	61,623,971	67,503,217	9.5

Source: Sergiu Nistor, 'Sibiu, Capitală Culturală Europeană 2007 Ianuarie 2005 – Decembrie2007'- Report Synthesis, Minister of Culture, 2008, p. 104

According to the study of Center of Studies and Research in Culture that aimed to analyze the impact of cultural capital program on certain groups of operators, the cultural program of ECoC has succeeded in presenting a positive impact on the city economy, not only in 2007, but also in the following years. Currently, the average expenditures of Sibiu's visitors increased from 2007. These are spending now almost two times more than they spent in 2007, but this only indicates structural changes in local tourist market[7].

Cluj-Napoca however, as a candidate for the title and with the example of Sibiu in 2007, has started already to make steps in establishing a cultural strategy. This gives this city a longer action and training period of time. On the other hand, for Sibiu case, no existence of rival cities for the title was in question, to determine Sibiu to develop a much better and a much earlier strategy that the one it prepared. We believe that Timisoara and Iași as Cluj-Napoca's counter candidates to the title in 2020 determined the last city in question to start quicker a better structured cultural strategy, which by its development topics and aims will inevitably lead to economic growth also. Economic growth will also due to the high economic potential that this city registers now. Although currently we cannot see an annual economic boom of Cluj-Napoca, the number of cultural activities is annually increasing and manages to draw from one cycle to another a raised number of participants to cultural

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[7] Center of Studies and Research in Culture, *Sibiu Capitală Culturală Europeană, Raport pentru ultima etapă a studiului de impact Iunie- Iulie 2008*, 2008

[http://www.culturadata.ro/PDFuri/Sibiu_Capitala_Culturala_Europeana_2008.pdf], 2 June 2012

acts. For example, we would like to take a look to TIFF (Transylvania International Film Festival), which in 2010 drew an audience of about 50,000 (countered in tickets sold), while in 2011 it amounted to about 55,000 [8]. So, we can easily deduct that the public's expenditure brought to local budget an important amount of money resulting from the various local taxes, and we are talking here strictly on the act of consumption. Also the investments in infrastructure, initiated in both cities before the cultural year, facilitate the access of new investors, and so it will contribute to sustainable economic development, however, we will develop this topic bellow.

Later on, we will easily observe that all the analyzed topics of the article have direct impact in the economic development of Cluj-Napoca and region of Transylvania. We consider that all the analyzed subjects will encourage in a certain point, new investors to open new businesses in the area and so, to obtain an even more increased economic development.

Therefore, we consider that an incentive as the counter-candidates to title of ECoC has a positive aspect in achieving economic growth even before the cultural year, and by referring to the impact this title had in the economy of all former European Capital of Culture, we believe that the year of 2020 will bring new opportunities for Cluj-Napoca and for the region of Transylvania in terms of economic growth.

2. Tourism development

The impact of ECoC, is closely related to the increased tourism offer. In the city of Sibiu, we think that perhaps it would have shown, even without ECoC, some increases due to economic development context. In this respect, if we refer to the stage after 2007, you can see a substantial increase in construction of hotels and other accommodation facilities.

Another point which offers us data on economic impact of tourism trends are the tourist taxes. It shows us that 2007 represented an important year in the touristic economy development of the city and this sector's contribution to local finance. Between 2006 and

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[8] Ştiri de Cluj, *TIFF Cluj- 55000 de bilete vândute în 10 zile de Festival*, 2010

[http://www.stiridecluj.ro/divertisment/tiff-cluj-55-000-de-bilete-vandute-in-10-zile-de-festival], 2 June 2012

2007 tourist tax increased by 70%, while in 2008 and 2009 remain the same high-level. Even if there was a general drop in Romanian tourism, hotel tax managed to maintain 70% higher in the first half of 2009 compared to 2006[9]. We can conclude that ECoC was able to make quantitative changes in the development of city tourism. However, the year of 2007 was important not only for Sibiu, but also for the entire region of Transylvania, because during this year, other places of the area recorded significant increase of visitors/tourists. In our opinion the events that were taking place in Sibiu determined the tourists to visit also the proximities of the city and their cultural objectives.

If for Sibiu, the cultural year represented also the increase of the number of accommodation facilities, resulting at the end of 2007 a total of 27 hotel rooms, which reported 1227 rooms, and which in 2009 doubled, this items number, currently registered in Cluj–Napoca, is considered sufficient for nowadays requirements. Not too many initiatives in building new facilities were registered, probably because these succeeded to balance demand with supply. On the other hand, if currently the accommodation facilities number is not enough, places around the city succeed to meet the demand, which is a plus, economically speaking, for the region. However, city representatives (Florin Moroşanu), consider that the increasing number of annual cultural activities will attract more and more tourists in the future, and this will determine the beginning of building new accommodation facilities[10]. We believe also that this will lead to the phenomenon of cultural tourism, a phenomenon that has many positive effects such as economic growth, a subject that we talk about in the paragraphs above and which will reflect in the whole region of Transylvania.

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[9]Greig Richards, Ilie Rotariu, Monitorizarea efectelor pe termen lung ale „Programului Capitală Culturală Europeană în Sibiu", 2009
[http://www.google.ro/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwebspace.ulbsibiu.ro%2Filie.rotariu%2Fstudenti%2Fsibiu%2520report%25202009%2520academic%2520printing%2520RO.doc&ei=DFnQT_GzAuHj4QTpvdTFDA&usg=AFQjCNF2Moh8APzIfe5hFMS3ximGfHAEXg&sig2=QythXRT1SAJNlWsbT3seZQ], 3 June 2012

[10] Information obtained from an interview with Florin Moroşanu, former director of the Cultural Department at the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca

3. Cultural impact

ECoC gave a substantial impetus to the cultural sector of Sibiu. In terms of cultural visits, they have increased in 2007 and continued to grow since then. The public of important attraction point of the city has tripled since 2007.

Table 2: City's major attractions public's evolution (number)
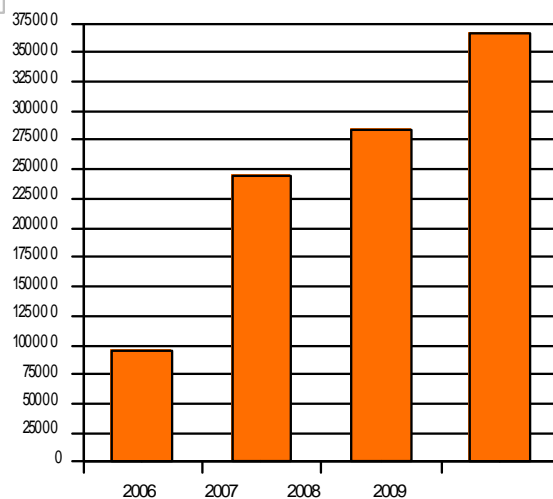
Source: Greg Richards, Ilie Rotariu, 'Monitorizarea efectelor pe termen lung ale „Programului Capitală Culturală Europeană în Sibiu"', 2010, p. 52

According to the data of the interviews on ASTRA museum management team, ECoC program led to a significant increase in the number of visitors. In 2008 and 2009 for Brukenthal Museum also, was registered an increase in number of the visitors. In 2009 the total number of visitors to the main museums in Sibiu has reached nearly 700,000,

compared with almost 500,000 in 2007[11]. It is also important to remember, as we already stated at the previous subtitle that the number of tourist has direct influence in the economic impact of ECoC and so, more visitors mean more money to the local budget, not only for Sibiu, but for the entire region of Transylvania.

In what concerns Cluj-Napoca, this city currently has a number of strengths within the existing environment for cultural activities. It enjoys a large number of institutions / cultural organizations (theaters, opera houses, libraries, museums, NGOs, folk, culture houses and schools of arts, cinema, magazines), the presence of national cultural institutions branches (branch of the Romanian Academy, the Writers' Union, the Composers and Artists Union), the centers of research and technological development and innovation, or the existence of a University. All these aspects provide an intense cultural activity in the city, each year being registered about 2500 cultural events, which in this regard ranks Cluj-Napoca second, after Bucharest. Thus, in Cluj-Napoca, we can meet a diverse cultural offer (film festivals, theater, exhibitions, concerts, etc.), a large number of events in non-conventional areas (The brushes factory, concerts in clubs) some unique events in the country (TIFF) or the existence of long-lived events (classical music festival

Toamna Clujeană)[12]. In addition, some events include a number of localities in the region (Man.In.Fest Festival, including Turda, and Bonţida beside Cluj-Napoca), which takes effects, usually positive ones, over a wider area, such as Transylvania. All these activities currently attract a large audience, which records annual growth and which in economic terms represent a good thing.

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[11] Greig Richards, Ilie Rotariu, Monitorizarea efectelor pe termen lung ale „Programului Capitală Culturală Europeană în Sibiu", 2009

[http://www.google.ro/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwebspace.ulbsibiu.ro%2Filie.rotariu%2Fstudenti%2Fsibiu%2520report%25202009%2520academic%2520printing%2520RO.doc&ei=DFnQT_GzAuHj4QTpvdTFDA&usg=AFQjCNF2Moh8APzIfe5hFMS3xi mGfHAEXg&sig2=QythXRT1SAJNlWsbT3seZQ], 3 June 2012

[12] Datas from another study, where together with a group of interest we proposed to the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca a SWOT analysis for the local cultural activities and a draft for the Cultural Strategy starting with the year 2013. Some of the datas are not public yet, however, the SWOT analysis was presented at the Conference organized by the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca, 14 December 2011.

Because we already registered data about Sibiu's cultural impact after the cultural year, it will be interesting to see how cultural life will develop in Cluj-Napoca and how this city will organize its cultural program of the year in title, which will be its international component, the events scale and the impact of this program once the year is finished.

4. Visibility increase

The Center of Studies and Research in Culture conducted in 2008, at the request of Commissioner for Sibiu ECoC 2007, a study on program's impact on public, cultural agents and certain categories of economic operators.

Although the questionnaire referred too many subjects that aimed also the preferences of respondents, we chose to examine out of this study, the target audience's feedback and the impact of such an event on a city / region, in terms of visibility.

The data showed that at the beginning of the cultural year (Sibiu 2007), 33% of respondents had yet no information regarding the event. This does not indicate anything other than an insufficient promotion, an incorrect one or one that used a wrong media, of Sibiu ECoC 2007 among the public. In this respect, the information source commonly used by the public was the television. This information did not surprise us because we all know that this is the most attractive way to present information to the public, mainly because it combines picture and sound. Therefore, we propose to the future Romanian European Capitals of Culture, to resort to a high promotion through television.

Subsequently Sibiu 2007 event, the questionnaires show that ECoC program had a positive impact on the city and the region. The most common ECoC effects mentioned among respondents was that it brought the city/region closer to Europe, that it improved the image of the city and of cultural utilities and the economic effects.

Most respondents also agreed that the ECoC program created more social cohesion in Sibiu and improved the quality of life. In analyzing these responses, we must take into account the intangible nature of these effects, which indicates a good result of the questionnaires.

At the same time, it is important that these perceptions of the impact to be felt even in the years after ECoC. In many cities of the former ECoC, the program memory quickly faded, and the population is far to see its benefits. We can conclude that this is mainly due to drastic changes in certain areas of development. However, for Sibiu, we see a relatively weak decrease in population assessments on of ECoC impact.

Since 2007, Sibiu's image remained constantly positive, especially in Romanians' memory, and its image as a city of history, culture and art was able to grow more easily than its image as an European city, especially among foreign visitors, which although they have positive assessments on the ECoC title for Sibiu, they are less inclined to appoint Sibiu as European city, but on the other hand, just like the Romanians, appreciating the city as being friendly, historic or a city of culture and art[13].

Compared with Sibiu's impact on people, Romanians or foreign citizens, the impact which was due not only to their participation to events, but also to promotion of the event in different media, Cluj-Napoca has a series of activities designed to promote the city even before the cultural year. Thus, the European Capital of Culture Cluj 2020 Association, which was established to meet the imposed by the European Union requirements, was divided into seven working committees, divided into different areas (literary arts, research, heritage, etc.). Further, the Association intends to propose one ambassador (foreign person) for each committee, each of them having the role to promote abroad ECoC Cluj 2020. Thus, compared with Sibiu that had only one cultural ambassador, Cluj-Napoca would like to offer to its citizens a number of seven cultural diplomats. On the other hand, there are more than twenty twinning partnerships with cities and towns in other countries, cities that will have the role of helping promote the city title. Moreover, the city has already started associating his name with various phrases such as *The heart of Transylvania* or the *Seven Saxon medieval cities*. For some of these name associations, video clips were created and started to be promoted through different media. This type of promotion affects not only the city in question, but also the whole region where it is geographically situated. In addition,

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[13] Center of Studies and Research in Culture, *Sibiu Capitală Culturală Europeană, Raport pentru ultima etapă a studiului de impact Iunie- Iulie 2008*, 2008
[http://www.culturadata.ro/PDFuri/Sibiu_Capitala_Culturala_Europeana_2008.pdf], 2 June 2012

to promote and support the event before and during the cultural year, Cluj-Napoca intends to work closely with an Irish city. This was the attitude of Sibiu as well when then it chose to work closely with Luxembourg. These partnerships are considered beneficial because they cause an exchange of experience between the two cities, intercultural exchange and support in many domains[14] and all these are leading to future development.

Referring to those above-mentioned, we are wondering if all this promotion effort will be good enough to attract for the city of Cluj-Napoca, in 2020 (if this city is named the winner of ECoC title among all Romanian candidates), a positive and higher than Sibiu's in 2007 impact. We cannot, however, forget the fact that Sibiu had sent the letter of intent on becoming ECoC to the European Commission, only three years before the title and that the event promotion met some gaps because of the limited period of time. In this respect, Cluj-Napoca will have ten years to prepare its promotion strategy and to make sure that the cultural message will be sent through as many media as possible. Therefore, we believe that this asset will create more intense and longer lasting effects than those of Sibiu. We also believe that all these promotional activities that occur before the cultural year of 2020 will provide to Cluj-Napoca and to Transylvania greater visibility not only among the Romanian public, but also among the foreign one because Cluj-Napoca is collocate with *the hard of Transylvania.*

Moreover, we believe that these actions are beneficial not only the city / region that receives the name of ECoC, but the entire country, which becomes as well more visible among foreign citizens because it represents the country of origin of one of the ECoC 2020. At the same time, promoting the event will attract a large number of spectators, which will cause economic effects as well to the region, subject that we already have mentioned at the firs subtitle of the article.

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[14] Information obtained from an interview with Florin Moroşanu, former director of the Cultural Department at the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca

5. The impact on infrastructure

The ECoC program involves also a number of significant investments in cultural and non-cultural infrastructure. The table below shows all the investments for this sector in Sibiu. Mrs. Matioc stated however, that these investments were required to be made no matter the ECoC title and that its progress represented only the impulse for the beginning of these investments[15].

Table 3: Investitions in infrastructure

Infrastucture	Total €	
Tourism infrastructure	117.0m	
Renovation of cultural infrastructure	15.4m	
Renovation of the historic centre	4.1m	
Technical equipment (scenes, lightening system, audio system, projectors, etc.)	0.9m	
TOTAL	137.4m	

Source: ECOTEC, 'Ex-Post Evaluation of 2007 and 2008 European Capitals of Culture Final Report', 2009, p. 41.

The strategy of development began, however, at Sibiu, as if Cluj-Napoca, even before the cultural year, and for Sibiu, some of them had completed it later.

Currently, in Cluj-Napoca we can see in this respect, some vague steps, seen as future projects, initiated by local authorities. It seeks the establishment of a Cultural Center located outside the city to bring together different cultural directions (theater, music, fine arts, etc.), a center for conducting various cultural events. Other investments have already been completed such as stadiums, but these and their need are the subjects of another

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[15] Information obtained from an interview with Stela M. Matioc-Head-office of the Chamber of tourism promotion and development, City Hall of Sibiu

discussion topic, or highways. Currently, in Cluj-Napoca, there are also some categories of infrastructure, such as the accommodation, which does not present an increasing importance because at present the demand meets the offer[16].

Thus, we see that regardless the need or not of some infrastructure investments, each project will be able to find a use at that time. We believe that all these will lead to a better economic development of the city and also of the region because, for example, a new access road will facilitate the arrival of investors and tourists and might ride their number.

Conclusions

The ECoC project is a multi-levels program that brings different effects on many topics as economy, visibility, etc., effects that can be treated individually, independent by topic or interconnected, in dependence because the majority of the topics analyzed above generate economic growth and thus enhancing the effects of a cultural project such as the one discussed in this paper.

The analysis of the two cities, Sibiu ECoC 2007 and Cluj-Napoca 2020, bring concrete examples on the significance and impact of a program like ECoC for a particular city / region, not only in the year of the event hosting, but also in the application years. The impact of such a cultural project has of course a high rank for the title holder city, but it is also important for the whole region where the city is geographically located to and further, in some respects, it has national effects as well.

We conclude that because the majority of such projects' effects are positive and most importantly, sustainable effects, the statement that ECoC represents a regional development tool is realistic.

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[16] Information obtained from an interview with Florin Moroșanu, former director of the Cultural Department at the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca

Notes

1) Interview with Florin Moroșanu, former director of the Cultural Department at the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca

2) Interview with Stela M. Matioc-Head-office of the Chamber of tourism promotion and development, City Hall of Sibiu

3) Datas from another study, where together with a group of interest we proposed to the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca a SWOT analysis for the local cultural activities and a draft for the Cultural Strategy starting with the year 2013. Some of the data are not public yet, however, the SWOT analysis was presented at the Conference organized by the City Hall of Cluj-Napoca, 14 December 2011.

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THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC SPACE BEFORE LISBON

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Subjects of interests: EU lobbying activities, civil society, EU decision-making

Abstract: There is limited knowledge among the European public about what really goes on in Europe, specifically the division of responsibilities and competencies between the Union and the Member States. If reforms of existing institutions are not enough, what else needs to be done? One possible answer to this question may be that institutional reform is inadequate in the absence of a European public space as well as of a new form of European collective identity, distinct from but not contradictory to nation-based citizenship.

Keywords: European public space, common identity

The pre-eminent vehicles of creating a European public space, except the old popular movements and the new NGOs, are still radio, television, newspapers, and magazines - digital or otherwise.

One example could be the eminent bilingual German/French television station Arte that earned no less than 1,260 awards. However, it was still nowhere near its goal of carving out a 1 per cent share of the market. Although *Arte*'s proud slogan is "Europe watches TV", its prospects for finding a third major partner - apart from Germany and France - appear remote. Not even in those two countries has the channel managed to fashion a profile or a trademark sufficiently strong and appealing to lay the groundwork for anything that might resemble a European public space .

Le Monde diplomatique, which is run largely from France, has editions in close to 20 different languages. Though less synchronized, *Lettre international* is also a good case in point. The *Eurozine network* consists of some 50-partner publications, as well as 60 others that are more loosely connected, for the exchange of articles and ideas. However, while individual articles that are translated and distributed inside and outside the *Eurozine network* may have a total circulation of over 1 million, the cosmopolitanism of the cultural journals is small in scale.

They may represent a partial, contrarian public space, but their scope is much too limited to nurture a forum that can shape public opinion and steel people's wills, a place in which crucial issues can be framed and discussed in earnest.

A public space through which a common European identity can emerge and serve as the basis for the legitimization of new transnational polities will have to be broader than that. There is only one path open to meeting the challenge posed by a heterogeneous collective of nationally oriented viewers, listeners, and readers: a European public space spearheaded by established national media, whose translations - of both language and context - can offer "foreign" thinkers and concepts a seat at a table where Romanian, French, and Bulgarian readers all feel at home.

The democratic deficit of the EU should be seen as a likely cost of all international organizations. Although the term "federation" can be the basis of passionate debates in the EU – there are clearly very different perceptions of the organization of the EU – it should be acknowledged that the EU is a very special case in the international scene; there are no other cases of cooperation that resemble it. At the very least, it can be seen as a confederation if this is defined as "a group of organizations, countries, regions, etc. that have joined together to form a larger organization or government".

A European public space may be a requirement for a united Europe, but unity should not be confused with uniformity. The true challenge is to take diversity seriously and make room for new perspectives - whether in word or thought. Only such a rich and freewheeling dialogue has the potential to forge a common identity and put it to the proof.

A democratically viable Europe requires a "public space" or "public sphere" which might take very different forms from those familiar at national level. Its irreducible character is to offer a framework for a set of practices which are citizenship-oriented, i.e. which allow participants to adopt, to debate, and indeed to reconstruct a 'public interest' perspective.

For the time being, what needs to be kept in mind is that the member states and EU citizens, however mangled by crises and difficulties, continue to turn to the Union when seeking solutions to problems that cannot be solved nationally. That is an extraordinary proliferation of subjects and channels providing participation in European debates and decisions, in new and ever-changing ways.

Public debates on European issues should be organized with the participation of politicians and civil society. These debates could follow the model of Ireland's National Forum on Europe. Such fora should not promote a particular point of view, but should function as a neutral venue for open and uncensored debate. In addition, particular efforts should be made to enlist the participation of citizens from other member states to strengthen the European dimension in these debates.

In any modern democracy, citizens should be able to obtain information, compare their own opinions, be consulted, freely discuss, and evaluate the decisions taken in their name. The absence of a European public space means that there is a deficit in citizen participation.

In an era of press freedom and independent media which the European public authorities intend to encourage and recognize, help should be given in order to ensure that the information process is based on a more even and more comprehensive knowledge of European affairs as regards both the disseminators, i.e. the journalists and the recipients, i.e. the public.

While the media may be the fourth branch of government in the United States, and the Washington press corps a massive and tenacious body, the Brussels press corps is considerably more subdued. Princen and Kerremans suggest that "the European Union lacks an integrated 'European Public Space.'

As a result, there are no or very little European news media and European wide debates, especially when compared with the media and public debates in the European Union's Member States" (2005: 8). Saurugger also notes "what seems to be missing is a European demos with a shared identity, a common deliberative forum, and an open system of communication" (2005: 6).

The overhaul of the exercise of power and the vectors of development offered by the information and communication technologies also alter the nature of political communication and require a fresh attitude from public authorities and new forms of public action. These new bases to civic participation are the *sine qua non* of the building of a Union-wide public space. At the risk of being swamped by the general voicing of opinions prompted by the speed and facility of the new communications tools, the European Union should, by means of innovations, which encourage communication between citizens, look for the opportunity to develop a democratic area.

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"European integration has delivered fifty years of stability, peace and economic prosperity. It has helped to raise standards of living, built an internal market, and strengthened the Union's voice in the world. It has achieved results, which would not have been possible by individual Member States acting on their own. […] Yet despite its achievements, many Europeans feel alienated from the Union's work.

People do not necessarily feel less European. They still expect Europe-wide action in many domains, but they no longer trust the complex system to deliver what they want. In other words, people have disappointed expectations, but expectations nevertheless. This feeling is not confined to the European Institutions. It affects politics and political institutions around the globe. But for the Union, it reflects particular tensions and uncertainty about what the Union is and what it aspires to become, about its geographical boundaries, its political objectives and the way these powers are shared with the Member States" (EC 2001: 7).

Today, with the abandon of the constitutional treaty, Europe is in crisis. It is time to constitute a veritable European public space. A space, where citizenship is tied to residence and not to origin, and where the European people can enjoy complete civil rights (the right of referendum for adopting or rejecting a law and the right of initiative to propose a law). The European political parties must acquire more importance and the election process and their programs must be European not national.

The main source of the European legitimacy crises is created by fundamental political elements like the lack of a European public space, a space where European issues can be debated at a European level. There are plenty of possibilities to actively engage citizens in the debate on European matters that remain unexplored. European leaders must use this "period of reflection" to convincingly demonstrate that they take seriously the message from the two negative referenda. This present period of reflection must directly address the larger dissatisfaction that characterizes the attitude of a growing part of the population towards the EU

A first manifestation of the European public space understands that different national public spaces represent the foundation. The configuration of a public space for the European Union requests a series of particular conditions, considering that in the international law, it possess the statute of an international governmental organization:
- inside the European Union, liberty, equality, the citizen's fundamental rights must be guaranteed by the Treaties or by a Constitution; the concept of common citizenship must be used. Thus, it is necessary to establish, like in the national states, a state of law or a union of law.
- democratic forms and structures are necessary to characterize the life of the European society. The citizen must be able to react to the legislative, executive, and judicial institutions (the Council of Ministers, the European Commission, the European Court of Justice)
- the European Union must be able to use the competences given by the member states concerning different common policies.
- the existence of NGO's and political parties giving to citizens that share the same ideas,

- the possibility to discuss and articulate a common opinion.

The European Union forms today a dense network of institutional relations, social and political, which is on the verge to become more complex in the context of futures enlargements. This Union needs to surpass its economical dimension for achieving a Europe of citizens and diversity. Recent analysis of media, research centres, and statistical organisms, especially the Eurobarometer, are capturing the distance between citizens and the European institutions. The low participation level to the last elections for the European Parliament is the most recent example. The truth is that the Union is not yet equipped with adapted instruments.

The European Union needs a program that places the citizens in the centre of its actions and responds to their aspirations of better participating to the future of Europe. This program will allow citizens of different nationalities to meet, to interact, to confront their ideas, and develop their own reflexions in a European public space that captures their diversity.

Numerous representatives of the European civil society - syndicates, patronates, NGOs, euro think tanks, cultural organizations, etc. - express their progressive determination to participate to the European project. They contributed to the introduction of the principle of participative democracy in the European Constitution project. Nevertheless, there is no instrument able to put in practice transnational projects allowing the development of a more active participation of citizens in European issues.

The European instances take into account three valid scripts. The first one is included in the project of the "Information Society", which constitutes a whole chapter in the "White Paper of Growth, competitiveness, employment. The challenges and ways forward into the 21st century" (EC: 1994). Democracy depends on people being able to take part in public debate. To do this, they must have access to reliable information on European issues and be able to scrutinize the policy process in its various stages. Major progress has been made in 2001 with the adoption of new rules, giving citizens greater access to Community documents.

However, the Institutions and Member States also need to communicate more actively with the public on European issues.

The communication policy of the Commission and the other Institutions (EC: 2001) will promote efforts to deliver information at national and local level, where possible making use of networks, grassroots organizations and national, regional, and local authorities. Information should be presented in a way adapted to local needs and concerns, and be available in all official languages if the Union does not desire to exclude a vast proportion of its population –a challenge which will become more acute in the context of enlargement. Information and communication technologies have an important role.

Providing more information and more communication that is effective are a pre-condition for generating a sense of belonging to Europe. The aim should be to create a trans-national "space" where citizens from different countries can discuss what they perceive as being the important challenges for the Union. This should help policy makers to stay in touch with European public opinion, and could guide them in identifying European projects, which mobilize public support.

A well-known and much debated expression of this participatory engineering approach in EU politics is the Commission 'White Paper on European Governance'. The Commission's intention with the White Paper is to find new means "to connect Europe with its citizens" (European Commission 2001: 3). Yet the concept of participation in the White Paper remains vague; it "oscillates between output- and input-oriented conceptions of civil society and participation" (Finke 2007: 13). Participation is overall perceived in instrumental ways as a means to improve efficiency and effectiveness of European policy-making. A further critique against the White Paper is its strong focus on participation of organized interests and the neglect of unorganized citizens. Whereas the Commission is highly experienced with integrating territorial as well as functional interest groups via a number of means, the "real" challenge is to find direct channels of communication with individual citizens.

As a direct response to the negative French and Dutch referenda on the Constitutional Treaty and at a request from the European Council, Margot Wallström, Commission's Vice-President and Commissioner for Communication, launched a new initiative in 2005: Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate (European Commission 2005). Plan D calls for innovative models for citizen's communication and aims at shaping communication as a two-way street. According to Wallström, "Plan D is about debate, dialogue and listening. It is a means of harnessing political ideas to generate change ... Plan D aims to inject more democracy into the Union, to stimulate a wide public debate and build a new consensus on the future direction of the European Union" (quoted in: http://www.speakupeurope.eu/plan_d.html; 30-08-2008).

The 2006 White Paper on European Communication Policy complements the previous approaches by attempting to further develop tools and initiatives for citizens' involvement (European Commission 2006).

A clear sign of the "winds of change" is the inclusion of the principle of participatory democracy in the 2004 Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (Article I-47) and also in the follow-up Lisbon Treaty (Article 11) – however without explicitly mentioning the term "participatory democracy". This article, for example, introduces even an instrument of direct democracy, the popular initiative, into the overall representative structure of the EU. This allows citizens some agenda-setting influence at EU level. Even if the future of the Lisbon Treaty is currently not clear, it is nevertheless most remarkable that "a disputed idea becomes law" (von Bogdandy 2007) within a few years only. Enriching European representative democracy with elements of participatory democracy is now a legal principle – its realization is still a major challenge (see Leinen and Kreutz 2008).

The question is, if and how the EU institutions can breathe life into the idea of EU participatory democracy. Regarding the "if" question, I argue in this paper that there is substantial evidence that "participatory talk" is not simply cheap talk, but that the institutions, above all the European Parliament and the Commission, commence real "democratic experimentalism" (Dorf and Sabel, quoted in Papadopoulos and Warin 2007: 445).

Already in the course of the 1990s, "a new EU consultation policy" (Finke 2007: 13) has evolved developing into a new kind of "consultation regime" (Quittkat and Finke 2008); consultation of civil society actors – now called participation – is at the very heart of this new regime, yet other forms of consultation still exist . Workshop-conferences and internet forums are today widely practiced tools for civil society consultation. Yet they have some limitations. One problem is that (besides experts) mainly civil society organizations participate in consultations and less so individual citizens. The Commission also aims to reach out to the wider public, usually meaning then informed public. This does still not include the average citizens. But the question is: How to reach out to these individual citizens? What tools are suitable in the EU polity?

The European Commission is as much an active as an innovative advocate of participatory engineering. In developing innovative tools, the Commission can profit from the number of research projects funded since the 5th Framework Programme for Research and Development. These projects address the question of new ways in what is called "science governance" and particularly on the role of public participation at the interface of science and society.

The contested field of biopolitics has been a prominent example for testing the need and possibilities for a "participatory shift" (Abels 2002). Scholars and practitioners of technology assessment (TA) have been most creative and methodologically advanced with regard to developing a set of tools for public participation, including participation of individual citizens. Consensus or citizens' conferences are one such means; it has been become ubiquitous in Europe and elsewhere in the world. This TA method has become a model for pan-European participatory experiments. So far, the Commission has supported and solicited four citizens' conferences, two of which address socio-technological issues, two focus on general political topics. One of the objectives of these first experiments is to help develop method for supranational participatory democracy. Yet it is unclear, if this expectation as to their function has been fulfilled. The crisis over biotechnology and food safety, however, clearly illustrates that expert-based regulatory decisions cannot always secure effectiveness. The participatory governance approach in biotechnology has not automatically led to more public deliberation and an activated citizenry (Dabraowska

2007; see also Abels 2002; Skogstad 2003).

The Consultation Forum concerning the action programme 2007-2013 to promote active European citizenship was the second part of an extensive two-stage consultation exercise organized by the Directorate General for Education and Culture. Held on 3 and 4 February 2005, it followed closely the public online consultation from December 2004 to February 2005, period in which over a thousand responses were received (internet link). The Forum attracted the full range of stakeholders, drawing approximately 350 actors and representatives from European civil society's NGOs, think tanks, regional and municipal authorities, European networks, advocacy groups, trade unions, and European associations (Synthesis Report 2005: 2).

The major objective of the occasion was to stimulate dialogue and debate, and thereby advance concrete proposals, recommendations, and suggestions for the preparation of the new active citizenship programme, destined to improve and strengthen the current transitional one, in time for the discussions on the financial perspectives 2007-2013. Discussion points raised for reflection were aimed specifically, at the possible contribution thinks tanks or civil society can bring to European policy making, possible partnerships between such activities and those undertaken by NGOs.

The participants were initially asked to consider the lessons they had learned from the current programme. The multiplicity of actors present, representing a broad range of interests and activities, meant that throughout the workshop, consensus proved a somewhat difficult task. Nonetheless, the vast majority agreed on basic shortcomings, which they hoped the future programme would eliminate. The current financial rules and procedures posed some major barriers to the objectives of the programme to support civil society and promote active citizenship. Rigid procedures, as well as complex and detailed financial regulations proved crippling and cumbersome to many of the organizations, particularly the NGOs, and stifled innovative actions and ambitions (Synthesis Report 2005: 3-4).

A further discussion point concerned the criteria to be used for the award of operating grants. In view of the high number of potential applicants for support, and the rather

limited amount of financial resources available, participants were asked which criteria should be applied in what would undoubtedly be a competitive selection procedure. The criteria favoured by the participants reflected the programme's objectives. The activities and projects should be capable of introducing an additional European or transnational dimension to the current work being carried out. They should also be focused around crucial themes to the continued and successful realization of the European integration process.

Other proposals concerned the employed criteria in the selection of those organizations seeking structural support or operating grants. Such criteria, also largely applicable to organizations carrying out the aforementioned activities and projects, should be based on quantitative or qualitative analyses of the organization's governance structure and transparency, general support for European values, the number of publications produced, the extent, and scope of networks, the multiplier effect, or proven records of accomplishment.

Not all of these ideas received the unanimous support of the participants to the workshop, with many arguing that such criteria are in the majority of cases difficult to measure, and would prove a barrier to new think tanks or organizations, and hence also to innovation. There is a case for taking seriously the emergence of a distinct, complex Euro-polity that is generating multilevel forms of political communication that encompass lobbying, official information campaigns, and news reporting. Such communicative activity takes place not in a single coherent European public arena but rather in an often-contradictory field of political forces (Synthesis Report 2005: 15).

Consequently, rather than imagine a single European public sphere as the likely outcome of economic and political integration, we should think about the growth of interrelated spheres of European publics. How these will evolve is open to speculation. However, we may speculate that ultimately what Keith Middlemass (1995) has called the "Euro-civilizing" process will continue to knit these discursive spaces together and that the drift toward a more coherent articulation might contribute to the conditions for a distinctive Euro-political culture that offers a potential focus for a new layer of political identity.

A necessary precondition for this would be broad public engagement in European public affairs. Presently, at best, some European elites have begun to constitute a restricted communicative space.

In reality, any common European public agenda is likely, in the process of media reception, to be diversely "domesticated" within each distinctive national or language context. This does not foreclose the question of how national audiences might still be in some significant respects oriented toward a *common* "European" frame of reference. As noted earlier, we already have some nascent forms of "European" journalism. For this to evolve, it needs to find a mass, transnational audience that recognizes it as offering something distinct from national forms of reporting, with a different institutional focus and agenda from that of the individual member states. This will have both to interest and be significant for large numbers of Europe's citizens. Public engagement with the centrality of EU decision making and the effectiveness of their workings would not eclipse public interest in the politics of nation-states, regions, or other meaningful territorial entities.

The record of public policy intervention to create a common European media space, or to engage the public via official information, has not been a notable success. If there are some signs that the news market is taking a "European" shape and thereby helping to build a restricted communicative space for some, it is important to recognize that this could not have occurred without the prior institutional framework of the European Union.

It is the very existence of the emergent Euro-polity that has created the conditions for a transnational, elite media to develop. To the extent that pan-European media have begun to emerge in the press and in television—and these are still rare birds indeed—their market-seeking behaviour has been the driving force rather than the search for the new public imagined in normative theory. The result is that an elite conversation is now under way in the European space—and much of it is taking place in English.

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