



EASTERN CHESSBOARD

Geopolitical Determinants and Challenges
in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus

edited by Piotr Bajor and Kamila Schöll-Mazurek

Eastern Chessboard



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Kraków

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Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Joanna Fomina, <i>Narrowing the Gap: Convergence of German and Polish Public Attitudes towards the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict</i>	9
Piotr Bajor, <i>Strength and power – conditions and doctrinal assumptions of the security policy of the Russian Federation</i>	29
Natalia Adamczyk, <i>An assessment of the Eastern Partnership in view of Ukrainian crisis 2013</i>	41
Olena Bordilovska, <i>Ukraine's Geopolitical Choice: Historical Aspects</i>	63
Tomasz Stępniewski, <i>Post-Soviet Ukraine's war for independence, memory and identity</i>	71
Mykola Doroshko, <i>"Frozen" Conflicts on the Territories of Countries Participating in "Eastern Partnership" As a Toll of Russian Influence in the Region</i>	83
Roman Kryvonos, <i>Changes in the European System of International Relations due to the "Ukrainian Crises" of 2014-15</i>	89
Vahe Khumaryan, <i>Coup d'État vs. Revolution: The Scopes of Regime Change Legitimacy in Ukraine during and after the Euromaidan and before the Annexation of Crimea</i>	103
Song Lilei, Ren Sang, <i>Chinese perspectives and discussions on Ukraine Crisis</i>	111
Kamila Schöll-Mazurek, <i>When geopolitics hinders transformation – the impact of geopolitical games on social-economic development in Ukraine</i>	131
Jeffrey Ellison Brown, <i>Europeanization Postponed: The Role of Veto Players in Shaping Convergence With The EU's Conflict Resolution and Internal Market Integration Policies in Moldova and Georgia</i>	143
Małgorzata Sikora-Gaca, <i>The Meaning of Geopolitical Factors in the Development of the State of Moldova in 2014 and 2015</i>	157
Michèle Knodt, Sigita Urdze, <i>The European Union's external democracy promotion in the countries of the Southern Caucasus. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia between the European Union and Russia</i>	175
Moritz Esken, <i>Post Vilnius Armenia – Still Sitting on the Fence?</i>	197

Narek S. Galstyan, <i>How to Deal with Armenia's Geopolitical Trilemma? Examining Public Opinion</i>	209
Abraham Gasparyan, <i>Armenian Leadership (Political and Party Elite) Stance on State's Foreign Policy Orientation</i>	221
Hayrapetyan Grigor, <i>Hayrapetyan Viktoriya, Economic Relations between Armenia and the EU within the framework of Eastern Partnership</i>	231
Aram Terzyan, <i>Armenia's foreign policy between European identity and Eurasian integration</i>	247
Authors	259
Index	263
The Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation	269
The Robert Bosch Stiftung.....	271
The Bratniak Foundation	273

Introduction

This new publication concerning the geopolitical situation and the challenges for security in the region of Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus has been the result of the research within the international research project: “Geopolitical Dilemmas. Poland and Germany and the Processes and Challenges of Europeanisation in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus”, co-ordinated by the Faculty of International and Political Studies of Jagiellonian University and Viadrina European University in Frankfurt (Oder). The realisation of this project was possible thanks to the financial support of the Foundation for Polish-German Co-operation, the Robert Bosch Foundation and the “Bratniak” Foundation, for whom the authors wish to express their gratitude.

The realisation of this project led to the creation of a scientific consortium and research network, whereby academics representing various countries could carry out their research, the results of which have been published in this book. This publication contains papers prepared by both Polish and German authors, as well as by scientists from those states covered by the Eastern Partnership Programme. The studies of these European academics have been enriched by adding the perspective of researchers from the USA and China, whose papers have also been published in this book.

The conflict in Ukraine led to a complete change in the geopolitical situation in Central and Eastern Europe and affected the level of security in the region. The objective of the studies within the consortium was thus the examination of the impact of the Ukrainian conflict on current geopolitical conditions in that part of the world, as well as the level of regional security. The publication presents texts discussing the most significant problems and processes affecting the shape of the deformed geopolitical “Eastern Chessboard” in a world region regarded up until now as stable.

The editors wish to thank the authors for their research within the project and the publication of the results in this volume. Anyone interested in the geopolitical situation and the challenges for regional security in Central and Eastern Europe is invited to read the publication and the publishers hope for a warm reception from readers.

Piotr Bajor

Kamila Schöll-Mazurek

JOANNA FOMINA

Narrowing the Gap: Convergence of German and Polish Public Attitudes towards the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict

The annexation of the Crimean peninsula by Russia and the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict have triggered varied reactions in Europe. Although in response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine the Western governments have imposed limited individual and economic sanctions and the EU has managed to speak in one voice there, agreeing common position was not easy. Some EU member-states, including Bulgaria, Greece or Hungary strongly opposed sanctions. The EP elections turned in a strong representation of European right-wing populist parties intent on dismantling the EU and openly expressing their admiration for Putin's Russia as a counterweight to both EU liberals as well as the US influence. Today, some EU member-states claim that there is no need to continue the sanctions, while others – that the EU policy should preserve its tough position on Russia. Public attitudes in different countries certainly vary, but the dividing lines do not necessarily fall along the borders of member-states. Although both Polish and German governments support continuation of sanctions as well as the introduction of further sanctions in case of more violations on the part of Russia, there is a widespread public perception that Poles and Germans are in two opposing camps with regard to Russia. The article focuses on the analysis of German and Polish public opinion on the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the EU's reaction towards it. It attempts to investigate whether there is convergence or divergence of public opinions in these two EU member states. The survey results demonstrate that despite a popular perception of Poles as Russophobes and of Germans as Russophiles, and thus an expected difference of attitudes towards the ongoing events in the two societies, we may observe considerable convergence of opinions in both countries.

It may be a truism to say that the public attitudes towards Russia in Poland and Germany are determined by matters of history, public memory as well as economic relations. Yet, without taking into account these factors we may fail to understand the dynamics of public opinion in both countries. Before we focus on the discussion of public attitudes¹ towards the current political developments in Russia and Ukraine and the EU policy towards these countries, we will briefly discuss the more general differences in perceptions of Ukraine and Russia in Poland and Germany determining the views on the current event. The present convergence of public opinions in the two countries is much more pronounced against these differences.

Germans, when referring to Russia, still often call it their Neighbour², despite the fact that the two countries do not have a shared border. This reflects the attitude towards Ukraine that for a very long time was nothing else than one of many countries of the former Soviet Union, and thus firmly belonging to Russia's area of privileged interests. The Ukrainian Orange Revolution of 2004 has only somewhat changed this perception.

In an interview with *Die Welt*, German historian of Eastern Europe, Karl Schlögel, calls German Russophilia a *mixture of sentimentality, nostalgia, cowardice and kitsch*³. The term *Russlandversteher* has been coined to refer to those claiming to "understand" and often justify Russia's policies vis-à-vis its neighbours. The *Russlandversteher* perspective is partially shared by the public opinion as well as voiced by political elites' representatives, including two former Social Democratic chancellors, Gerhard Schröder and Helmut Schmidt. Schmidt referred to Russia's annexation of the Crimea as *understandable*. Schröder, in his turn, celebrated his 70th birthday literally in Putin's arms in St. Petersburg.⁴ In March 2014, according to an opinion poll by the Institute Forsa, only 24 percent of respondents supported economic sanctions against Russia. In the same month, according to an opinion poll by Infratest, 54 percent of respondents believed that the West should accept Russia's annexation of the Crimea.⁵

¹ I wish to express my deep gratitude to the Institute of Public Affairs in Warsaw and to the Bertelsmann Foundation (Berlin) for sharing the research results collected as part of their project on German, Polish and Russian public opinion regarding the Russia-Ukraine crisis. In Poland the survey was conducted by TNS Polska on a representative sample of 1000 adult Poles in the period from 13 to 18 February 2015. In Germany it was conducted by TNS EMNID in the period from 13 to 21 February 2015 on a representative sample of adult Germans.

² J. Kucharczyk et al., *Close Together or Far Apart? Poles, Germans and Russians on the Russia-Ukraine Crisis*, Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw 2015.

³ "Putin ist Dschingis Khan mit Internet", *Die Welt*, 2 May 2014, at <http://www.welt.de/kultur/literarischewelt/article127510809/Putin-ist-Dschingis-Khan-mit-Internet.html>, 15 May 2015.

⁴ Y. H. Ferguson, "Rising Powers, Global Governance: theoretical perspectives", *Rising Powers, Global Governance and Global Ethics*, Jamie Gaskarth (ed.), Abingdon 2015, pp. 21-40.

⁵ M. Wehner, "How Should Europe React to Russia? German View", *ECFR*, 18 November 2014, at: http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_how_should_europe_respond_to_russia_the_german_view356, 15 May 2015.

The presence of *Russlandversteher* reflects Germany's conflicted identity, its balancing between the West and the East, which dates back to much earlier than the period of the Cold War and the partitioning of Germany. A major historiographic debate concerns Germany's *Sonderweg* (special path). Usually the latter concept was used to explain Germany's deviation from the normal course of western democracies to Nazism. But a variation of this concept also reflects the ambivalence of Germany vis-à-vis the West embodied by the USA and the East embodied by Russia. Although Germany is a profoundly Western country, a liberal democracy upholding the rule of law and a member of the Atlantic alliance, it has a sentimental attitude towards Russia, its "enigmatic soul", its culture and assumed moral superiority towards the West, not unrelated to the victory of the Soviet Union in WWII. Indeed, only 45 percent of Germans, according to ARD-Deutschlandtrend in April 2014, believe that Germany's place as "firmly in the Western alliance", while 49 percent claim that Germany should take a "place in the middle" between the West and Russia.⁶

Germany's war guilt in the face of Russia's monopolisation of the war suffering⁷ is an important factor here. Germans are convinced the Soviet Union's victory in the WWII somehow guarantees Russia, the Soviet empire's heir, a special treatment. Russian propaganda accusations of the Ukrainian government and Euromaidan of being "fascist" resonate particularly strongly with many Germans, who tend to forget that in fact the territories of contemporary Ukraine (and Belarus) were fully occupied by Nazi Germany during the WWII, and Ukrainians served in the Soviet Army alongside Russians and other nationalities. Thus the war toll of the Ukrainian people was in no way smaller than of the Russian people. Yet, Germans often accept Russia's *martyrdom imperialism* or as Snyder explains, Russia's *implicitly claiming territory by explicitly claiming victims*⁸. As a result, many uncritically accept Russia's claims vis-à-vis its neighbouring countries.

One should not underestimate the pragmatic dimension either. Germany has the closest economic ties with Russia, and thus *the most leverage and the most to lose*⁹. Finally, the considerable "Russian" communities in Berlin and other German cities make Russians more familiar to Germans – even though a large share of these migrants from the former Soviet Union are ethnic Jews, Germans or Ukrainians. Yet, all these things considered, recently the German government have found that dialogue with Russia's political leaders leads nowhere and strongly advocated the sanctions.

The Polish-Russian historical legacy, the Soviet Union aggression against Poland in the WWII as well as the ensuing de facto occupation of Poland after the war make

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ T. Snyder, "Holocaust: The Ignored Reality", *The New York Review*, 16 July 2009, at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2009/jul/16/holocaust-the-ignored-reality>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Y.H. Ferguson, *op. cit.*

Poles rather suspicious towards Russia and shape the perceptions of political relations between the two countries in general. The pro-Russian sentiment is certainly less pronounced in Poland than in Germany, yet it is also present. It is predominantly shared by the radical right (fascination with the alleged Russian might, the imperial legacy) and radical left (anti-fascism, alter-globalism and the Soviet legacy). There is also an understanding that smaller nations on the periphery of the European Union will be the biggest losers if Russia decides to retaliate.

Poland is much more interested in Ukraine's affairs. Poland is often viewed as an "advocate of Ukraine in the EU"¹⁰, as successive Polish governments' have supported Ukraine's pro-European aspirations. The motto associated with Józef Piłsudski and repeated by many contemporary politicians that *there is no free Poland without free Ukraine, there is no free Ukraine without free Poland* could be understood both in symbolic as well as in pragmatic terms. Pro-democratic revolutions resonate strongly with Poles who take pride in their love of freedom and their historical legacy. At the same time, a democratic and stable Ukraine is perceived as a buffer zone against the less predictable Russia; while any instability in Ukraine also threatens the situation in Poland.

Yet, the Polish public is more ambivalent about Ukraine and Ukrainians, especially due to the mutual historical legacy. Many Poles still associate Ukraine and Ukrainians with the slaughter of ethnic Poles living in the Volhynia (Wołyń)¹¹ and are particularly perceptive to the Russian propaganda about alleged Ukrainian fascists – *banderovets*¹². Moreover, due to considerable economic migration of Ukrainians to Poland, Ukrainians are often associated with cheap unskilled labour. As a result, Poles often have a somewhat condescending attitude to Ukrainians.

With regard to Poles' sympathy (friendliness) towards different nations, interestingly enough Russians and Ukrainians score similarly. Although the scores in particular years may differ, usually between 15 and 35% of Poles express positive attitudes towards both Russians and Ukrainians, whereas the level of negative sentiments has been higher in case of both peoples. Throughout 1990s and early 2000s it stayed at the level of 50-60%, to drop in 2008 and to have remained at around 30%. Yet, negative sentiment towards Russia has plummeted again after the Crimea annexation to have reached the level of 50% in 2015.

The Polish authorities have expressed unequivocal support for Ukraine in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Yet there have been more controversies with regard to

¹⁰ "Interview with Director of Polish-German Cooperation Foundation, Cornelius Ochmann", *Polish Radio Programme I*, at <http://www.polskieradio.pl/7/129/Artykul/1400526,Dyrektor-Fundacji-Wspolpracy-PolskoNiemieckiej-Polska-adwokatem-Ukrainy-na-arenie-miedzynarodowej>.

¹¹ J. Fomina et. al., *Polska – Ukraina, Polacy – Ukraińcy. Spojrzenie przez granicę*, Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw 2013.

¹² From Stepan Bandera (1909-1959), Ukrainian nationalist politician, one of the leaders of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists.

providing concrete forms of assistance to Ukraine. The new Prime Minister of Poland, Ewa Kopacz, has emphasised the priority of protecting the interests of one's own state, before helping others and risking retaliation. When asked whether Poland should provide military support to Ukraine, she famously stated that as a woman, she would first focus on protecting her own home and children. She did not exclude the possibility of ensuring military support to Ukraine, but only on the basis of a common European decision¹³.

The public opinion research demonstrates a gradual *convergence* of attitude patterns in Germany and Poland. This is not to say that Polish and German public opinions are unanimous regarding the conflict. On the contrary, both German and Polish societies are internally divided with regard to the assessment of current events, their roots and consequences as well as the required response on the part of the EU. Due to this split it is difficult to make strong statements about preferred choices of both EU member states' societies. But in this sense, we observe a toning down of considerable differences along national lines. Moreover, both Poles and Germans agree that the relations between their countries with Russia are bad; are generally critical towards Russia's policy vis-à-vis Ukraine and support sanctions against Russia and economic aid for Ukraine. At the same time, both Germans and Poles oppose providing military aid to Ukraine as well as are afraid of a flow of refugees from Ukraine in case of lifting the visa requirement for Ukrainians. All in all, the belief that Poles and Germans have completely opposite views on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is not reflected in the public opinion survey results.

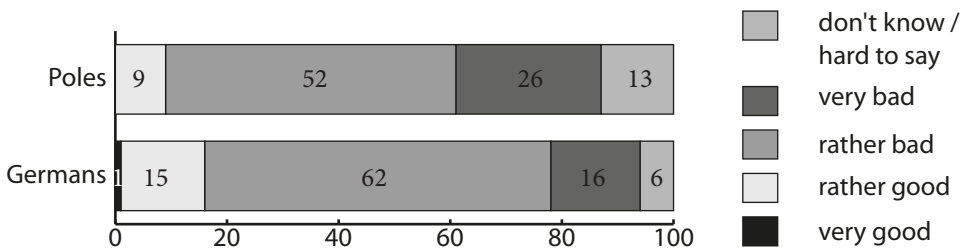
German and Polish perceptions of Russia

The crisis in Ukraine has strengthened the EU resolve towards Russia and has weakened Russia's position. Current German-Russian and Polish-Russian relations are perceived negatively by both societies, even though there is predictably slightly more optimism with regard to relations between Germany and Russia than between Germany and Poland, as we will see below. There are also some differences between Poland and Germany: while in both Germany and Poland the vast majority (78%) describe these relations as bad, a considerably bigger share of Poles than Germans believe that they are "very bad". The current events have significantly influenced

¹³ "Co dalej z Ukrainą? Kopacz: «Wie pan, jestem kobietą...» Pierwsza wpadka nowej premier?", *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19 September 2014, at http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,14871,16671488,_Wie_pan__jestem_kobieta____pierwsza_wpadka_Kopacz_.html, 15 May 2015.

Germans’ perceptions of the relations of their country with Russia: in 2013 almost half of the German society believed that these relations are good, in comparison to only 16% nowadays.

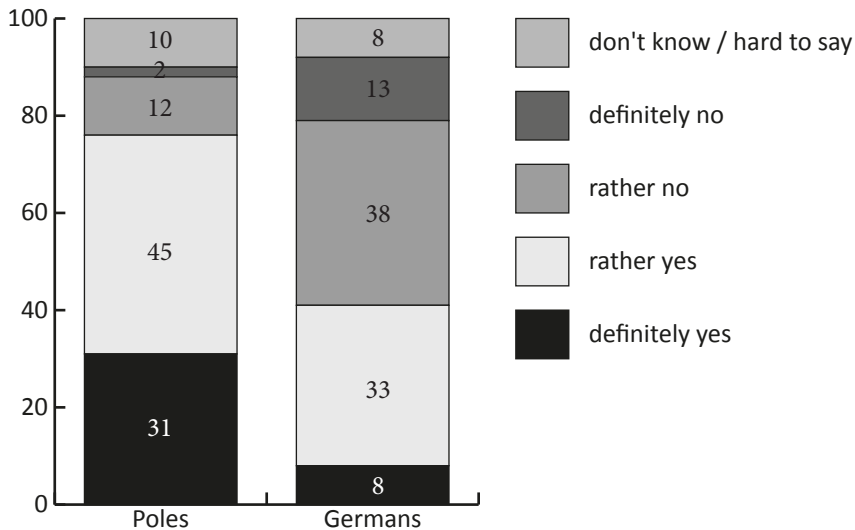
Figure 1. Assessment of the current state of affairs between Poland and Germany with Russia



Q: “How would you describe the current relations between your country and Russia?”
Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

Considerably fewer Germans consider Russia as a threat in comparison to Poles. While a majority of Poles are convinced that Russia poses a military threat to Poland (75%), Germans are much more sceptical about such eventuality, with only 41% seeing Russia as a possible aggressor.

Figure 2. Perception of Russia as a threat in Poland and Germany



Q: “Does Russia pose a military threat to your country?”
Source: Institute of Public Affairs, 2015

Such differences between German and Polish perceptions of Russia and Poland and Russia are understandable, bearing in mind the historical and political contexts and collective memories in both countries, difference in economic and military strengths of both countries, relatively new membership of Poland in the EU and NATO as well as geographical proximity to Russia. While certain reverence towards Russia as the “liberator from the German Nazism” is very widespread in Germany, and the belief that the historical roles may turn is limited, the memory of the Russian aggression against Poland is not only still alive, but also often brought up in domestic political debates. Moreover, there is a notable difference in opinions between the German *Wessies* and the *Ossies*, with residents from the eastern part of Germany being more trustworthy of Russia and less frequently perceiving it as a threat (31% to 44% among West Germans). Indeed, *Ostalgie*¹⁴ or nostalgia for the DDR times often translates into positive perception of the Soviet Union and thus more understanding for Russia.

Apart from generally perceiving Russia as a threat and fearing its direct military involvement, Germans and Poles are also aware of Russia’s economic pressure upon the countries’ economies and so upon the national governments’ policies. One in three Germans believes that Russia exerts strong influence on the German government’s policy. More Poles are convinced of Russia’s involvement in EU member states’ domestic politics: almost half (49%) believe that Russian authorities influence Polish government policy, but also slightly larger share of Poles than of Germans claims that Russia impacts German government policy. Economic pressure is more widely felt. Germans are almost equally divided into two camps with regard to Russia’s pressure on German economy. These attitudes are illuminating not only regarding the perception of Russia and its might as well as its tendency to meddle into the politics and policies of the neighbouring countries, but also of the general trust of national governments in both countries.

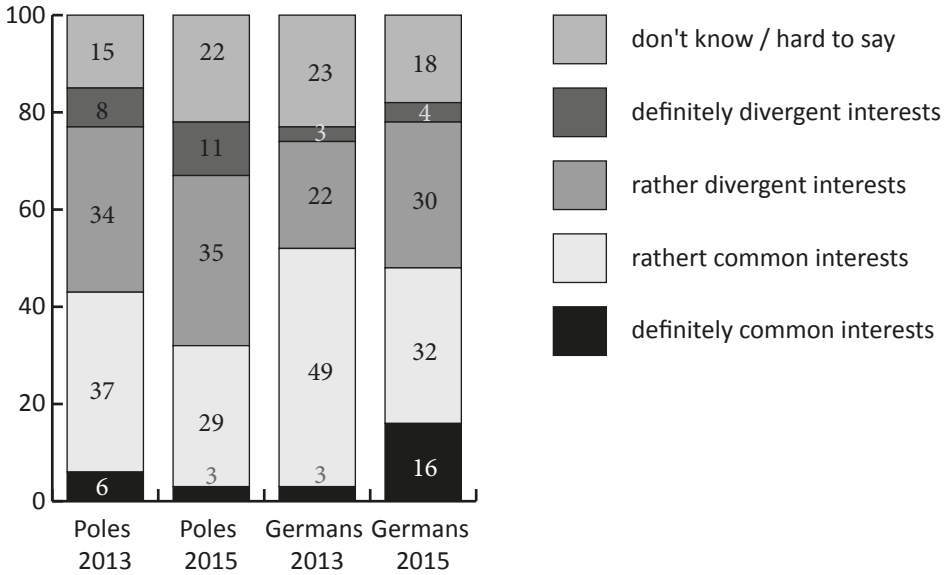
Poland and Germany: community of interests?

Despite similar positions of the German and Polish governments on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the required steps to be taken by the EU, Germans and Poles believe that both countries have divergent interests in their policy towards Russia. Especially in the opinion of Poles, the EU Eastern policy is divisive for Germany and

¹⁴ D. Berdahl, “(N)Ostalgie’ for the present: Memory, longing, and East German things”, *Ethnos* vol. 2, no. 64, pp. 192-211.

Poland. While several years ago there was a period when in both countries the plurality of respondents claimed that there was a commonality of interests, the conflict resulted in Poles' greater distancing from Germany. While almost half of the German society believes that Poland and Germany constitute a community of interests (48%) and only 32% of Poles share this opinion.

Figure 3. Poland and Germany: common or divergent interests?



Q: Do Poland and Germany have common or divergent interests in their policy towards Russia? (2013 and 2015)

Source: Institute of Public Affairs, 2013 and Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2015

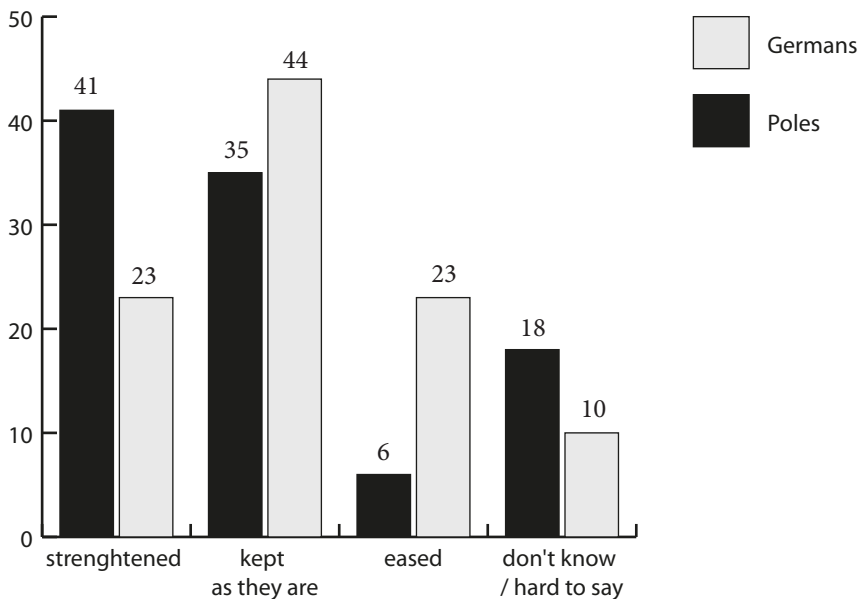
The results reflect Poles' fragile trust of Germany that is relatively strong at the time of stability, yet withers at the times of crisis. The majority are convinced that due to Germany's close political and economic relations with Russia and the *Russlandverstehender* approach Germany will not assume a principled policy towards Russia, despite a considerable change of policy towards Russia by chancellor Merkel, in comparison to her predecessor.

Sanctions

The idea of introducing sanctions against Russia has aroused much controversy. The debate was not limited to Russia-sympathisers and Russia-critics, but also concerned the very effectiveness of sanctions as such. One of the main arguments against sanctions has been that they will bolster Putin and help the authorities shift the blame for poor economic performance to the West. Yet, introducing sanctions was one of the ways to demonstrate that the West was not going to adopt the “business as usual” approach in the face of Russia’s violations of another country’s sovereignty and breaking international norms and standards.

The majority of Germans (67%) and Poles (77%) believe that the sanctions against Russia in response to its annexation of Crimea as well as its military involvement in the east of Ukraine should be either continued in the present form or strengthened.

Figure 4. Opinions on the future of sanctions



Q: “Should the current sanctions against Russia, imposed by the European Union, be strengthened, kept as they are or eased?”

Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

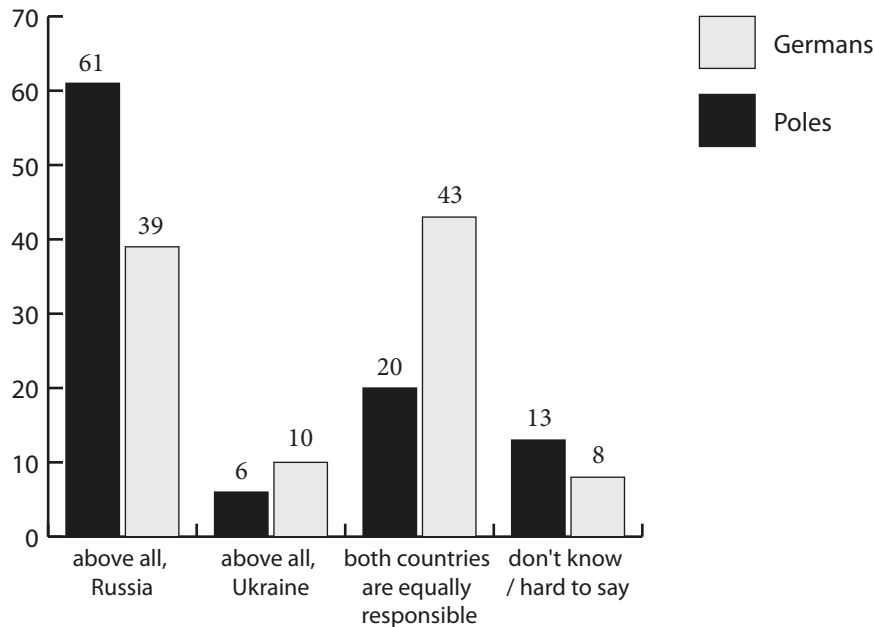
This demonstrated a considerable change of heart in case of the German society and preference for a principled policy towards Russia in both counties. Without doubt, sanctions against Russia also have certain negative effects on the economies of

the EU member-states, yet the majority in both countries are willing to pay this price in order to demonstrate their lack of acceptance of Russia’s behaviour.

Conflict in eastern Ukraine: who’s to blame?

Germans and Poles somewhat differ in their opinions on where the main responsibility for the military conflict in the east of Ukraine lies. While Poles predominantly blame Russia alone (61%), the conviction that it is mainly Russia’s liability is less popular among Germans (39%). Germans are more prone to attribute equal responsibility to both countries (43%). In both cases there is a correlation between generally perceiving Russia as a threat and recognising Russia’s responsibility for the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Figure 5. Main responsibility for the conflict in eastern Ukraine



Q: “Who is responsible for the Russian-Ukrainian conflict?”
Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

Many more Germans than Poles see the Ukrainian crisis as a “natural” response of Russia towards Ukraine’s drifting towards the West. Understanding Russia certainly comes easier to Germans than to Poles who can only speculate

who is going to be the next object of geopolitical interest of Russia. We can assume that Germans are also more prone to the interpretation that partial fault for the events lies with Europe itself, propagated also by some western analysts. According to this version this is Russia's reaction towards the West's violation of the post-Cold War order, NATO's expansionism and EU's involvement in Eastern Europe.¹⁵ Yet, such insistence on geopolitical interpretations often results in a leap from understanding to justifying; while Ukraine's interests, wishes and preferences are completely ignored in this interpretation.

Western Solidarity with Ukraine?

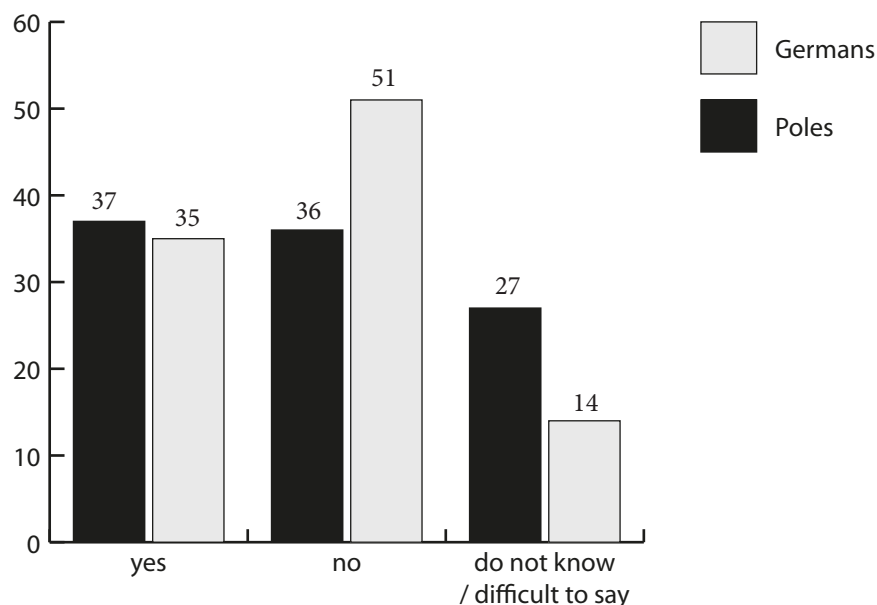
It is hard to speak of true solidarity with Ukraine on the part of the German and Polish societies. Focus on the self-interest, fatigue with Ukraine, conviction that the conflict in Ukraine somehow does not concern "Europe", combined with the fear of retributions from Russia explain relatively low support for aiding Ukraine, especially in the military dimension. Despite the general support for sanctions against Russia, both Poles and Germans are less keen on providing support to Ukraine in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Significantly, there is a positive correlation between recognising Russia as a threat and willingness to provide Ukraine with aid of different kinds, as well as to continue sanctions against Russia. Conversely, the lack of support for aiding Ukraine is related to having a more optimistic perception of Russia and not seeing it a threat to one's security.

Only roughly one in three Poles and Germans believes that their country should support Ukraine in the face of the conflict, even if it means worsening relations with Russia (37% of Poles and 35% of Germans). Almost the same share of Poles rejects this idea, while a considerably larger share, just over half of all Germans, reject it. Many more Germans than Poles were ready to answer this question. One of the interpretations is that Poles realise the image of Poland as the "advocate of Ukraine" in the EU and thus are ashamed of admitting their unwillingness to support Ukraine, especially in the face of possible retribution from Russia.

In both countries, those who perceive Russia as a military threat are more likely to also support aiding Ukraine (Poles: 42% to 24% of those who do not see Russia as a military threat and Germans: 43% to 34%).

¹⁵ The controversial essay by a well-known American political scientist J. Mearsheimer is a case in point here, see: J.J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault. The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin", *Foreign Affairs*, Sept-October 2014, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault>, 15 May 2015.

Figure 6. Supporting Ukraine in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict



Q: "Should your country support Ukraine during the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, even if it results in the deterioration of the relations of your country with Russia?"

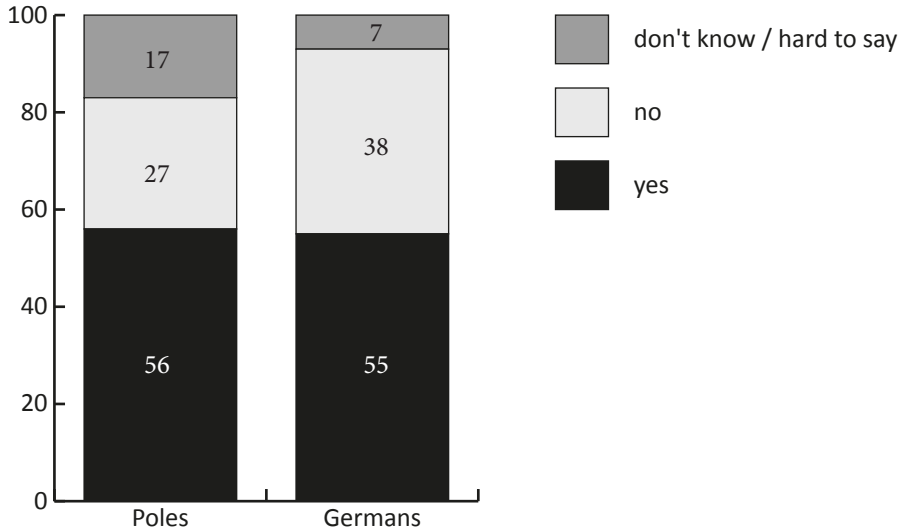
Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

In Poland public support for Ukraine grows considerably with declared interest in politics, while the share of those not having a clear opinion on the subject decreased. Yet the lack of support for helping Ukraine is similar to that among the general public. In this group 56% agree that Poland should provide support to Ukraine, while (32%) disagree. Predictably, there are also divisions along the lines of political preferences and voting patterns. The support for aiding Ukraine is also higher among people declaring right-wing (45%) and centre-right (39%) political orientations as well as voters of voters of the Law and Justice party plus two minor splinter right-wing parties (47%) and the Civic Platform party (46%). The self-declared left-wingers and supporters of the Democratic Left Alliance are much more sceptical about providing support to Ukraine compared to the average. Opinions of people declaring centre-left political orientation as well as voters of other parties are closer to the average.

Moreover, Poles and Germans share views with regard to ensuring economic support to Ukraine. Just slightly over half of the Polish as well as German societies are willing to aid Ukraine in economic term (56% and 55% respectively). While the majority is ready to aid Ukraine economically in both countries, these figures are not that impressive. For Poles the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is of high significance, taking place at their doorstep, yet Poles all too often believe that their country is still not

rich enough to aid others. For Germans this conflict does not bear such importance, it is one of many issues that require their attention and possible financial aid.

Figure 7. Support for provision of economic aid to Ukraine



Q: "Should your country provide economic assistance to Ukraine?"

Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

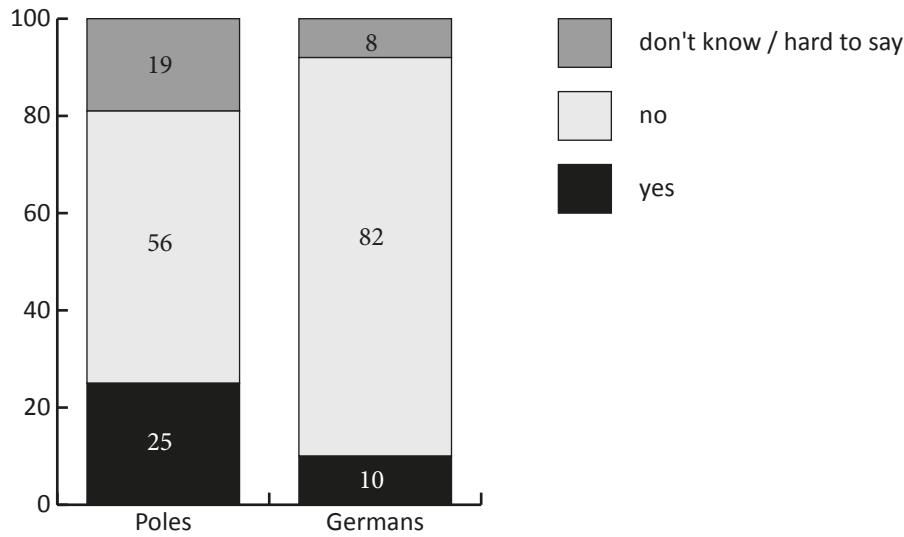
More significantly, both societies steer clear from any military involvement (sending military equipment and weapons or training Ukrainian soldiers). The share of Poles supporting the idea of military aid to Ukraine is more than twice as big – 25% of Poles and only 10% of Germans approve of this. Yet more than half of the Polish society (56%) and a decided majority of the German society are not prepared to support the Ukrainian army in its fight against (pro-)Russian separatism. The readiness to provide military aid also grows with the recognition of Russia's liability for the conflict in eastern Ukraine. In Germany 18% among those who blame mainly Russia for the conflict support the provision of military assistance in comparison to 10% overall.

The German pacifism and distancing from the US lie at the heart of such low support for military aid to Ukraine. As Jochan Bittner, political commentator of *Die Zeit* has succinctly put it: "Would the Germany of today help liberate the Germany of 1944? You don't need to tap Angela Merkel's phone to find the answer: It's no."¹⁶ (NYT, 2013) In other words, Germans managed to rework the experience of WWII

¹⁶ J. Bittner, "Rethinking German Pacifism", *The New York Times*, 4 November 2013, at http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/05/opinion/bittner-rethinking-german-pacifism.html?_r=0, 15 May 2015.

to the extent that now they shrink away from any military involvement, and especially against Russia, believing that it is rapprochement that works with Russia, not confrontation. In case of Poland, one of the possible explanations is just the fear of inviting war on the Polish soil. At this point, when the military conflict is limited to east of Ukraine, the non-engagement policy is perceived as a safer option than attempts to contain Russia by providing military help to the Ukrainian army.

Figure 8. Support for provision of military aid to Ukraine



Q: “Should your country provide assistance to the Ukrainian army, for instance, through the supply of equipment, weapons, or through military training?”

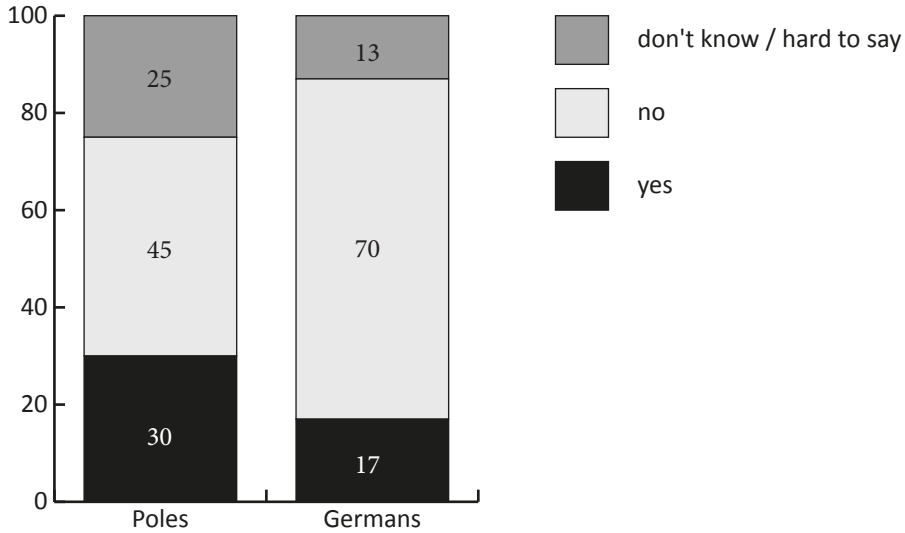
Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

Abolishing visa requirements for citizens of Ukraine who would like to travel to the EU for tourism or business and stay there for up to three months is one of the goals of the Eastern Partnership programme. It is a concrete way of expressing support for Ukrainians, as well as an opportunity to promote democratic values in the Ukrainian society. The process of achieving visa abolishing assumes the introduction of a number of reforms by Ukraine, almost all out of which have been implemented by now. Moldova, another EaP member, has been granted visa-free regime with the EU in 2014. Yet, neither Germans nor Poles are enthusiastic about giving Ukrainians a chance to travel to the EU visa-free. The majority of Germans (70%) and the plurality of Poles (45%) are against lifting visa requirements for Ukrainians.

We can see that in Poland there is part of the society that is consistently pro-Ukrainian: there is a high correlation between those who favour lifting visa requirement and those who blame Russia for the conflict as well as those who generally

believe that Ukraine should be provided with aid, even at the expense of worsening relations with Russia. The attitudes in Germany are less consistent.

Figure 9. Attitudes towards abolishing visa requirements for Ukrainians



Question: Should the European Union abolish visa requirements for Ukrainians?

Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

Admittedly, the whole debate on lifting visa barriers for the EaP countries is dominated by stereotypes, misconceptions, and lack of understanding. Although the question at hand concerns exclusively the possibility of travelling to the EU visa-free on short-term basis, as tourists or on business, without the possibility to take up employment or settle, it is often wrongly associated with migration. Even experts arguing both for and against lifting visa requirements often confuse visa-free regime with economic migration. Undeniably the debate on migration is much more vigorous and vitriolic and in Germany than in Poland. Unlike in Poland, immigration has rocketed to the top issue of concern in 2014 with 37% claiming it is one of the two most important issues facing for Germany (the rise from 14% in 2013)¹⁷. In the face of the military conflict in eastern Ukraine, there is a considerable fear of refugees from Ukraine in both countries. Yet, these attitudes are also demonstrative of the considerable distance towards Ukraine and its people in both countries, but especially in Germany.

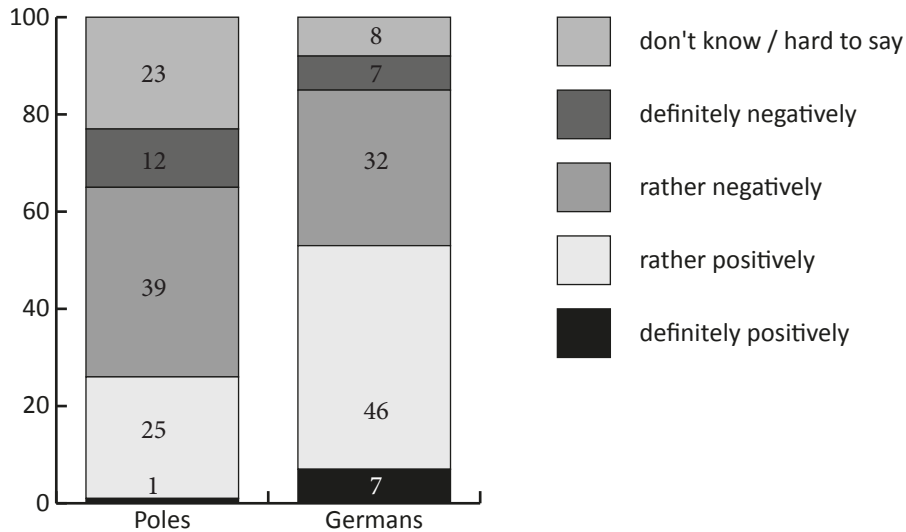
¹⁷ Eurobarometer Interactive Search System: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/index_en.cfm.

Assessment of the Polish and German governments’ policy in response to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict

Since both German and Polish societies are internally split over the developments in Ukraine, predictably they are also divided regarding the assessment of the performance of their own governments in response to the crisis. Yet, there are certain differences: Poles, beings traditionally more critical of their authorities, are also less satisfied with their government’s policy vis-à-vis Russia and Ukraine than Germans are. A considerable share of Poles is critical of their government’s policy towards the Russian-Ukrainian conflict: 51% declare a negative opinion of their government’s actions in this context, whereas 26% have a positive opinion. Poles’ opinions of the German government’s policy are just slightly more positive. Germans are much more enthusiastic about their government’s actions: more than half (53%) have a positive opinion of their government’s policy, although those having a very positive opinion constitute only 7% out of total population, the remaining 46% are moderately enthusiastic. But a considerable share of Germans are also critical of their government’s steps vis-à-vis the conflict (39%).

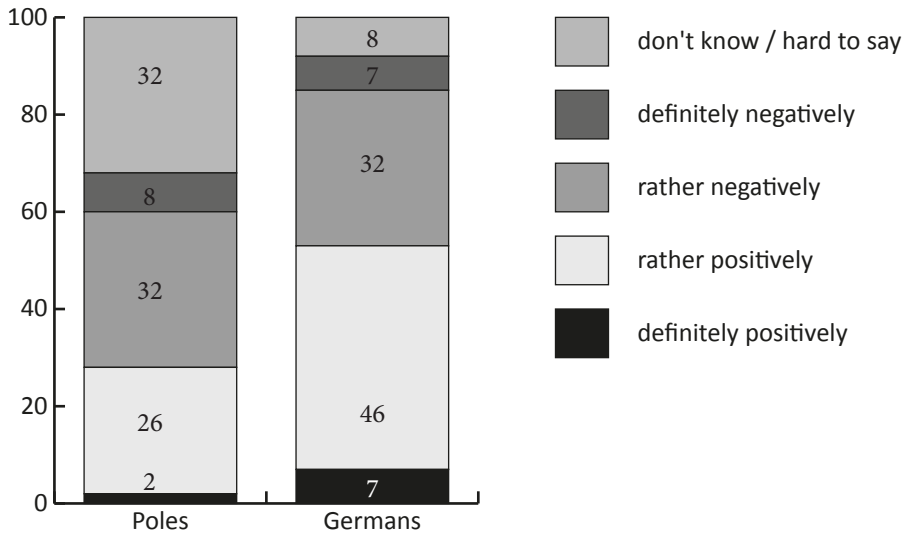
We can safely assume that among the critics there are both those who favour more confrontational approach towards Russia and more support for Ukraine as well as those who prefer more lenient or understanding policy towards Russia and attempts to achieve rapprochement.

Figure 10. Assessment of the national government’s policy in response to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict



Q: How do you assess the policy of your government regarding the Russian-Ukrainian conflict?
Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

Figure 11. Assessment of the German federal government's policy in response to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict by Germans and Poles



Q: "How do you assess the policies of the German federal government regarding the Russian-Ukrainian conflict?"

Source: Institute of Public Affairs/Bertelsmann Foundation 2015

Again, these differences should be seen in context: Germans generally tend to trust their government much more than Poles, according to the Eurobarometer¹⁸. If 44% of Germans trusted their government in 2014 (the lowest result within the past ten years, when the level of public trust in the government oscillated between 69% and 47%); only 25% of Poles claimed to trust their government in 2014, while in previous years the level of trust varied from 11% to 29%). Besides, the survey in Poland was conducted several months before the presidential elections campaign, the period when public political attitudes radicalise and are particularly critical of the incumbents.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Conclusions

The public opinion research in Germany and Poland demonstrates a gradual *convergence* of attitude patterns along national lines, yet considerable internal divisions within the societies with regard to the assessment of current events, their roots and consequences as well as the required response on the part of the EU. On the whole, both Poles and Germans tend to agree that the relations between their countries with Russia are bad; are generally critical towards Russia's policy vis-à-vis Ukraine and support sanctions against Russia and economic aid for Ukraine. At the same time, both Germans and Poles oppose providing military aid to Ukraine as well as are afraid of refugees flows from Ukraine in case of lifting the visa requirement for Ukrainians. Thus, the popular conviction that Poles and Germans have completely opposite views on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is not reflected in the public opinion survey results.

In both countries there is a positive correlation between seeing Russia as a threat as well as recognising Russia's main responsibility for the military conflict on the territory of eastern Ukraine and the readiness to support Ukraine and provide Ukraine with economic and military aid. In other words, we can trace two prevalent internally coherent narratives. According to the first one Russia poses a threat to the security of Europe and bears the main liability for the conflict in the territory of eastern Ukraine. In this situation the EU should help Ukraine, if not militarily, then at least economically; while Russia should be punished by sanctions. According to the other narrative, the blame for the conflict is equally shared by Russia and Ukraine. Russia's actions are perceived as understandable and at least partially justified by geopolitical reasons or alleged violations of Russian-speaking inhabitants of Ukraine. Proponents of this interpretation of events predictably are less prone to supporting sanctions against Russia.

German society is somewhat more divided regarding Russia due to Germany's own complex historical legacy and conflicted identity; yet bearing in mind the differences between Poland's and Germany's experiences it is the similarities rather than differences in public opinion patterns that draw our attention.

Taking into account general pro-Russian sentiments in the German society, the high support for the German government's robust policy is an interesting issue for further research on the relationship between political elites and mass public opinion.¹⁹ The present case appears to demonstrate that a principled and coherent public policy may successfully shape public attitudes. Germans have become much more

¹⁹ M. R. Steenbergen et al., "Who's Cueing Whom? Mass-Elite Linkages and the Future of European Integration", *European Union Politics*, 8 March 2007, pp. 13-35.

critical of Russia's foreign policy also because the stance of their authorities, whom they tend to trust. The research results also demonstrate a link between declared interest in politics and thus higher level of information about current international affairs and more critical stance on Russia and readiness to support Ukraine in the context of this conflict.

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Abstract

The annexation of the Crimean peninsula by Russia and the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict have triggered varied reactions in Europe. Although in response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine the Western governments have imposed limited individual and economic sanctions and the EU has managed to speak in one voice there, agreeing common position was not easy. The survey results demonstrate that despite a popular perception of Poles as Russophobes and of Germans – as Russophiles, and thus an expected difference of attitudes towards the ongoing events in the two societies, we observe considerable convergence of opinions in both countries. This is not to say that Polish and German public opinions are unanimous regarding the conflict. On the contrary, both German and Polish societies are internally divided with regard to the assessment of current events, their roots and consequences as well as the required response on the part of the EU. Yet, we observe a toning down of considerable differences along national lines. Moreover, both Poles and Germans agree that the relations between their countries with Russia are bad; are generally critical towards Russia's policy vis-à-vis Ukraine and support sanctions against Russia and economic aid for Ukraine. At the same time, both Germans and Poles oppose providing military aid to Ukraine as well as are afraid of refugee flows from Ukraine in case of lifting the visa requirement for Ukrainians. All in all, the belief that Poles and Germans have completely opposite views on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is not reflected in the public opinion survey results.

Keywords: Russian annexation of Crimea, Russian-Ukrainian conflict, German public opinion, Polish public opinion, Russlandversteher

PIOTR BAJOR

Strength and power – conditions and doctrinal assumptions of the security policy of the Russian Federation

The end of the Cold War and disintegration of the Soviet Union marked the beginning of a new type of system of international and global security. The end of the Cold War rivalry and risk of global conflict built a sense of stability and changed perceptions of threats. However, recently, unprecedented incidents connected with the annexation of Crimea and armed conflicts in Eastern Ukraine have led to a change in the whole geopolitical situation, not only in Eastern Europe, but also across the globe.

These incidents signal an important change in the current state of international relations as well as a turning point in the perception of threats to international security. The situation has also led to an altered understanding of security by the Russian Federation and the threats it faces - mostly posed by the Western world. Thus, this paper aims to present the process of evolution of the Russian Federation's perception of threats to its own security, along with an analysis of the newest doctrinal assumptions in the security policy adopted by the Russian government in reaction to an open confrontation with the Western world.

Evolution of the assumptions and concepts of security of the Russian Federation

The security policy of the Russian Federation has largely been determined by the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The first period of policy formation in the 1990s might be described by the phrase, “syndrome of ambitious weakness”. Russia at that time attempted to maintain its position as a global power of crucial importance for the new world order. Formally, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and the owner of a huge nuclear arsenal, it was entitled to assume such an attitude. However, Russia’s real geopolitical position at that time was much weaker than before due to international considerations and internal problems, including political and economic chaos.

A major change in Russia’s international position and security policy was brought about when President Vladimir Putin assumed power in 2000. In addition, the world market’s demand for natural resources exported by the Russian Federation improved the economic condition of the country. Therefore, the government could spend much more money on the army after its functional downfall in the 1990s.

The following years witnessed the growing importance of the Russian Federation in the international arena, this was accompanied by increasingly complicated relations with Western nations, in particular the United States. A speech delivered by Vladimir Putin at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security was a clear indication of the change in Russia’s attitude and understanding of its role in the world. Putin attacked the USA and blamed them for creating a unipolar world. He also accused Western countries of expanding the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which in his opinion was a breach of earlier agreements. Moreover, he declared that the planned installation of elements of an anti-missile shield in Central and Eastern Europe was an act aimed against Russia, to which he needed to react accordingly¹.

¹ “Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy”, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>, 21 September 2015; “Putin atakuje Stany Zjednoczone”, at <http://www.wprost.pl/ar/101176/Putin-atakuje-Stany-Zjednoczone>, 21 September 2015.

Anti-Western Rhetoric

Anti-Western rhetoric has often been a common element in the narrative of the Russian Federation; this is also reflected in the history of official doctrinal documents referring to foreign policy and security. Depending on the needs determined by the domestic and international situation of the moment, Western nations were presented instrumentally, and with varied intensity, as foes intending to weaken the international position of the Russian Federation. The official narrative indicated that such attitude on the part of the West was motivated by a desire to counteract the growing importance and role of the Russian Federation worldwide.

The deciding moment in Russia's intensified view of the West and the United States as the 'principal threat' to its security was the "revolution of dignity" in Ukraine and the subsequent Russian annexation of Crimea, which resulted in conflict in the Ukraine's Eastern provinces. These developments led to a radical deterioration in relations between Russia and Western nations, the causes and consequences of which were entirely different than those concerning the earlier events of 2014 in Ukraine.

The Western countries, like the new Ukrainian government, assumed that the "revolution of dignity" was a spontaneous reaction of society to the authoritarian rule of President Yanukovich. His deposition from function, on the other hand, was an effect of lack of realization of the settlement negotiated with the opposition on February 21, 2015 with the participation of foreign ministers from Germany (Frank Walter-Steinmeier) and Poland (Radosław Sikorski), and a representative from France (Eric Fournier)². The West accused Russia of annexing Crimea, which was a violation of the principles and standards of international law and a breach of the terms of many bilateral and multilateral agreements signed by Russia.

So-called 'differences in interpretation' also accompanied subsequent geo-political developments, including the outbreak of conflict in Eastern Ukraine. According to Western countries, the conflict was provoked by Russia, which later threw gas on the proverbial fire by sending in arms and regular troops to the two Ukrainian districts shaken by separatist movements.

Such an interpretation was entirely rejected by the Russian Federation, according to whom Ukraine suffered a coup plotted by covert services of the Western states, which led to the overthrowing of a legally elected incumbent President. Furthermore, the annexation of Crimea was described as a necessary act aimed at protecting local citizens against Kiev- fascists and Bandera followers.

² O. Varfolomeyev, "Ukraine's Ruling Party Faces Defections", *Eurasia Daily Monitor* vol. 11, no. 34, at [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=41999&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=756&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=41999&tx_ttnews[backPid]=756&no_cache=1), 21 September 2015.

Russia was also highlighting the fact that the separation of Crimea from Ukraine was fully legal, thus international law had not been violated. The government of Russia describes the incorporation of the peninsula into the motherland as an act of “restorative justice” and the correction of a historic mistake: ie the handing of the area over to Ukraine under the USSR. Russia also rejects accusations that they provoked the conflict in eastern Ukraine and that they continue to support local separatists. It interprets the occurrences in the Donetsk and Lugansk districts as a spontaneous protest by citizens against the illegal seizure of power by the country’s opposition.

Social Consolidation

It is also worthy of note that the Russian authorities have been able to skilfully heat up the patriotic and emotional atmosphere around Crimea. On the 18th of March 2015, during a speech opening the concert celebrating the first anniversary of annexation, Putin stated that the “incorporation” of Crimea did not stem from a desire to expand the territory of Russia, but was conditioned by the need for justice as well as historical reasons. He added that millions of Russians were endangered and expected the Russian state to provide help and support³.

Thanks to this type of rhetoric Russia experienced social consolidation and the government gained increasing support for their actions. The Russian public still backs the annexation and view it as a justified step and a necessary measure in helping its citizens to “return” to the motherland in the face of a threat from Kiev’s nationalists and Bandera followers. A poll carried out in March 2014 by the Russian Levada Centre found that 86% of the population share this view, whereas 8% claim that incorporation of Crimea was an annexation⁴. The research indicated increasing support for Putin’s policy, amounting to over 80 percent of the population.⁵

Favourable public opinion has not been affected by constantly changing accounts of the events in Crimea in 2014 as offered by Vladimir Putin. At first the President denied that Russian troops were engaged in any way in the annexation of the peninsula. He claimed that the so-called little green men were local self-defence fighters who simply purchased their military supplies in a shop. Several months later he stat-

³ “Concert celebrating Crimea and Sevastopol’s reunification with Russia”, 18 March 2015, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/47878>, 21 September 2015.

⁴ Происходящее в Украине, Крыму и реакция России, at <http://www.levada.ru/26-03-2014/proiskhodyashchee-v-ukraine-krymu-i-reaktsiya-rossii>, 21 September 2015.

⁵ “Владимир Путин: отношение и доверие”, at <http://www.levada.ru/16-04-2014/vladimir-putin-otnoshenie-i-doverie>, 21 September 2015.

ed that the Russian military had participated in the organization of the referendum. Just before the anniversary of the annexation, in a documentary “Crimea. The Way Home,” Putin admitted that the whole process had been planned and carried out by Russian soldiers and special forces, all of whom were acting on his orders⁶.

War Doctrine

A clear confirmation of the anti-Western rhetoric of the Russian Federation is also seen in doctrinal changes in perceptions of the security of the country. Although works on a new draft of the War Doctrine of the Russian Federation had been underway since 2013, it was the Ukrainian conflict that to a great extent influenced the final shape of the document (despite the fact that it does not contain any direct reference to the conflict)⁷. The new war doctrine adopted by President Putin on the 26th of December 2014 indicates the West and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as the main threats to the security of the Russian state⁸. In the opinion of the Russian strategists who prepared the document, the actions of the Western countries result from their will to weaken Russia, to counteract its growing importance in the world, and to undermine its independence in the international arena, including its foreign policy and security⁹.

The updated war doctrine consists of four parts, which present the main threats to the security of the Russian state as well as its military policy, actions, and undertakings aimed at strengthening defensive potential and the state itself¹⁰.

⁶ “Putin odpowiada na pytania Rosjan: Nasze wojsko było na Krymie. W Naddniestrzu powinni o sobie zdecydować”, 17 April 2014, at <http://www.gazetaprawna.pl/artykuly/791577,putin-odpowiada-na-pytania-rosjan-nasze-wojsko-bylo-na-krymie-w-naddniestrzu-powinni-o-sobie-zdecydowac.html>, 21 September 2015; “Krymu „droga do ojczyzny”? Putin opowiada, jak wydał rozkaz aneksji półwyspu”, 9 March 2015, at <http://swiat.newsweek.pl/putin-w-filmie-dokumentalnym-przyznaje-ze-nakazal-aneksje-krymu,artykuly,358637,1.html>, 21 September 2015.

⁷ S. Blank, “Russia’s Military Doctrine Reflects Putin’s Paranoia and Siege Mentality”, *Eurasia Daily Monitor* vol. 12, no. 2, 6 January 2015, at [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=43237&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=786&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=43237&tx_ttnews[backPid]=786&no_cache=1), 21 September 2015.

⁸ “Президент утвердил новую редакцию Военной доктрины”, 26 December 2014, at <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/47334>, 21 September 2015.

⁹ R. McDermott, “Putin Signs New Military Doctrine: Core Elements Unchanged”, *Eurasia Daily Monitor* vol. 12, no. 2, 6 January 2015, at [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=43236&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=786&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=43236&tx_ttnews[backPid]=786&no_cache=1), 21 September 2015.

¹⁰ “Военная доктрина Российской Федерации”, 30 December 2014, at <http://www.rg.ru/2014/12/30/doktrina-dok.html>, 21 September 2014.

The document underlines that the doctrine is strictly defensive; however, Russia reserves the right to use its army in the face of aggression that threatens the state or its allies. The doctrine also indicates that the Russian army may be used abroad for international missions realized in conformity with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council or other international bodies responsible for security. Russia reserves the right to use the army to, „provide security to its citizens residing out of the borders of the Russian Federation”¹¹. This last provision caused considerable concern in the Baltic States and other countries with a sizeable Russian minority.

Any analysis of the doctrinal principles of Russia's security policy should also include issues surrounding the use of nuclear weapons. The doctrine provides that Russia reserves the right to decide about using nuclear weapons in two cases:

- as a response to a nuclear attack on itself or one of its allies,
- to respond to a conventional attack on a scale which would threaten the foundations of existence of the Russian Federation¹².

As has been pointed out, the new version of the war doctrine possesses a clear anti-West character. The main threat to Russian security comes from Western countries and their armed forces, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. One of the most significant dangers, according to Russia, is the strengthening of the military position of NATO and its establishment of goals with a global range, which Russia treats as a breach of the norms of international law. Other threats posed by NATO include its expansion plans and the building up of NATO's military infrastructure in the countries bordering Russia¹³.

The doctrine also recognizes military manoeuvres and the distribution of troops in areas neighbouring Russia as a means of exerting political and military pressure. Russia pointed out that plans to place elements of an anti-missile shield in Central and Central-Eastern Europe severely undermine global stability and upset the established balance of power in the nuclear sphere¹⁴.

The principal internal threat was defined as interference by foreign special forces from opponent countries aimed at overthrowing the legal Russian government, leading to social and political destabilization and a constitutional coup. Among other hostile activities, the doctrine mentions “foreign propaganda” designed to compromise the fundamental spiritual and historical values, as well as the patriotic attitude, of Russian citizens¹⁵.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.; “Что доктрина прописала”, 29 December 2014, at <http://www.rg.ru/2014/12/29/doktrina.html>, 21 September 2015.

¹⁴ *Военная доктрина...*

¹⁵ S. Blank, *op. cit.*

The doctrine also indicates many other threats to Russia's security, including global terrorism and extremism. The creators of the doctrine noted that international attempts to eliminate these threats are insufficient, thus eliminating this threat is of key importance to the world's security. The document considers a terrorist assault with biological or chemical weapons or radioactive materials to be highly probable, thus this type of threat must be addressed effectively¹⁶.

The Confrontational West

According to provisions laid out in the document, the details of the war doctrine are specified in presidential proclamations made to the Russian Federal Assembly. Official statements of Russian authorities referring to problems of security are also significant. These are often presented during sessions of state institutions responsible for maintaining order. In this context one should note President Putin's meeting with the members of security forces held on the 26th of March 2015.

During the meeting the Russian President declared that the state's security and functioning of the defence and law enforcement institutions are particularly important. He stated that 2014 was 'not the easiest time' due to escalating tensions in the international arena, especially in the Middle East and other unstable regions, including Ukraine. He stated that as a result of a coup Ukraine has been plunged into a civil war, however Russia was doing its best to settle the conflict and restore normality. Moreover, he added that the Russian state was striving to prevent humanitarian catastrophe and had thus admitted hundreds of thousands of refugees from Donbas into its territory.¹⁷

Putin added that independent Russian policy and "help" offered to Ukraine seem to cause considerable irritation for some countries, which employ a whole range of activities to deter Russia from pursuing its policy. Such measures include: attempts to politically isolate the Russian State, exertion of economic pressures, the waging of information warfare, and the use of special forces¹⁸.

President Putin stressed that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization continues to develop rapid reaction forces and strengthen its infrastructure in the vicinity of Russian borders. Forcing the installation of components of anti-missile protection in

¹⁶ *Военная доктрина...*

¹⁷ "Federal Security Service board meeting", 26 March 2015, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/49006>, 21 September 2015.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Europe and regions of Asia and the Pacific is a violation of established nuclear parity. Putin accused the US of repudiating the anti-missile protection treaty; in his opinion the decision ruined the foundations of the contemporary system of security¹⁹.

During the same meeting Putin boasted the effectiveness of Russian special forces: the data he quoted indicated that, thanks to their actions, the number of terrorist assaults in 2014 dropped by half (compared to 2013). According to the information he presented, the special forces prevented around 74 million cyber assaults aimed at Russian IT systems and detained over 300 collaborators and agents of foreign intelligence. The Russian President stated that the foreign special services intend to continue their activities during the coming election campaigns in an effort to create chaos in the country. According to him, there are plans to create internal destabilization, which would be achieved by financing Russian associations and non-governmental organizations²⁰.

The Russian President explicitly stated that, in spite of the threats, Russia would not allow itself to be intimidated. He stressed that the Russian state had never been intimidated, and the authorities will react to any internal and external threats to national security. He concluded that the international public would not respect Russia if it made concessions, but rather only if it would become stronger and stronger²¹.

Priority: Modernization

Taking the above into account, the authorities insisted that Russia react properly to the “challenges” coming from the West. In order to achieve this, and in spite of the financial crisis, they announced full realization of ambitious plans to modernize the Russian army. According to a decree issued by Putin on the 7th of May 2012, 70% of the army should be equipped with the state-of-the-art weapons.²² Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin stated many times that the sanctions imposed by the West would not impede the implementation of this programme, which according to his knowledge had been so far carried out on schedule.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.; P. Bajor, “Od Kosowa po Donbas”, *Nowa Europa Wschodnia*, 2 April 2015, at <http://new.org.pl/2153.post.html>, 21 September 2015.

²¹ *Federal Security Service...*

²² “Указ Президента Российской Федерации от 7 мая 2012 г. N 603 „О реализации планов (программ) строительства и развития Вооруженных Сил Российской Федерации, других войск, воинских формирований и органов и модернизации оборонно-промышленного комплекса”, 9 May 2012, at <http://www.rg.ru/2012/05/09/vpk-dok.html>, 21 September 2015.

These are important political declarations, which (regardless of possible setbacks in the implementation of individual upgrades) demonstrate the importance modernizing the army holds for the Russian authorities. Putin continues to repeat his sentiment that the only assurance of security for the Russian state is its military strength, which is held in esteem by Western countries and NATO: thus, he declares, it is necessary to further finance the programme to professionalize the army.

Arctic Interests

A more and more important element in Russian policy is their plans for the Arctic. Its role for international relations and global security continues to grow, mostly due to potential natural resources and new transportation routes. Russian interest in the region was presented in a document dated 18th September 2008, „Basic Guidelines for Russia’s State Policy in the Arctic to 2020 and Beyond”, and was also declared explicitly in the war doctrine²³. In line with the priorities defined therein, Russian authorities recently made several crucial decisions.

At the end of 2014 the Combined Strategic Command “North” assumed its duties at the naval base of the North Fleet. The decision was made to construct naval bases in this area and establish a special body supervising their activities. Russian interests in the strategic region of the Arctic are to be guarded by the State Commission on Arctic Development Issues, created on 3rd February 2015 and based on President Putin’s decree. Several weeks later, on 14th March 2015 the Russian government passed a resolution confirming the principles of operation and goals of the new body²⁴.

According to this act, the commission is a coordinating executive power organ responsible for increasing and guaranteeing the national security of Russia in the

²³ “Основы государственной политики Российской Федерации в Арктике на период до 2020 года и дальнейшую перспективу”, 18 September 2008, at <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/98.html>, 21 September 2015; “The Russian Security Council met to discuss the protection of Russia’s national interests in the Arctic”, 17 September 2008, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/1433>, 21 September 2015.

²⁴ “О Государственной комиссии по вопросам развития Арктики”, 23 March 2015, at <http://government.ru/docs/17319/>, 21 September 2015; P. Bajor, “Arktyczne napięcie”, *New Eastern Europe*, at <http://www.new.org.pl/2101,post.html>, 21 September 2015; И. Сафронов, Н. Городецкая, С. Горяшко, “Северный завхоз. Дмитрий Рогозин возглавит комиссию по управлению Арктикой”, 6 February 2015, at <http://kommersant.ru/Doc/2661252>, 21 September 2015. See also: Н. Городецкая, К. Мельников, И. Сафронов, “Арктику возьмут на комиссию. Для управления ею создадут специальную структуру”, 24 November 2014, at <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2617802>, 21 September 2015.

Arctic zone. Its main tasks include: the protection of national interests in the Arctic, improving the administration of the area, and resolving key problems of a strategic character. Within its competences the commission will also coordinate the exploitation of natural resources and strengthen Russia's military presence in this territory²⁵.

Moreover, the document declares that the commission will act based on approved annual plans and its chairman is to be nominated by the President. The present nominee is Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin. The commission may appoint 'task teams', and its sessions are to be summoned whenever deemed necessary, but at least once every six months. The commission's decisions are binding and must be implemented by every organ of federal executive power; however, their enforcement is conditioned by a special legal act issued by the Russian President or the government²⁶.

Conclusions

Based on the above analysis we may conclude that the Ukrainian conflict resulted in changes in the geopolitical situation in Central and Eastern Europe and lowered the overall level of international security. One of the reasons for this is a radical deterioration in relations between Russia and the Western states and in particular with the United States of America. The West is considered a source of threat and danger. Russian authorities consequently continue to portray the West as an enemy who tries to weaken the Russian state and destabilize it internally; to do this they would employ special forces, which are suspected of infiltrating the non-governmental organizations with the aim of launching a coup d'état and overthrowing the legal Kremlin government. The rhetoric of the Russian authorities indicates NATO as one of its main adversaries. The armed forces of the West are said to draw closer to Russia, all while strengthening their military potential, thus constituting a direct threat.

In summary, one may state that the events of 2014 initiated the worst crisis in the relations of the West with Russia since the times of the Cold War. It is unlikely that this situation will be overcome in the foreseeable future.

²⁵ "Постановление от 14 марта 2015 г. № 228 Об утверждении Положения о Государственной комиссии по вопросам развития Арктики", 23 March 2015, at <http://government.ru/docs/17319/>, 21 September 2015.

²⁶ Ibid.; И. Сафронов, С. Горяшко, "Инстанция по всем торосам", at <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2688114>, 21 September 2015.

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- "Concert celebrating Crimea and Sevastopol's reunification with Russia", 18 March 2015, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/47878>, 21 September 2015.
- "Federal Security Service board meeting", 26 March 2015, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/49006>, 21 September 2015.
- "Krymu „droga do ojczyzny”? Putin opowiada, jak wydał rozkaz aneksji półwyspu", 9 March 2015, at <http://swiat.newsweek.pl/putin-w-filmie-dokumentalnym-przyznaje-ze-nakazal-aneksje-krymu,artykuly,358637,1.html>, 21 September 2015.
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- "Владимир Путин: отношение и доверие", at <http://www.levada.ru/16-04-2014/vladimir-putin-otnoshenie-i-doverie>, 21 September 2015.
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- “Происходящее в Украине, Крыму и реакция России”, at <http://www.levada.ru/26-03-2014/proiskhodyashchee-v-ukraine-krymu-i-reaktsiya-rossii>, 21 September 2015.
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Abstract

The article presents the analysis of the circumstances and the doctrinal assumptions behind Russian security policy since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The evolution of the security concept and Russia's perception of its own role and significance on the international arena is discussed here. The changes occurring in the Russian security policy since President Putin came to power are also analysed. The text discusses also the newest concepts concerning security adopted in the War Doctrine with the threats for the Russian state coming from the West and presented in that document.

Keywords: Russia, security, army, war doctrine

NATALIA ADAMCZYK

An assessment of the Eastern Partnership in view of Ukrainian crisis 2013

Started in 2008, the initiative of the Eastern Partnership was adopted at the Prague Summit on 7 May 2009 and addressed to six eastern neighbours: Ukraine, Belarus, Moldavia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. It developed mechanisms for closer co-operation with the EU. Despite its noble objectives and initial successes, the countries participating in it have not reached a significant progress in the system transformation and economic modernisation. Paradoxically, anti-democratic processes and tendencies have been increasing in the region in recent years, which significantly weakened Brussels's influence on the region. The author formulates a thesis that over the six years of functioning of the Eastern Partnership, the European Union has not gained greater significance in the region of Eastern Europe, which would suit its ambitions, mainly due to the lack of coherent interests among EU institutions, member states and partner countries.

The outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis thwarted most efforts and results developed so far. It called into question the further sense of EaP's functioning in the current form, at the same time pointing out many flaws and weaknesses.

Thus, the aim of this article is to assess the effects of actions taken over the last six years of EaP's functioning based on the analysis of different criteria and indicators showing changes in six partner countries in selected areas in the years 2010-2014/15. The influence of the Ukrainian crisis on the further development of the Partnership was also noted in this text.

The author formulates two research questions: What are the causes of the poor effectiveness of the Eastern Partnership? What are the consequences of the Ukrainian crisis for the EaP future?

The core and objectives of the Eastern Partnership

The Eastern Partnership is a regional project strengthening the cooperation with the eastern countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy. It was originally addressed to Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, and then extended to the South Caucasus countries – Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. This Polish-Swedish initiative was presented on 26 May 2008, and next contained in the European Commission's Communication of 3 December 2008, approved by the European Council in its conclusions of 11-12 December 2008, and inaugurated at the Prague Summit on 7-9 May 2009.

The Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership (EaP) Summit¹ provided relations with the “Eastern partners” founded on mutual values, interests and commitments based on the principle of differentiation and conditionality².

The implementation of the EaP was to take place in two dimensions: bilateral and multilateral. The former dimension envisages new association agreements (instead of the current partnership and cooperation agreements concluded in the 1990s) involving deep and comprehensive free trade agreements and gradual economic integration with the EU, taking actions toward visa liberalisation, cooperation in the area of energy security and people-to-people contacts. A condition for deepening the cooperation was respect and commitment to values such as democracy, stability, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as the implementation of market economy principles, the principle of sustainable development and good governance by the beneficiaries.

Pursued through the institutionalisation of meetings among the representatives of the EU and partner countries in a form of summits for the heads of states and governments, Foreign Ministers, senior officials and experts, the multilateral dimension was supposed to be a forum for exchanging information and experience in particular cooperation areas, gradually integrating partner countries to EU policies and programmes through the development of coordinated roadmaps within four thematic platforms (for democracy, good governance and stability; for economic integration and convergence with EU politicians; for energy security; for people-to-people contacts), flagship initiatives (integrated border management programme, support for small and medium-sized enterprises, regional markets for electricity and renewable

¹ “Wspólna deklaracja przyjęta podczas szczytu Partnerstwa Wschodniego w Pradze”, 7 May 2009, at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=PL&f=ST%208435%202009%20INIT>, 28 January 2015.

² I. Borucińska-Dereszkiewicz, “Partnerstwo Wschodnie – osiągnięcia i wyzwania po czterech latach współpracy”, *Marketing i Rynek* 2014, no. 2, p. 11, at http://www.pwe.com.pl/files/1276809751/file/mir_2_2014_cd.pdf, 27 January 2015.

energy sources as well as energy efficiency, environmental management, system for preventing natural disasters and man-made disasters) and creating conditions for the development of civil society in these countries³. The multilateral level, apart from establishing closer relations with the EU, aimed at developing regional ties among the addressees of the project.

Here, it must be pointed out that the programme does not include Russia, which of its own will, as in the case of the European Neighbourhood Policy, decided not to be part of them. Nonetheless, Russia was allowed to participate in some of the joint programmes⁴.

The Eastern Partnership is funded mainly by the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI), which is also addressed to the countries of the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood, including Russia. The European Commission allocated the amount of EUR 1.9 billion out of EUR 11.6 billion from the general ENPI budget in the years 2007-2013 for the EaP countries. Programmes as well as multilateral and bilateral initiatives were to be funded from it.

Apart from the basic instrument, i.e. the ENPI, the EaP was funded by extra resources transferred from other sources⁵. It was also declared that the EaP budget would be extended to additional EUR 600 million, apart from EUR 250 million transferred from bilateral programmes. Ultimately, the amount was reduced to 350 million due to pressure from the southern countries and financial crisis in the Eurozone. As a result the total amount was EUR 600 million for the years 2010-2013⁶. In the new financial perspective, the general budget for sixteen countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy was determined at EUR 15.4 billion⁷.

³ B. Wojna, M. Gniazdowski, "Partnerstwo Wschodnie – raport otwarcia", *Raport PISM*, April 2009, at http://www.pism.pl/zalaczniki/Raport_PW_2009_pl.pdf, 27 January 2015, pp. 6-7.

⁴ B. Piskorska, "Wpływ procesów antydemokratycznych w Państwach Partnerstwa Wschodniego na Europejską Politykę Sąsiedztwa", *Zeszyty Natolińskie* 2014, no. 59, p. 57, at http://www.natolin.edu.pl/pdf/zeszyty/Natolin_Zeszyty_59.pdf, 30 January 2015.

⁵ In the years 2007-2013 an amount of one billion euro was to be granted to eastern partners from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, as well as loans from the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Furthermore, there is a possibility to gain support from the Management Fund, the programmes of cross-border cooperation and the Neighbourhood Investment Facility. K. Longhurst, "Partnerstwo wschodnie i co z niego wynika dla Europejskiej Polityki Sąsiedztwa", in K. Longhurst (ed.), *Kształtowanie się nowej europejskiej polityki wschodniej – ocena Partnerstwa Wschodniego*, Warszawa 2009, p. 24, at http://www.civitas.edu.pl/pub/CfSS/Studia_i_Analizy_tom_8_pol.pdf, 28 January 2015.

⁶ M. Lasoń, "Interesy, cele i oczekiwania Polski w ramach inicjatywy Partnerstwa Wschodniego Unii Europejskiej", in E. Cziomer (ed.), *Unia Europejska między Polityką wschodnią a Partnerstwem Wschodnim*, *Krakowskie Studia Międzynarodowe* 2009, no. 4, Kraków 2009, p. 168.

⁷ "The European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) 2014-2020", at http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/how-is-it-financed/index_en.htm, 20 July 2015.

The assessment of the EaP implementation until the Ukrainian crisis

Three summits were held in the multilateral dimension, in Prague 2009, in Warsaw 2011 and in Vilnius 2013. The first one was a summit inaugurating the EaP initiative as a regional EU project, while the subsequent ones were a platform of meetings at the highest level based on the revision of current achievements and setting road maps for next years. It must be pointed out that the Warsaw Summit in 2011⁸, which was arranged during the Polish Presidency of the EU, was not decisive. The participants focused more on revising and improving the functioning of current EaP mechanisms rather than on moving the relation to a “higher level” and therefore making the actions taken more dynamic. Furthermore, the summit was dominated by the issue of Belarus which aiming at strengthening the authoritarian system automatically excluded itself from the real participation in the project. This fact additionally showed to the EU representatives that in fact they are not able to make democratic transformations in the East⁹. Even Poland’s proposal presented at the summit to establish a modernisation package for Belarus in exchange for returning to the path of democratisation did not result in breaking the deadlock, all the more, the dialogue was not possible to establish due to the absence of the representation from Minsk¹⁰.

The third EaP summit in Vilnius on 28-29 November 2013 was hoped to revive and develop a new quality in relations with Eastern partners. The planned initialling of association agreements and agreements on the deep free trade area with Ukraine,

⁸ The Declaration of the Warsaw Summit recognises the efforts of partner countries to develop closer relationship with the EU, highlights the acknowledgement for their European aspirations, points out current achievements in the bilateral and multilateral aspect, at the same time stating to reinforce efforts to support further political, economic and social reforms, there is an announcement of financial strengthening the EaP through the implementation of new funds. See: “Join Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit”, 29-30 September 2011, at http://eap-csf.eu/assets/files/Documents/Joint_Declaration_Warsaw_Summit.pdf, 19 January 2014. At the Warsaw Summit, it was called for preparing a road map for the EaP, which would guide the work while waiting for another summit in the autumn of 2013. See more: “Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Eastern Partnership: A road map to the autumn 2013 summit”, *JONIN* (2012), 15 May 2012, at <http://www.ipex.eu/IPEXL-WEB/dossier/files/download/082dbc537165bef0137785eef390e1a.do>, 29 January 2015.

⁹ I. Borucińska-Dereszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁰ A. Szydłowska, “Demokratyczny pakiet dla Białorusi podczas szczytu?”, 30 September 2011, at <http://www.uniaeuropa.org/demokratyczny-pakiet-dla-biaorusi-podczas-szczytu-partnerstwa-wschodniego-premier-donald-tusk-zaproponowa-w-czasie-spotkania-z-przywodca-mi-ue-oraz-pastw-uczestniczacych-w-partnerstwie-wschodnim-pakiet-modernizacyjny-na-rzecz-demokratycznej-b>, 29 January 2015; “Declaration of the EU condemning the situation in Belarus”, 30 September 2011, at <http://www.rp.pl/artykul/725237.html>, 29 January 2015.

Moldova, Georgia and Armenia was to give a new strengthened impulse for the further development of this initiative, presenting “the factual results” of the actions taken during the four years of operating. Unfortunately, several days before the summit the situation became so complicated that success was not expected, in particular for Ukraine. Furthermore, no significant progress was achieved by partner countries in the process of implementing reforms. Finally, association agreements were initialled only by Moldova and Georgia. Ukraine withdrew from signing the agreement due to Yanukovych’s decisions and Armenia turned to the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The new geopolitical context following the Vilnius Summit ended an era for the EaP.

The Declaration of the Vilnius Summit in November generally does not introduce new elements to the provisions of the Warsaw Summit. It mainly focuses on the conclusion and implementation of association agreements with Georgia and Moldova as soon as possible, visa liberalization for all the six countries and development of sector cooperation. As far as the budget is concerned, a small increase in the funds for the entire Neighbourhood Policy was planned in financial perspective for the years 2014-2020, which practically means little financial revenue for the EaP budget.

A politically significant fact which should be mentioned was the presence of all most important leaders of EU states at the summit, including Germany, France and the United Kingdom, which meant an increasing interest in eastern neighbours. That was what the Warsaw Summit in 2011 lacked.¹¹

As for the multilateral dimension, apart from the summits, meetings of Foreign Ministers were held as well (8 December 2009, 13 December 2010, December 2011, 5 March 2012, 17-18 May 2013), sectoral ministerial meetings, adopting multilateral and bilateral Road Maps: Comprehensive Institution-Building Programmes as well as Supporting the Multilateral Dimension of the Eastern Partnership adopted in 2010; developing the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly in 2011; appointing the Civil Society Forum, establishing the EaP Business Forum in 2011; establishing the Permanent Conference of Local and Regional Authorities for Eastern Partnership under the aegis of the Committee of the Regions (CORLEAP) and establishing the Business Forum of Eastern Partnership. As for the tools for the financial support of eastern partners, the following ones were established: Investment Facility for Neighbourhood at the end of 2007, Instrument for Supporting the Development of Civil Society established in 2011, European Endowment for Democracy appointed in 2011 which was to be launched in mid-2013, Eastern Partnership Instrument

¹¹ R. Sadowski, “Szczyt w Wilnie: bez przełomu w Partnerstwie Wschodnim”, *Analizy OSW*, 4 December 2013, at <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2013-12-04/szczyt-w-wilnie-bez-przelomu-w-partnerstwie-wschodnim>, 30 January 2015.

launched in 2011. The EaP Integration and Cooperation was also initiated in 2012. Furthermore, four multilateral thematic platforms for exchanging information and experiences were implemented; five out of six planned flagship initiatives were launched within these platforms, apart from the Diversification of Energy Supply: Southern Gas Corridor.¹²

Starting the analysis of EaP functioning, the document “Eastern Partnership: The Opening Report”, which was prepared by the State Institute of International Relations, should be discussed. In the first part it refers to the participation of individual member states in developing the Eastern Partnership, while in the second part it presents the response of addressee states to the proposal of setting up the project¹³. Without going into details, the report unambiguously states that partner countries welcome the new initiative. Nevertheless, they do not express great enthusiasm. However, it is hard to expect it when the biggest weakness of the project is the lack of clearly formulated prospects for membership for these countries, which would make it attractive¹⁴. The initiative does not exclude membership but does not imply “the EU perspective” for these countries, although it increases their chances for this process in future¹⁵.

The lack of accession perspective (or a clear definition what the integration means, which is different from membership) caused that integration policy with six countries was formulated and implemented in an ambiguous and non-committal way, thus it affected its efficiency. As a result, the instruments and mechanisms for its development were limited, in particular the conditionality mechanism¹⁶. In addition, the EaP beneficiaries started to use the Partnership for their own purposes, which we can find in the abovementioned report by the Polish Institute of International Affairs. Georgia put the strongest focus on the increased EU involvement in settling up Caucasian conflicts, energy security, the transit of resources and transport. Moldova expected to receive both help in the dispute with the unrecognised Transnistrian Republic and EU funds. On the other hand, by emphasising its European identity, Ukraine stated that until the EU offers a perspective for membership,

¹² I. Borucińska-Dereszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

¹³ B. Wojna, M. Gniazdowski, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ A. Barabasz, M. Piechocki, “Partnerstwo Wschodnie jako instrument polityki wschodniej UE?”, *Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej* 2012, no. 6, pp. 262-263, at <http://rie.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/259-268.pdf>, 30 January 2015.

¹⁵ In the Declaration the term “interested partner countries” was used to the addressees of the initiative. The term “European EU neighbours” was decided not to be used because according to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union it gave them an opportunity to apply for membership which was to be avoided due to the ambiguous position of the EU in this matter.

¹⁶ K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, “Integracja czy imitacja? UE wobec wschodnich sąsiadów”, *Prace OSW* 2011, no. 36, p. 10, at http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/prace_36.pdf, 30 January 2015.

“the Partnership will not operate properly”¹⁷. A situation when the EU declaring to establish closer relations with the countries of eastern Europe takes at the same time a defensive position toward the full integration had a negative impact mainly on the areas where most partners saw economic benefits resulting from association agreements deepened by free trade areas with the EU and benefits from easing the visa regime. It should be pointed out then that the ambivalence of EU policy toward the region of Eastern Europe is a consequence of the lack of coherent, clearly determined Community policy toward the whole region of Eastern Europe, which also affects the EaP quality. Furthermore, any activity carried out by the EU in the post-Soviet area focuses on relations with Russia and is often their outcome¹⁸.

Political and economic transformation in EaP countries

In recent years democratic regression in partner countries and, paradoxically, strengthening negative tendencies in the internal political, economic and social situation have been observed, contrary to the European standards.

In all the countries of the region we deal with undemocratic voting processes, marginalising the opposition, dependent justice systems, a high level of corruption, dependent media, serious economic issues, power in the hands of the president and weak parliaments. Furthermore, these countries still face a strategic choice between implementing the model of development proposed by the EU and the one offered by Russia and the Eurasian Union¹⁹.

As regards the voting standards in all these countries, breaches of election procedures were noted to greater or lesser extent. They concerned the way of organising elections as well as respecting the principle of freedom of choice. Georgia is a positive example, where the parliamentary election held on 1 October 2012²⁰ and presidential election of 27 October 2013²¹ were recognised by the OSCE as free and democratic, strengthening the image of Georgia as the most democratic country among the countries in the region. An improvement was achieved also in Moldova, where the OSCE

¹⁷ The response of the Ukrainian government to the EaP initiative was a statement that until the EU offers a prospect of membership to Ukraine, the Partnership will not operate properly. In: A. Barabasz, M. Piechocki, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ B. Piskorska, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

²⁰ “OSCE Georgia Parliamentary Elections 1 October 2012”, at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/92971>, 6 February 2015.

²¹ “OSCE Georgia Presidential Elections 27 October 2013”, at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/georgia/105001>, 6 February 2015.

positively assessed the course of parliamentary elections in 2010²² and 2014²³. Armenia was also positively assessed by the OSCE, despite the fact that numerous infringements were noted which undermined its fully democratic course.

A significant worsening of standards was noted in Ukraine during the parliamentary election of 28 October 2012. A monitoring mission of the OSCE assessed that the election lacked a level playing field because of the abuse by state administration, lacked transparency in the election campaign and its funding²⁴. Other elections held on 26 October 2014 were mostly considered compliant with democratic standards, which posed a serious challenge due to the crisis between Ukraine and Russia²⁵. As far as Azerbaijan and Belarus are concerned, none of the general elections held in recent years fulfilled democratic standards.²⁶

According to the “Nations in Transit 2014” report²⁷ which was drawn up by the American Freedom House Foundation²⁸, all EaP countries followed the way of authoritarian systems or turned toward so-called hybrid regimes defined as an intermediate system between democracy and authoritarianism. Furthermore, none of these countries was classified in the report based on the categories taken by the Freedom House Agency as free. In 2014 partly free countries included Georgia and Moldova, whereas Armenia, Ukraine, Belarus and Azerbaijan were identified as authoritarian countries (not free)²⁹. In comparison with 2004, when partly free countries included as many as four countries – Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Armenia, a significant lowering of democratic standards and a drop in the classification are observed.

²² “Republic of Moldova, Early Parliamentary Elections 28 November 2010”, *OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*, at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/75118?download=true>, 6 February 2015.

²³ “Republic of Moldova, Parliamentary Elections 30 November 2014”, *OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report*, at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/moldova/123800?download=true>, 6 February 2015.

²⁴ “Ukraine, Parliamentary Elections 28 October 2012”, *OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*, at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/98578?download=true>, 6 February 2015.

²⁵ “Ukraine Early Parliamentary Elections, 26 October 2014”, at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/123759>, 6 February 2015.

²⁶ R. Sadowski, “Partnerstwo w czasach kryzysu. Wyzwania dla integracji Europejskiej państw Europy Wschodniej”, *Punkt Widzenia OSW* 2013, no. 36, pp. 18-19, at http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/pw_36_pl_partnerstwo_net.pdf, 6 February 2015.

²⁷ “Nations in Transit 2014”, *Freedom House*, at <https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/nations-transit#.VNSjC9KG9if>, 6 February 2015.

²⁸ The Freedom House Agency analyses the progress of democratic changes in 29 countries, including former CIS states, based on the criteria containing seven categories: electoral process, civil society, independent media, national democratic governance, local democratic governance, judicial framework and independence, corruption.

²⁹ S. Habdank-Kończakowska, “Nations in Transit 2014: Eurasia’s Rupture with Democracy”, *Freedom House*, at https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/NIT2014%20booklet_WEB SITE.pdf, 3 February 2015.

The research on the assessment of adapting EaP countries to EU requirements should be noted. It was carried out within an expert panel and published in a quarterly entitled “New Eastern Europe” in August 2013³⁰.

Table 1. Assessment of bringing the EaP states closer to the EU in selected areas in 2013

Ambition and will of the political elite to integrate with European structures and institutions?		Bilateral relations with the EU	Development of civil society	Rule of law / justice system	Trade and economy / market reforms	Human rights	Accountability of public institutions and administration	Fight against corruption	OVERALL GRADE (AVERAGE)
Belarus	1.4	1.3	2.1	1.5	2	1.4	1.9	2.1	1.7
Ukraine	3.2	3	3.7	1.8	2.5	2.6	2.2	1.6	2.6
Moldova	2.2	1.6	3.9	3.8	3.2	2.8	3	3.4	3
Armenia	2.9	2.3	2.8	3.1	2.8	2.1	2.6	2.4	2.6
Azerbaijan	1.8	2.7	2.3	1.7	2.7	1.6	2.1	1.6	2
Georgia	4.1	3.8	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.1	3	3.4	3.4
REGIONAL AVERAGE	2.6	2.5	3	2.5	2.8	2.25	2.5	2.4	2.6

Source: “Pass or Fail? Grading the Eastern Partnership”, *New Eastern Europe* Issue 4(IX)/2013, at <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/890-pass-or-fail-grading-the-eastern-partnership>, 14 July 2015. The higher the value is, the bigger the extent of being closer to the EU is.

Belarus and Azerbaijan obtained the lowest score for the implementation of EaP objectives in the first half of 2013. Ukraine and Armenia were ex aequo in the middle of the list, while Georgia scored the highest, and Moldova had a slightly lower score. The biggest progress within the EaP was made in the area of civil society, the smallest one in respecting human rights.

Based on the presented analysis, it can be concluded that we deal with “a Partnership of two speeds”³¹. This thesis is also confirmed by the annual European Integration Index for Eastern Partnership Countries (EIIIfEPC), which provides detailed data on the extent of linkage of the increasing political, economic and social ties of EaP countries with the EU, the approximation of laws, practices and institutions to the European model and developing management principles and structures for further integration³².

³⁰ “Grading the Eastern Partnership: Between fair and Poor”, *New Eastern Europe Expert Panel*, *New Eastern Europe* 2013, no. 4, pp. 29-30. A shorter version including the list discussed in this text is available at <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/890-pass-or-fail-grading-the-eastern-partnership>, 3 February 2015.

³¹ P. Lickiewicz, “Partnerstwo Wschodnie dwóch prędkości”, at <http://eastbook.eu/2014/11/material/news/partnerstwo-wschodnie-dwoch-predkosci/>, 19 January 2015.

³² The European Integration Index is a tool for monitoring civil society and is used as a speedo-meter of integration with the EU within the EaP. The publication distinguishes three

Its analysis in the years 2010-2014 shows positive tendencies in all the countries. Nevertheless, it also confirms that the biggest progress in the implementation of EaP objectives has been made by Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. Referring to the data from 2014, differences in the dynamism and the results of reforms can be observed based on three categories: Linkage, Approximation and Management which include specific and numerous subcategories. Without going into details, it should be pointed out that European Index 2014 places Moldova and Georgia at the top of the classification. Moldova was identified as a pioneer of reforms in order to have closer relations with the EU in the region, despite the fact that in terms of political dialogues, trade and economic integration as well as sectoral cooperation it gives way to Ukraine. However, this is a country which as the first out of six partners obtained a visa-free travel regime in the EU in 2014. Furthermore, it obtained the best scores in all aspects of deep and permanent democracy, except for the fight against corruption and independent judiciary, where for example Georgia achieved better results. According to the Index in 2014, Georgia was the second country which best implemented the process of reforms. Compared to 2013, it improved its score in three dimensions. It is leading the way in deep and permanent democracy, democratic elections or human rights. Out of the six countries, it has the best investment climate in the region and the best conditions in the Free Trade Area with the EU. It ranks high in integration management. It is followed by Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus which did not achieve a significant progress; on the contrary, the actions aiming at closer relations with the EU were suspended. As regards Ukraine, which until the Vilnius Summit in November 2013 was the most promising country from political point of view, due to the suspension of preparations for signing an association agreement by the Ukrainian government a few days before 21 November 2014, setting back the process aiming at closer relations with the EU was a result of an internal crisis in that country, and next the Russian-Ukrainian conflict as well as the war in the eastern part of the country. Armenia, which could not boast any significant successes in any particular field, finally made a step backward in 2014, turning to the Eurasian Union. Like Azerbaijan, it is not particularly willing to follow the EU, which is proved, for instance, by strengthening authoritarian rule.

The last place in the classification of European Integration Index 2014 is taken by Belarus, which has the lowest level of cooperation with the EU³³. The analysis of annual EC reports – the Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy

integration dimensions. The first dimension, Linkage, shows the level and range of integration. The second dimension, Approximation, reflects the level of institutional compatibility, i.e. it answers the question to what extent they operate in a similar way in the EU and EaP states. The third dimension is the Management of European integration.

³³ More details: "European Integration Index 2014 for Eastern Partnership Countries", *International Renaissance Foundation, The Open Society Foundations, The Eastern Partnership Civil*

Report: Eastern Partnership³⁴ in the years 2010 – 2014 also confirms that changes in the EaP are being made slowly and the progress concerns selected areas and is impermanent because of the political will of partners that implement their own national interests, perceive benefits from the implementation of reforms and the integration with the EU as well as take into account the benefits from the integration with the post-Soviet area³⁵.

Because of the dominant role of economic and social potential over political potential, it should be pointed out that economic growth rates and structural reforms in the EaP countries have little dynamic. Based on the analysis of the Index of Economic Freedom data – the World Ranking published yearly by the American Heritage Foundation, a slight improvement of economic scores was noted in the EaP states³⁶. The Index classifies countries in the world ranking in 2015 according to economic freedom in 10 categories. Georgia is ranked highest in the list, at 22nd place with 73 points out of 100, so in the category of countries with greater economic freedom. Armenia is at 52nd place in the general classification as a “moderately economically free” country with the result of 67.6 points. Azerbaijan takes 85th place with 61 points as “moderately free”, Moldavia is at 111th place with 57.5 points as “mostly unfree”. Ukraine was classified as “repressed” – 46.9 points which gives 162nd place and Belarus has 49.8 points and 153rd place in the ranking. The table presents in detail the list covering 10 categories based on which the position of an individual country is verified and tendencies are observed³⁷ (Annex no. 1).

Significant data on the democracy status and the free market economy is provided by the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI)³⁸. In a list for the years 2010 – 2014 we observe again a dichotomy in the development of the countries in the region, where a dominant role is played by Moldova and Georgia which achieved the biggest progress in political and economic transformation.

Society Forum, at <http://www.eap-index.eu/sites/default/files/EaP%20Index%202014.pdf>, 11 July 2015.

³⁴ An annual regional review of progress in the Eastern Partnership implementation drawn up by the EC as a part of document set issued within the annual assessment of European Neighbourhood Policy activities, describing the progress made by individual EaP states in the multilateral and bilateral area.

³⁵ I. Borucińska-Dereszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

³⁶ B. Piskorska, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

³⁷ “Index of Economic Freedom 2015, World Ranking”, *Heritage Foundation*, at <http://www.heritage.org/index/pdf/2015/book/Highlights.pdf>, 17 July 2015.

³⁸ The Bertelsmann Transformation Index takes into account the progress of system and economic-market transformation as well as the political process of governance in 129 countries. The scale of determined scoring is from 1 (worst) to 10 (best). See more at <http://www.bti-project.org/bti-home/>, 17 July 2015.

Table 2. Political and economic transformation in EaP countries in the years 2010/12/14 (1 – worst, 10 – best)

Country	Category	2010	2012	2014
Armenia	Political transformation	5.00	5.25	5.35
	Economic transformation	6.50	5.93	6.07
Azerbaijan	Political transformation	3.92	4.02	3.92
	Economic transformation	5.79	5.68	5.50
Belarus	Political transformation	4.08	3.93	3.93
	Economic transformation	4.96	4.79	4.68
Georgia	Political transformation	6.05	6.15	6.50
	Economic transformation	6.00	5.61	5.82
Moldova	Political transformation	6.65	7.05	7.15
	Economic transformation	4.93	5.43	5.50
Ukraine	Political transformation	7.00	6.10	6.10
	Economic transformation	6.11	5.28	5.68

Source: Study based on the BTI 2010 Country Report data, at <http://www.bti-project.org/downloads/bti-2014/archive-country-reports/country-reports-2010/cis-and-mongolia/> BTI 2012, Country Report at <http://www.bti-project.org/downloads/bti-2014/archive-country-reports/country-reports-2012/cis-and-mongolia/> BTI 2014, Country Report at <http://www.bti-project.org/downloads/bti-2014/country-reports-2014/post-soviet-eurasia/>, 17 July 2015.

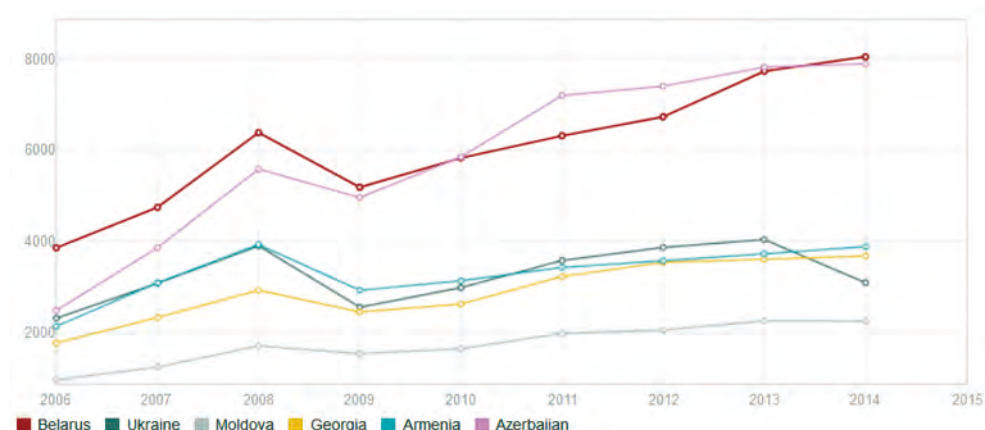
As for the other countries, the situation at that time worsened. Belarus and Azerbaijan opposed political and economic liberalisation. They caused the fact that Minsk turned toward Russia by joining the Customs Union, while Baku, thanks to the income from oil sales in the EU market, became independent from Brussels's financial support. Thereby, the EU lost the possibility of having a real impact on the situation of these countries. The decision of Armenian government in 2014 was also a surprise. Armenia was the fourth country, following Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, which had the best prospect for closer relations with the EU. It decided to suspend further activities and turn to Kremlin³⁹.

It is a peculiar paradox that political closeness is different from economic closeness. It is Belarus and Azerbaijan, which de facto are politically furthest away from the EU, have the highest GDP per capita growth rate among the EaP countries on the basis of which citizen prosperity is assessed⁴⁰.

³⁹ R. Sadowski, *Partnerstwo w czasach kryzysu...*, pp. 28-29.

⁴⁰ Data according to the World Bank at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PC.AP.CD>.

Chart 1. GDP per capita (USD) of EaP countries in the years 2006-2014



Source: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD/countries/BY-UA-MD-GE-AM-AZ?display=graph>, 17 July 2015.

On the other hand, according to the World Bank data, in the countries which treated integration with the EU as a priority, i.e. apart from Georgia and Moldova, both Ukraine and Armenia have a lower GDP per capita growth rate⁴¹.

Therefore, it should be pointed out that the regression observed in economic and market transformation results from the weakness of partners' political will to implement radical and costly, both financially and socially, reforms in order to have closer relations with the EU. Adapting the economic structure to the EU requirements of the free market means to reorganise the whole economic system of EaP countries which are still based on a model of the centrally planned economy. Undoubtedly, the financial crisis in the European Union in 2009 affected negatively the development of mutual trade relations and the intensity of EU economic contacts with the Eastern Partnership countries. The focus on the Community internal issues limited its involvement in Eastern Neighbourhood, putting the problems and needs of these countries in second place, which resulted in worsening political climate. Furthermore, the Eurozone crisis caused that the EU economic model failed to be perceived as the most beneficial for state economic prosperity.

Integration processes in the region are an important factor. They were initiated by Russia, at first within the Commonwealth of Independent States, then within the Customs Union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, which was transformed into a Eurasia Union in January 2015 as an opposition to the European model. In that situation the area of the so-called mutual neighbouring of the EU and Russia caused that most of these countries follow multi-sector policy to achieve their national

⁴¹ K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

interests. A long-term political and economic dependency of EaP countries on Russia results in the fact that they are afraid of worsening the relations with Moscow because of their closer relations with Europe⁴².

The influence of the Ukrainian crisis on the EaP future

Due to the fact that the Ukrainian crisis, which started in November 2013, has not ended, it is difficult to indicate all its consequences for the EaP future. Undoubtedly, the crisis of EU-Ukraine relations as well as Russian policy in the region has significantly weakened the EU influence on Eastern Europe.

Ukraine which as the first among all partners within the EaP started to negotiate on the association agreement and the Deepened Free Trade Area, thus the biggest hopes for the success of the whole project were pinned upon it, became distant from Brussels, despite its European declarations. The problems arising since 2008, which resulted from the conflict of interests between the parties, related to fulfilling political obligations, and as regards DCFTA, the regulation of mutual access to the market caused that negotiations were extended⁴³.

The decision on halting the work on the agreement a few days before the summit, and next the decision on not signing it unambiguously meant a fiasco of the Vilnius Summit (despite the fact that during that summit such agreements were signed with Moldova and Georgia). Additionally, the turn of Armenia to the Customs Union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus caused that the EaP considerably lost its significance. It was not changed even by the fact that during the worsening political crisis in Ukraine, the political part of agreement between the EU and Ukraine was finally signed in March 2014 and the trade part in June 2014 (which is not applicable until 2016). Signing the association agreements by three countries was perceived in Russia

⁴² R. Sadowski, *Partnerstwo w czasach kryzysu...*, pp. 29-31.

⁴³ More details: K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, *op. cit.*, p. 32. An analysis of the conflict origin shows that the offer for Ukraine was not interesting enough to take the risk involved with it, which means the implementation of costly and socially unpopular reforms, especially that the association agreement did not add anything new to the strategic offer or the prospects for membership for those signatories. Its biggest advantage was the expected introduction of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area depending on the adoption of suitable regulations by individual countries. This would improve the Ukrainian economic situation but only in the long-term perspective. More details: S. Domaradzki, "Cena umowy stowarzyszeniowej. Między interesem Unii Europejskiej, Polski i przyszłością Ukrainy", in K. Czornik, M. Lakomy, M. Stolarczyk (ed.), *Dylematy polityki zagranicznej Polski na początku XXI wieku*, Katowice 2014, pp. 301-320.

as an attempt to interfere in its economic and strategic objectives, which resulted in an unambiguous reaction.

The outbreak of Ukrainian-Russian conflict due to the annexation of Crimea and the aggression in eastern Ukraine have bluntly proved that EU *soft power* in the region is not able to oppose military force. Although the EU aspires to play the role of a guardian of international security, its influence on regional conflicts in Georgia (South Ossetia and Abkhazia), Armenia and Azerbaijan (conflict over Upper Karabakh) in Moldova (Transnistrian region) is very limited, even marginal. This results from a weak political position in the region dictated by the lack of suitable instruments of pressure on the parties to the conflict because of the lack of prospects for membership. A statement that "the EU remains an economic giant and a geopolitical dwarf in the region is not unfounded"⁴⁴.

The Ukrainian crisis has also shown that the internally divided EU, connected with Russia through various interests, is not able to pursue efficient policy for the development of EaP countries. Maintaining the principle *Russia first* caused that any actions taken in bilateral conflicts toward eastern neighbours were, so to speak, the results of relations with Russia. In the current situation no changes should be expected in this regard because Russia is able to offer more benefits for the member states in mutual cooperation than the EaP countries are. Raw material supplies have a particular significance here.

On the other hand, Russia, which returned to its imperial policy, will probably try to keep internal disorganisation in Ukraine as it finds it beneficial, and therefore limit the influence of the EU in the whole area. It cannot be ruled out that Russia will go as far as to blackmail the countries which cooperate with Brussels most closely, i.e. Moldova and Georgia. It is staggering whether these countries, when facing direct danger, turn back from the European path in order to keep their integrity and sovereignty.

Thus, the Ukrainian crisis has shown how essential it is to reformulate the EU policy toward EaP countries and Russia. Unfortunately, taking into account the course of the fourth EaP summit in Riga, there is no political will to make such changes, at least not this time. Although it was pointed out during the summit that cooperation with the six eastern partners should reflect differences between them to greater extent and their various ambitions of closer relations with the EU, but this is not an indication of radical changes⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ B. Piskorska, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-105.

⁴⁵ A. Rybińska, "Partnerstwo Wschodnie to polityczny trup. Zginęło w starciu z brutalną polityką Kremla. I nie da się go już ożywić", 24 May 2015, at <http://wpolityce.pl/swiat/245693-partnerstwo-wschodnie-to-polityczny-trup-zginelo-w-starciu-z-brutalna-polityka-kremla-i-nie-da-sie-go-juz-ozywic>, 20 July 2015.

In the final declaration⁴⁶ there was a note about recognising by the participants of the summit “*European aspirations and European choice of the partners concerned, as stated in the Association Agreements*”. Nevertheless, Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, excluded European prospects for those countries stating that “*nobody promised that the EaP would be an automatic way to membership*”.

One of the few successes of the summit includes granting a medium-term loan to Ukraine within macro-financial support at the amount of EUR 1.8 billion as well as a possibility to introduce the visa-free travel regime for Ukraine and Georgia in the EU, which after fulfilling strictly determined conditions and a positive opinion by the EC could receive the visa-free travel regime in 2016.

An objection of representatives of Armenia and Belarus against a note condemning the annexation of Crimea by Russia in the final declaration was an event which was surprising and even raising doubt about the solidarity among the EaP beneficiary countries. In the final version of the document only EU states condemned those events.

Considering the atmosphere and caution of the offer presented to eastern partners, journalists of “*Rosjijska Gazeta*” compared the meeting in Riga to “*fishing without bait*”. In their opinion, the final documents of the Riga Summit include other empty promises, which will lead to a situation when the countries of the Eastern Partnership lose their interest in that programme⁴⁷.

Conclusions

The Ukrainian crisis and its origin allowed looking at the situation we deal with in the signatory countries of the EaP more critically. Although quite superficial, the analysis of the effects of functioning of the programme pointed out many problems and difficulties, thus many challenges for the neighbouring countries and the EU. Therefore, the author is inclined to formulate several general thoughts summing up the conducted analysis:

1. Over the six years since the Eastern Partnership has been established, its results can be assessed only in the category of moderate influence on partner countries. The

⁴⁶ “Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit”, 21-22 May 2015, at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/meetings/international-summit/2015/05/21-22/>, 20 July 2015.

⁴⁷ “Szczyt Partnerstwa Wschodniego w Rydze. Ostrożne obietnice UE”, 22 May 2015, at <http://www.polskieradio.pl/5/3/Artykul/1447211,Szczyt-Partnerstwa-Wschodniego-w-Rydze-Ostrozne-obietnice-UEw>, 20 July 2015.

situation in the individual countries of the region generally has not changed, and in some cases regression occurred. An analysis of various criteria and indicators of changes in particular areas in the years 2010-2014/15 shows that the increase in EU involvement in the region and the extension of its bureaucratic instruments are not expressed in a tangibly way into the real improvement of the neighbourhood due to the influence of many political, economic or procedural factors. These are significant sources of challenges which the EU faces to improve the efficiency of its foreign policy⁴⁸.

2. The initiative which created the frameworks and mechanisms for the process of integration of Eastern Europe countries with the EU did not have greater political significance that would suit Brussels's ambitions, mainly because of the lack of coherent interests among EU institutions, state members and partner countries. In a situation of limited cooperation, its effects are not satisfying for any of the parties involved and focus mainly on maintaining the dialogue rather than the cooperation in implementing specific changes. The deficit of real influence was compensated by extending institutions and procedures in the multilateral and bilateral dimension⁴⁹.

3. The area of EaP operation is formed by countries diversified in terms of political systems, the level of economic development, the social system, trade ties with the EU as well as different historic and cultural roots. Their closer relations with the EU depend on other factors and have diversified development prospects⁵⁰. During the EaP functioning, an unquestionable leader in intensifying cooperation, integration with the EU and internal transformation was Moldova, and then Georgia, despite the fact that numerous faults and challenges still exist. Both countries signed and ratified the highest number of agreements with the EU by September 2013. As regards Ukraine, the achievements of the Orange Revolution did not result in the range of transformation and were not used during the EaP period. These processes were halted, as a result Ukraine dropped from the leader position before the establishment of the EaP toward a country with an average level of Europeanising. As for Armenia, the biggest EU failure is the decision on not signing the association agreement at the third EaP summit due to the planned accession to the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. Azerbaijan expresses little desire for cooperation. Having valuable oil deposits, it became independent from financial support by the EU. The cooperation limited only to the sectors favourable for Azerbaijan. As for Belarus, we can speak of formal membership in the EaP only. Its cooperation with the EU

⁴⁸ I. Borucińska-Dereszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁴⁹ R. Sadowski, *Partnerstwo w czasach kryzysu...*, p. 10.

⁵⁰ More details: K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-25.

is minimal and faces many problems because of the membership of Belarus in the Customs Union under the auspices of Russia⁵¹.

4. The crucial issue of the EaP is connected with a deficit of political will for integration both by the EU and the countries of Eastern Neighbourhood. It results from the lack of a clearly determined strategic objective, an initiative, thus specified prospects for membership or other forms of integration. A limited EU offer deprived it the possibility to use the conditionality mechanism fully and as a result the influence on the range and shape of changes. The lack of readiness to formulate a more attractive offer results from the ambivalence of the EU itself which, on one hand, declares to have closer relations with the countries of Eastern Europe, on the other hand, takes a defensive position when the access to particularly sensitive areas is involved, such as regulations on visa regime or access to the free market. Furthermore, for countries declaring to establish closer relations with the EU, it is of utmost importance to have a guarantee that the benefits from integration will be so notable that they will compensate the high costs of reforms. Due to the fact that the EU should redefine its current unclear message which has been given to the neighbouring countries so far by developing mechanisms to raise the status of these countries, which are not only interested in the integration but they also show progresses in transformation. On the other hand, the mechanisms or instruments which do not give any expected results should be given up⁵².

5. The principle “more for more” did not frequently impact the diversification of policy toward partner countries. In practice, other reasons were decisive in this respect. They were dictated by geographical closeness or EU interests toward individual countries. Due to this fact, the widest offer has been always addressed to Ukraine, although the process of transformation and modernisation was much slower there than in Moldova or Georgia. What decided about Ukraine’s advantage was the potential and geopolitical location which give it a better initial position than, for example, the countries of the South Caucasus have. There is no doubt that the EaP project was established mainly for Ukraine, thus its position in the EaP is so high. Bending the rules was often used for countries such as Ukraine or authoritarian Azerbaijan, while the countries of the Caucasus faced numerous restrictions determining the dialog continuance. Using double standards is also visible in the level of dialogue with Azerbaijan, which is rich in resources, and Belarus which is comparable in the light of authoritarianism⁵³.

⁵¹ I. Borucińska-Dereszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁵² K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, *op. cit.*, pp. 53, 10.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

6. The ending of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and stabilising the situation in Ukraine's eastern provinces is of key importance for the EaP future. This will be possible only in a long-term perspective because it is very important for Russia that the conflict become frozen, so as a result it will be able to control the situation in the region. In this regard, formulating current assumptions of eastern policy and strengthening the unity of EU member states in maintaining a coherent dialogue with Russia in Realpolitik conditions become a priority.

Unfortunately, the last EaP summit in Riga did not bring radical changes, which would allow reactivating the project and adapting it to the new conditions. By being cautious in formulating an offer for the neighbouring countries, the EU may struggle with a failure of the entire programme.

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Abstract

The noble objectives and programme assumptions of the Eastern Partnership turned out to be more difficult in implementation than it had been expected. The European Union has not gained greater significance in the region of Eastern Europe, which would suit its ambitions, mainly due to the lack of coherent interest among EU institutions, member states and partner countries. The outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis thwarted most efforts and results developed so far. It called into question the further sense of functioning of the EaP in the current form, at the same time pointing out its many flaws and weaknesses. Thus, the aim of this article is to assess the effects of actions taken during the last six years of functioning the EaP based on the analysis of different criteria and indicators showing changes in six partner countries in selected areas in the years 2010-2014/15, taking into account the influence of the Ukrainian crisis on the further development of the programme.

Keywords: Eastern Partnership, Ukrainian crisis, European Union

Annex no. 1. Classification of countries by economic freedom based on 10 categories of the Index of Economic Freedom in the years 2015/2013/2010

Economic Freedom 2015												
	World rank	Overall score	Property rights	Freedom from corruption	Fiscal freedom	Government spending	Business freedom	Labour freedom	Monetary freedom	Trade freedom	Investment freedom	Financial freedom
	Armenia	52	67.1	20.0	36.0	84.4	82.8	82.7	64.3	70.6	85.4	70.0
	Azerbaijan	85	61.0	20.0	28.0	88.1	59.7	74.5	79.1	79.8	76.0	50.0
	Belarus	153	49.8	20.0	29.0	86.4	54.7	72.0	80.1	44.5	81.0	10.0
	Georgia	22	73.0	40.0	49.0	87.2	73.8	88.6	79.9	82.7	88.6	60.0
	Moldova	111	57.5	40.0	35.0	85.1	51.8	66.8	40.6	76.1	79.8	50.0
	Ukraine	162	46.9	20.0	25.0	78.7	28.0	59.3	48.2	78.6	85.8	30.0
Economic Freedom 2013												
	Armenia	38	69.4	30	26	88.0	82.1	87.6	77.1	73.0	85.4	70
	Azerbaijan	88	59.7	25	24	85.5	67.8	69.2	79.4	73.5	77.2	40
	Belarus	154	48.0	20	24	88.8	43.5	75.2	76.9	40.7	80.8	10
	Georgia	21	72.2	45	41	88.2	68.9	90.6	91.1	72.6	89.2	60
	Moldova	115	55.5	40	29	87.2	50.1	69.7	40.9	73.4	80.0	40
	Ukraine	161	46.3	30	23	78.2	29.4	47.6	49.9	71.0	84.4	30
Economic Freedom 2010												
	Armenia	38	69.2	83.4	80.5	89.3	90.9	72.9	75.0	70.0	30.0	70.6
	Azerbaijan	96	58.8	74.6	77.1	79.5	77.5	62.7	55.0	40.0	20.0	82.5
	Belarus	150	48.7	72.1	80.3	85.2	32.0	62.6	20.0	10.0	20.0	84.8
	Georgia	26	70.4	87.9	89.1	89.1	65.3	70.2	70.0	60.0	40.0	93.7
	Moldova	125	53.7	70.2	79.9	85.1	43.0	67.5	30.0	50.0	40.0	42.7
	Ukraine	162	46.4	38.7	82.6	77.9	41.1	61.2	20.0	30.0	30.0	57.7

Source: Own work based on the data from Index Economic Freedom 2015 at <http://www.heritage.org/index/explore>, Index Economic Freedom 2013 http://www.heritage.org/index/pdf/2013/book/index_2013.pdf, Index Economic Freedom 2010 http://www.heritage.org/index/PDF/2010/2010Index2010_ExecutiveHighlights.pdf, 20 July 2015. The higher the score is, the bigger the freedom is. On the other hand, as for the ranking, the positions are ranked from the best (no. 1) to the worse one in the list.

OLENA BORDILOVSKA

Ukraine's Geopolitical Choice: Historical Aspects

Geopolitical approach became a kind of fashion in the international relations last decades. In reality – what is the factor of geopolitics in general and in Ukrainian situation in particular? Usually, it is common understanding of such factors as geography, economics, and demography, participation in regional units and power ambition in the creation of the main directions of the nation's foreign policy. Despite being a main shaping factor of international behavior of any country, in case of Ukraine geopolitics could be determined as a destiny. It is not only because of the latest events and crises in Ukraine-Russia relations but it has been visualized by many scholars a long time before. In fact, there is at least one very simple understanding of such “fatal” approach – the location of Ukraine: to realize geostrategic potential of the nation you should look at the map firstly.

Well, it would not be easy to escape a very common approach: Ukraine is a natural bridge (if not a buffer zone) between West and East, Europe and Eurasia, it is blessed by a unique geopolitical situation. The situation looks really good and favorable, but I would rather say Ukraine has a destiny to be located here, otherwise why we had so many tragic events and wars throughout our history? And again what for we have to pay such a high price, with thousands victims, people killed, wounded and shifted to prove that our nation belongs to Europe and not Eurasia? The answer could be found up in our history: since the creation of Ukrainian nation it always faced a choice to be closer to one of the neighbors as it was not possible to survive without the allies.

Accordingly to such definition, everyone, at least shortly acquainted with Ukrainian history, does realize: it is the natural state of things to be “in between” position. Since 14-15 centuries Ukrainian nobility had to decide whose rule is better – Polish

or Russian? As Jagiellonian Poland seemed to be more democratic than Tsar Moscovy, Ukrainian land became the part of Joint Polish-Lithuanian State. The fact is that it was not an independent state, it is the territory only, populated by Ukrainians. And, frankly speaking, the choice has been made by others, not Ukrainians themselves. Historical destiny was shaped by geographic location, war between Poland and Russia in 16 century (Liwonska war) was the one only among the conflicts between our neighbors from the west and east. It was the beginning of our uncertain position, our continuous search for friends and allies.

Also, it was a time when Ukrainian nation has been put onto “death triangle” – between Poland, Russian state and Ottoman (Turkish) empire, so it was really needed to have at least one of them as an ally to survive. Since the end of 16 century we have this state of doubts, when Cossaks started to provide independent diplomacy and foreign policy activity, trying to insure their position as free, independent nation. Actually, it was the time of Cossak state, when Ukrainians made their appearance in Europe: their military troops took part in the events of 30 – years war 1618 – 1648 and even before they sent missions abroad: they said, the first mission to Moscow has been sent in 1592, in 1621 the exchange of the missions happened and it was a start of negotiations between Cossaks and Moscow power about possible alliance. At the same time, Turkish direction remained in the priority – talks with Tatars aimed on creation anti-turkish coalition also have been initiated. What is more, some years earlier Ukrainian hetman (leader) Sagaydachnyi sent a special mission to Iran – with the same purpose – to create an alliance and prevent Turkish invasion.

Three main directions of Cossacs diplomatic activity could be described as the biggest priority: Poland, Russia and Ottoman Empire (Turkey). Soon it became clear, that it is a “mortal triangle” for Ukraine – as it was not possible to survive without somebody’s assistance inside this triangle. Also, it was not possible to predict any combination for sure, as every party had to protect their own interests. All these circumstances could make an explanation – why Cossacs leaders were searching alliances, changed allies, made a new one – which seemed to be more reliable partners. Anti-polish uprising, started in 1648, pushed Ukrainians to Russians. It was a common strong belief that they will be understood by brothers, Orthodox Christians. This decision has been taken after long doubts and considerations. Finally, as it is well-known, Pereyaslav Rada (Council) in 1654 made a decision to come under the protection of Russian Tzar. Actually, it was not clear up to which grade this “protection” could be accepted, as nobody spoke about the real union with Russia (as it was interpreted later “forever with brothers”).

A lot of examples of this eternal choice between West and East for Ukraine could be given, diplomacy of Bohdan Hmelnytsky and Ivan Mazepa are 2 only, famous enough. While 1654 events in Pereyaslav were welcomed by Moscow, betrayal of Mazepa during Russian-Sweden war provoked a strong attempt to rein in Cossaks.

Actually, after Mazepa's alliance with Sweden Russian Tzars initiated policy of total vanishing of Cossaks state and dissolution of Ukrainian Nation – for the first, but not the last time in the history. Peter the First, famous Russian Emperor, could not forgive such a betrayal and later one more great Russian ruler Katherine the Second reinforced this policy and totally destroyed all the privileges Cossaks had before, first of all tradition of freedom and democratic governance. The result was that since the end of 18 century Ukrainian Nation was divided and our lands became the parts of different states. We lost our sovereignty – because of our geopolitical position, nobody wanted a strong independent state in this part of Europe. Due to further partition of Poland lands inhabited by Ukrainians were distributed between two super-powers of those times – Russian and Austro – Hungarian Empires.

“The land of Cossaks, situated between Little Tartary, Poland and Muscovy”, wrote Walter about Ukraine – indicating a crucial moment – the position of Ukraine in Eastern Europe, between 2 influential powers. There is no sense to follow up all the history, as it seemed like a *dejavu* – again and again Ukraine tried to provide freedom and independence – a number of attempts could be traced in 20-th century, in particular after the I-st World War Paris Peace conference did not allow to discuss possible sovereignty with Ukrainian delegation, for example. The reason was “no need”, as the land of Ukraine was already divided, and the Western part came to Poland mostly. The irony is that for the first time almost all the Ukrainian lands have been united inside the Soviet Union, during the II-nd World War. And only in August 1991 Ukraine got a sovereignty being tired with this battle for West – East orientation it proclaimed a really independent course in foreign policy and made it clear that it has to get a rightful place in European space. Ukrainian scholar O.Betlii (Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine) argues that “Ukrainian regional identity was built up in no opposition to either East or West. Instead, it was built up on the basis of comparative analysis of influences of both of them”¹. It seems to be acceptable.

The irony is that by now, the position is still the same – between Europe and Eurasia, nothing new. Here, in Ukraine we have been adjusted for such situation, when our neighbors keep an eye on Ukraine and firmly follow their interests. Only thing could be traced – the less interests Europe has – the bigger force Russia starts to use to keep Ukraine on her orbit. It is our concern about the possible integration with European Union: for many years, when Ukraine has been trying to declare and provide our European choice and it was refused by Europeans at least to give us a chance for the future – Russia adjusted itself to consider Ukraine “a natural space of Russian interest”, up to famous “frankly speaking” of President V. Putin himself at 2008 Bucharest NATO summit told President G.W. Bush the Senior that “Ukraine is not

¹ O. Betlii, “Regional identity as an indicator of the integration process: the case of Ukraine”, *Geopolitical transformation in Eurasia*, Kyiv 2012, p. 41.

even a state”, as *Time* reported in May 2009². Of course, some new steps made by both Ukraine and EU towards possible Association with European Union provoked a severe reaction in Russian leadership. Also, as Kremlin government regards Ukraine as being within its sphere of influence and control it took a serious view of the political revolution that occurred in Maidan in 2014. The story of reaction is well-known – the annexation of Crimea and cross-border terrorism and military assistance providing in so called “people republics” of Donetsk and Lugansk. These specific fears of Putin administration that Ukraine really could shift closer to what they call “un-moral West” provoked a very dangerous situation. Now many scholars believe it could be one more “frozen conflict” on the Post-Soviet space – because of Russian ambitions to keep Ukraine – as a part of “Russian World” or “Slavic Union”.

It seems, the challenge can be predicted – if you know the history and really understand the map. In Ukraine some political leaders tried to explain current situation as the result of passive Western policy, but it is not that easy to put all fault onto Europeans. Yes, they underestimated the real threats from the Russian side and probably they are not educated that much to know all these historical lessons. A few only have a clear vision: “The West must understand that, to Russia, Ukraine can never be just a foreign country. Russian history began in what was called Kievan-Rus. The Russian religion spread from there. Ukraine has been part of Russia for centuries, and their histories were intertwined before then”, – H. Kissinger pointed out immediately after annexation of Crimea³. Some other experts caught the idea about this relationship pretty well: “Russia still traces its Orthodox inheritance to Kievan Rus, the loose confederation of Slavic principalities that fell to the Mongols in the thirteenth century. Dominated by the Lithuanians and the Poles from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, and overrun by Cossacks in the seventeenth, most of the area was integrated into the emerging Russian Empire” – University of London Prof. Orlando Figes pointed out⁴. In reality, since that time (18- beginning of 19 century) it was “natural” to recognize Ukraine as a part (a really important by demographic and economic resources) of any “empire project”, does not matter it was Russian monarchy or Soviet Union. Russia built its national identity on the idea of Slavic unity, of which Ukraine was a fundamental and inseparable part (and very important one by demographic and economic resources) and it continues to pretend to be our “Big brother”.

But it would be a serious mistake to say that the crises started at the end of 2013 is due to such “European misunderstanding”. Another problem is that here in Ukraine we have an inclination to overestimate our geopolitical position. Many in the Ukrainian

² J. Marson, “Putin to the West: Hands off Ukraine”, *Time*, May 2009, at <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1900838,00.html>.

³ H. Kissinger, Interview to *Washington Post*, 5 March, 2014.

⁴ O. Figes, “Is There One Ukraine? The Problem with Ukrainian nationalism”, *Foreign Affairs, Special edition*, 2014, p. 59-63.

elite appear to hold the view that Ukraine's geopolitical importance to Europe is so crucial – that Ukraine matters so much in a geopolitical competition between the West and Russia – that the West would ignore our democracy problems and economic development and embrace Ukraine, for fear that Kyiv otherwise would fall into Moscow's orbit.

It implies that Ukraine is an object of the foreign policy of others rather than a subject capable of determining its own foreign policy course. It disregards the fact that falling "into the arms of the Russians" is not in the interests of Ukraine since 1991. Ukraine proclaimed its independence, precipitating the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Those times Z. Brzezinsky mentioned, nobody in the West was aware of this new independent state, the biggest in Europe by territory, and, to be honest, nobody was happy about that fact. The geopolitical situation has been changed totally as such a big European territory shifted from Soviet Union/Russia, so nobody in Russian Federation was excited as well. Actually, without Ukraine it ceases to be just a big Eurasian state, while control over Ukrainian territory could give Russia a chance to restore imperial glory which they really search.

Definitely, the West bears some blame for fueling this sense of geopolitical importance of Ukraine. Despite many NATO and EU declarations, before criticizing domestic problems within Ukraine, stated that an independent, sovereign and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is key to Euro-Atlantic security. So one can understand why there is the belief in Kyiv in Ukraine's central geopolitical importance. At the same time, we have no evident facts that our Western partners realized clearly this geopolitical shift and Ukrainian key position within these changes.

Ukraine's Orange Revolution 2004-2005 initially inspired a hope, both in Ukraine and in the West, that Ukraine had turned an important corner and demonstrates its strong intention to provide democratic reforms with the aim of Western integration.

Ukraine's transition, however, has proven more difficult than expected and internal contradictions between leaders and more widely – between West and East mentalities, different visions of our future blocked the implementation of reforms. Ukraine's biggest weakness and at the same time Moscow's strongest card are these internal divisions, that is why geopolitics still matters. Personal and collective memories, economic and cultural traditions are different in the Western and Eastern Ukraine: the first part demonstrates its total understanding of European values, while the second one till now dreams about Soviet power. The first is the product of European development, the second is the result of Soviet experiment. By the words of O.Figes, "...the country is divided between those who look to Europe for their values and ideals – mainly young Ukrainian speakers in the west and central regions – and those older Russian speakers in the industrial eastern regions and Crimea who prefer to retain the old connections with Russia"⁵.

⁵ Ibid.

Taking into account the long, complex history between the two countries, cultural links between Ukrainians and Russians, and economic ties that have continued since the end of the Soviet era, it is entirely natural that Ukraine seeks stable partnership with Russia. Ukraine's national interest is a stable, constructive relationship with Russia, but Russia is not the easiest of neighbors. It is concern about the possible integration with European Union: for many years, when Ukraine has been trying to declare and provide its European choice and it was refused by Europeans, at least to give it a chance for the future, – Russia adjusted itself to consider Ukraine a part of Russian natural space. The reality is that “since the time of Ukraine's independence, Russia's fundamental state interest has been to diminish Ukraine's independence”⁶.

No one than O.Dugin, demonic Russian political figure and researcher, can better present common Russian geopolitical view (Eurasian context):

- Ukraine should be annexed by Russia because “Ukraine as an independent state with certain territorial ambitions represents an enormous danger for all of Eurasia and, without resolving the Ukrainian problem, it is in general senseless to speak about continental politics”. Ukraine should not be allowed to remain independent, unless it is sanitary cordon, which would be inadmissible. Estonia should be given to Germany's sphere of influence.
- Latvia and Lithuania should be given a “special status” in the Eurasian-Russian sphere.
- Poland should be granted a “special status” in the Eurasian sphere.
- Romania, Macedonia, “Serbian Bosnia” and Greece - “orthodox collectivist East” – will unite with the “Moscow the Third Rome” and reject the “rational-individualistic West”.

Is that not clear enough? Still there is no evidence that these warning signs result in dire analyses and strong inclination to estimate Russian ambitions correctly. What is more, such “understanding” (as per Ukraine) is shared by many western scholars who still dream about the ways to pacify V.Putin. To continue with these speculations, Ukraine as a part of “Russia's vital interests” could be accepted, at least to some extent. Our polish colleague, M. Olchawa, sadly mentioned: “...Western Europe still viewed Ukraine, former Soviet Republic, within the context of the USSR... Ukraine was not at the top of EU's list of foreign policy objectives”⁷ and all the good intentions proclaimed by Eastern Partnership politics did not serve well, Ukraine remains somewhere forgotten and mistrusted (frankly speaking, because of many reasons, and our internal problems are not the last). At the same time, we are still here, in the buffer zone, “in between” position.

⁶ J. Sherr, *Ukraine, Russia, Europe*, National Security and Defense, Razumkov Center 2012, no. 4-5, p. 73.

⁷ M. Olchawa, *Gwiazdy i Tryzub. Europejska integracja Ukrainy*, Kraków 2013, p. 39.

“Ukraine does not vanish just because it is frustrating and boring. Having failed to triumph with the misbegotten Eastern Partnership, Europe must now work even harder to avert disaster” – E. Lucas tried to awake the West on the outbreak of 2014 crises⁸. It did not happen, unfortunately, and the Ukrainian crises started in December 2013 is another story within the same context of geopolitics. The only hope is that dramatically changed political situation and Russia's open attempt to keep Ukraine can awake the right Western understanding. It should be recognized that he crises and today's dangers are created by Russia's political aims, its military actions (starting with 2014 annexation of Crimea) and its increasingly febrile view of the world order. From the beginning of the Ukrainian crises, the West reacted primarily with economic sanctions anticipating that they would induce Russia to modify its action. In reality, sanctions do constrain capacity, but do not constrain behavior. J. Sherr believes that Western assistance is “unsystematic, uncoordinated and unevenly matches to Ukraine's need”⁹. To support Ukraine, he said, West must go beyond sanctions. The focus of this assistance should be on enhancing Ukraine's defensive capabilities and medical support equipment. Providing critical military assistance to Ukraine is necessary, as weakness only repeatedly provoked V. Putin into a dramatic escalation of the conflict. The EU also needs to make clear to Russia that it does not have a veto over Ukrainian accession to the EU and that if Ukraine meets the criteria then it will be allowed to join.

The Ukrainian crisis has also demonstrated that without real transformation inside our society – mentality, economics, democratic transition – we could not change our “geopolitical destiny”. No doubt, Ukraine needs support of the West to manage the crises, to preserve its independence and integral unity. At the same time, we should not overestimate possible Western assistance. What is more, to get it in a full volume we have to prove our European approach for both economy and civil sphere reconstruction. We have to recognize: to some extent Ukraine's previous mistakes and incompetence in the sphere of foreign policy is a victim of its own geopolitics. But nothing is given for granted, either independence nor potential. It's time (if not the last chance) to provide changes – for overcoming the “shadow of geopolitics” and being a real European state.

⁸ E. Lucas, *Ukraine scenarios and Central Europe*, 23 January 2014, at <http://www.cepolicy.org/publications/ukraine-scenarios-and-central-europe>.

⁹ J. Sherr, *To Support Ukraine, West Must Go Beyond Sanctions*, at <http://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/support-ukraine-west-must-go-beyond-sanctions>.

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Abstract

The article deals with the role and place of Ukraine in the modern geopolitical dimension in Eastern Europe from the historical point view. It is a hard discussion on possible scenarios for the Ukrainian state and the challenges it faces now, but probably it would be useful to remind some facts and trends from the past of Ukraine – to understand present situation better. Author examines security risks on the basis of location as well as historical facts.

Keywords: Russia, Ukraine, Geopolitical Choice

TOMASZ STĘPNIEWSKI

Post-Soviet Ukraine's war for independence, memory and identity

The present paper aims at a synthetic examination of the current Russia-Ukraine conflict from the point of view of Ukraine's strife for full independence, memory and identity¹. Will the war of the brotherly nations wreck Russia's long-term policy towards Ukraine? Will the conflict ruin Russia's plans of post-Soviet space reintegration whose pivot is set on Ukraine? Will the war stimulate Ukraine to deal with the issue of its identity, post-Soviet legacy and collective memory?

Russian Neo-Revisionism in international politics

Understanding the roots of the Ukrainian crisis without considering the evolution of Russia's foreign policy and its perception of international relations in the near past is difficult. According to Richard Sakwa, Russia's policy in recent years has evolved in the direction of „a 'neo-revisionist' power, setting the stage for the confrontation over Ukraine.”² Sakwa states that Russia's policy change was motivated by at least four issues: *“First, the gradual deterioration of the relationship with the EU... (...) The second key issue was the gradual breakdown of an inclusive pan-European security system in*

¹ This paper was written during the author's research training at Harvard University in June-August 2015.

² R. Sakwa, *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands*, London–New York 2015, p. 30.

*which Russia could act as an autonomous yet cooperative partner... (...). Third, Russia and a number of other 'rising powers', notably China, have challenged American claims to 'exceptionalism' and global leadership. (...) the fourth catalyst for Russian neo-revisionism. This is the ideology of 'democratism', which is distinct from the practices of democracy itself, instead assuming that if democracy is the best possible form of government and the one that is liable to make allies of the states concerned, then all practicable measures should be employed to achieve the desire end. The perception that the West was using democracy promotion as a cover to advance its strategic objectives, including regime change, aroused a host of defensive reactions in Russia.*³

According to Sakwa, neo-revisionism does not denote the attempt at complete annihilation of the existing international order but rather the emphasis on the fact that all powers will follow international rules and regulations and respect Russia's "equivalent" position in the system.⁴ On the other hand, Lilia Shevtsova states that Russia's anti-Western policy originates from several external factors. 1) the West's naivety (providing help for Boris Yeltsin was considered as input into Russia's democratisation), 2) cooperation with Russia over western values (the fact that liberal democracies are no longer a role-model for Russia is one of the woeful phenomena of the last 20 years), 3) Russia did not exploit its defeat in the Cold War in the transition into a state under the rule of law.⁵ Therefore, Carl Bildt is right in stating that in the recent years Russia has shifted from being the "strategic partner" of the West into its "strategic problem."⁶

According to some researchers, such as Hiski Haukkala⁷, Laure Delcour and Kataryna Wolczuk⁸, as a result of Russia-Ukraine conflict and Russia's support of Donetsk and Luhansk separatisms, a change in Russia's foreign policy has occurred. Other researchers, such as Igor Zevelev or Peter Rutland, are of the opinion that a 'paradigm shift' has taken place. The shift denotes the transition from the 'state driven' (i.e., driven by state interests) foreign policy (decisions) into a policy driven by 'ethno-nationalism'.⁹ However, Andrei Tsygankov is of different opinion. He

³ Ibid., pp. 31-34.

⁴ Ibid., p. 34.

⁵ L. Szewcowa, „Polem gry Kremla jest chaos”, trans. by A. Ehrlich, *Gazeta Wyborcza. Magazyn Świąteczny*, 27 June 2015, at http://wyborcza.pl/magazyn/1,145325,18248326,Polem_gry_Kremla_jest_chaos.html#TRwknD, 27 June 2015.

⁶ C. Bildt, "Russia, the European Union and the Eastern Partnership", *ECFR Riga Series*, at <http://www.ecfr.eu/wider/rigapapers>, 5 July 2015.

⁷ H. Haukkala, "From Cooperative to Contested Europe? The Conflict in Ukraine as a Culmination of a Long-Term Crisis in EU-Russia Relations", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 2015, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 25-40.

⁸ L. Delcour, K. Wolczuk, "Spoiler or Facilitator of Democratization? Russia's Role in Georgia and Ukraine", *Democratization* 2015, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 459-478.

⁹ P. Rutland, "A Paradigm Shift in Russia's Foreign Policy", *The Moscow Times*, 18 May 2014, at <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/a-paradigm-shift-in-russia-s-foreign-policy/500352.html>, 20 June 2015.

claims that “*Putin's actions demonstrate both change and continuity in Russia's foreign policy*”¹⁰.

Lilia Shevtsova is right to indicate that between Russia and the liberal West, Putin's policy boils down to the search for balance between cooperation and deterrence. Shevtsova defines the deterrence as having three dimensions: 1) preventing geopolitical influence of western countries in Eurasia (preventing NATO forces from being stationed in Eastern Europe and the Baltic countries, discontinuation of inviting the former Soviet Union states into the EU); 2) inducing the West into accepting the spheres of influence in the region; 3) blocking all influence of the West upon Russia's internal affairs¹¹.

Russia and Ukraine's collective past – a challenge for Ukraine's identity and memory

Wołodymyr Kulyk rightly states that „*historical memory may be considered as one of the social identity's elements due to the fact that it provides an answer to a significant issue of any community's self-identification i.e. the question of its origin and future, which offers an explanation of the current state of communities.*”¹² When referring to the origins of Ukrainian nationality, Kievan Rus' (Ukrainian: Київська Русь) must be mentioned. However, Kievan Rus' may be perceived as a starting point for three Eastern Slavic nations, i.e. Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. Such state of affairs leads to the rivalry of narrations among Ukrainian and Russian historian as to the Kievan Rus' legacy and, de facto, Ukrainian history¹³.

¹⁰ A. Tsygankov, “Vladimir Putin's last stand: the sources of Russia's Ukraine policy”, *Post-Soviet Affairs* 2015, vol. 31, no. 4, p. 280.

¹¹ L. Szewcowa, *op. cit.*

¹² W. Kulyk, „Narodowościowe przeciwko radzieckiemu: pamięć historyczna na niepodległej Ukrainie”, in A. Nikžentaitis, M. Kopczyński (eds.), *Dialog kultur pamięci w regionie ULB*, Warszawa 2014, p. 163.

¹³ “Ukrainian and Russian historians offer two competing narratives of ancient Ukrainian history: The Ukrainian nationalist narrative refers to Kievan Rus' as it existed before the Tatar yoke, as the exclusive ancestor of present-day Ukraine. The argument stresses that the bulk of the Kievan Rus' was in the center of present-day Ukrainian borders, with Moscow and Novgorod at its northern limits. It rejects Russian claims that Kievan Rus' was the common ancestor of the three eastern Slavic nations. It argues that the Russian nation emerged from a mix of Slavic and Finnish tribes inhabiting present-day northern areas of European Russia (Moscow included); it also claims that Ukrainians are pure Slavs, while Russians have a blood component from the Tatar invaders. The Russian narrative speaks of common origin of the three eastern Slavic nations, with the Tatar invasion propelling many Kievan principalities to join the Great Duchy of Lithuania (which later united with Poland), thus creating

Michael Rywkin made a very accurate observation on the issue of Ukraine and its complex identity. He claims that: *“Not many countries have an identity as confusing as Ukraine’s. The name comes from the Russian word ‘ukraina,’ which means periphery (as it is seen from Moscow) and appeared only near the end of the nineteenth century. During prerevolutionary times, St. Petersburg considered the three Slavic nations (Russia, Ukraine, and Belorussia) to be parts of the same nation, referring to Ukraine as ‘Malorussia,’ or Little Russia, and calling its inhabitants ‘Malorussy,’ or Little Russians, in contrast to Russians, who were officially listed as ‘Velikorussy,’ or Great Russians. Prior to the divisions of Poland in the eighteenth century, the Poles called western Ukrainians ‘Rusiny’ and spoke of Russians as ‘Moskale’ (Moscovites), and of Belorussians as ‘Ruskie’. In the West, western Ukrainians were for a long time known as ‘Ruthenians’ and the land Ruthenia”*¹⁴.

For ages, the territory of the present Ukraine has been under the influence of various political powers: beginning with Kievan Rus’, Cossacks, Kingdom of Poland and then Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth up to the influence of Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires and USSR Empire. The issue is further complicated by the fact that nation building in Ukraine has to overcome over two centuries of colonial rule as stated by Orest Subtelny¹⁵.

Individual parts of Ukraine experienced long-term rule of several countries and empires, which is reflected in the ethnicity, religion and language of the country. Wołodymyr Kulyk indicates that *„differences in historical and national memory may be viewed as the most frequently supported by members of ethnical and language and regional groups main (meta)narrations of Ukrainian history and identity embodied in various public discourses.”*¹⁶ The fact that the myth regarding Cossacks is frequently used by Ukrainian historians in order to differentiate between Ukrainians and Rus-

the split between them and those remaining under Tatar control and later unified by the great dukes of Moscow. It rejects the idea that Russians are an ethnically mixed nation, because the small Finnish tribes inhabiting Russia’s north were absorbed by the much more numerous Slavs, many of whom moved north to escape the Tatar invasion. It views Moscow as the Third Rome (Byzantium being the second) and heir of old Kievan Rus’, and the three eastern Slavic peoples as parts of a the same closely connected nation.” See: M. Rywkin, “Ukraine: Between Russia and the West”, *American Foreign Policy Interests: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy* 2014, vol. 36, no. 2, p. 125.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 119.

¹⁵ O. Subtelny, “Imperial Disintegration and Nation-State Formation: The Case of Ukraine”, in J. W. Blaney (ed.), *The Successor States to the USSR*, Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1995, pp. 184–195; also: O. Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*, 4th edition, Toronto 2009, P. R. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine. The Land and Its Peoples*, 2nd edition, Toronto 2010; G. Smith, V. Law, A. Wilson, A. Bohr and E. Allworth, *Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands. The Politics of National Identities*, Cambridge 1998, part I; T. Kuzio and P. D’Anieri (eds.), *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, Westport, CT and London 2002.

¹⁶ W. Kulyk, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

sians is noteworthy. In the view of the above claims, such differentiation would not be possible in the framework of Kievan Rus, but is feasible in the case of Cossacks. It is assumed that it was Cossacks who brought freedom to the lands constituting the present Ukraine¹⁷.

Andrij Portnow indicates that „Ukraine in its present borders, social and ethnical structure is an outcome of the Soviet policy... (...)Ukraine, a product of late 1980s and beginning of 1990s disintegration, de iure and de facto a successor of USSR, faced the problem of historical legitimisation, aggravated by the fact that there has been no change of the elites.”¹⁸ Therefore, the relations between Ukraine and Russia are extremely complex as they are built on a shared history, religion, language and culture and they should not be gauged with Western standards. “The West must understand that, to Russia, Ukraine can never be just a foreign country,” wrote former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger in a *Washington Post*.

What it means to be a Ukrainian? The former Ukrainian president, Viktor Yushchenko, stated in an election advertisement in Channel 5 (28th January 2006): „Think Ukrainian. You are a successor to Princess Olha, Volodymyr the Great and Yaroslav the Wise, who are Equal to the Apostles. History requires from you confidence and trust in Ukraine. Think Ukrainian.”¹⁹

Despite the current war in Ukraine, which accelerated the formation of Ukrainian political nation (even in the south and west of the country), divisions remain. Recently, numerous researchers have claimed there have existed not one, but two or several Ukraines²⁰ – separate from each other, exhibiting individual identity and posing a challenge for the development of a common national identity of the country. As a result of the conflict, the divisions have been neglected, but they do remain and continue to influence the frame of mind of Ukrainians from various parts of the country. Significantly, as a consequence of the annexation of Crimea and south-eastern separatisms, approximately 5 million pro-Russian (defined as pro-Russian)

¹⁷ In-depth study of Cossacks and their significance for Ukraine's identity and history in: S. Plokhyy, *The Cossack Myth. History and Nationhood in the Age of Empires*, Cambridge 2012; see also: F. Hillis, *Children of Rus'. Right-Bank Ukraine and the Invention of a Russian Nation*, Ithaca and London 2013.

¹⁸ A. Portnow, „Polityki pamięci na postsowieckiej Ukrainie (1991–2011)”, in A. Nikžentaitis, M. Kopczyński (eds.), *Dialog kultur pamięci w regionie ULB*, Warszawa 2014, p. 180; see also: A. Portnow, „Постсоветская Украина: политики памяти и поиски национального прошлого”, in A. Гиль, Т. Стемпневски (ред.), *Перед выбором. Будущее Украины в условиях системной дестабилизации*, Люблин-Львов-Киев 2013 [A. Gil, T. Stępniewski, eds., *Facing a Dilemma. The Future of Ukraine under Systemic Destabilization*, Lublin–Lviv–Kiev 2013], pp. 227–248.

¹⁹ See: T. Kuzio, “National identity and history writing in Ukraine”, *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 2006, vol. 34, no. 4, p. 407.

²⁰ See: M. Riabczuk, *Dwie Ukrainy*, Wrocław 2004; in Ukrainian: М. Рябчук, *Dvi Ukrainy*, at <http://www.ji-magazine.lviv.ua/dyskusija/arhiv/ryabchuk.htm>, 20 June 2015.

citizens were separated from Ukraine. In addition, the Donbass situation serves as a bitter example to those entertaining thoughts of separatism.

Russia intended to exploit the divisions in Ukraine for its own political objectives. In 2014, Putin started referring to these divisions and called for establishing “Novorossiya” – the region of south-eastern Ukraine inhabited by Russian speakers. While the exploitation of Russian speakers proved fruitful and allowed Crimea to be annexed, the Novorossiya project did not fare well. As a consequence, Russia scrapped the plan altogether.

Taking reference to works of such authors as Andrzej Nowak, Włodzimierz Marciniak, Adam D. Rotfeld, James Sherr, Dmitri Trenin or Alexei Miller or thoughts and works of analysts devoted to imperial Russia such as Marek Menkiszak, Kadri Liik, András Rácz and others as well as statements from Russian politicians, especially Vladimir Putin’s, from the 2013-14 period, the fact that we are dealing with the development of a certain Russian foreign and security policy, especially regarding the post-Soviet regions, may be acknowledged. A particular spiritual and civilizational community, the so-called Russian World (Russkiy Mir), constitutes a vital element of Putin’s doctrine. The doctrine establishes that regardless of their citizenship and ethnical background, a community of Russian speakers who identify with the Orthodox religion and culture and share values, forms around Russia²¹. The Russian-Ukrainian-Belarusian community constitutes the core of the Russian World. Therefore, if Ukraine is the core of the Russian World, the question of Russia-Ukraine war’s validity arises.

Ukraine in Russia’s foreign policy

Among all countries of the “near abroad”, Ukraine is the one perceived as the key post-Soviet state whose position, potential and geopolitical location are vital for the balance of power in both Eastern Europe and Europe in general.²² What motivated

²¹ M. Menkiszak, „Doktryna Putina: Tworzenie koncepcyjnych podstaw rosyjskiej dominacji na obszarze postradzieckim”, *Komentarze OSW*, no. 131, 27 March 2014, at <http://www.osw.waw.pl>, 15 June 2015.

²² Cf. З. Станкевич, Т. Степневски, А. Шабациук (eds.), *Безопасность постсоветского пространства: новые вызовы и угрозы*, Люблин-Москва 2014 [*Security of the Post-Soviet Region: New Challenges and Threats*, Z. Stankiewicz, T. Stępniewski, A. Szabaciuk (eds.), Lublin-Moscow 2014]; T. Stępniewski, *Geopolityka regionu Morza Czarnego w pozimnowojennym świecie*, Lublin-Warszawa 2011; M. Klatt, T. Stępniewski, *Normative Influence. The European Union, Eastern Europe and Russia*, Lublin-Melbourne 2012, pp. 115-136; А. Гиль, Т. Степневски (ред.), *Перед выбором. Будущее Украины в условиях системной дестабилизации*, Люб-

Russia to go to war with the brotherly nation, a war which cancels the long-term objectives of Russia's policy towards Ukraine? Would the conflict break out if the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement was signed in November 2013? All evidence indicates that if the agreement had indeed been signed, the situation would not be any different. Viktor Yanukovych and the oligarchs would still be in power and the political system would gravitate towards authoritarianism. Serhiy Bilenky indicates that owing to the Euromaidan and ensuing events, Yanukovych's corrupt government and associated oligarchs were removed from power and Ukrainians were given a prospect of essential reforms.²³

Andrei Tsygankov analysed Russia's policy towards Ukraine over the past few years from the perspective of values and interests influencing Russia's foreign policies. The table below presents the evolution of Russia's policy towards Ukraine in the period of 2004-2014.

Table 1. Russia's Policy Towards Ukraine, 2004-2014

1. FROZEN TIES 2004 –2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Warnings against NATO membership o Blocking Ukraine's MAP in NATO o Pressures to control Naftogaz o Termination of gas deliveries o Delay of sending new ambassador
2. LIMITED PARTNERSHIP 2010 – 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Lease on Russia's Black Sea Fleet until 2035 o Reduction of gas prices o Pressures to join the Customs Union o Pressures to control Naftogaz o Financial aid
3. CONFRONTATION February – August 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Non-recognition of new government in Kiev o Control and annexation of Crimea o Demands to de-centralize power o Troops on Ukraine's border o Support for protesters in the East o Retracted aid and energy discount

Source: Based on: A. Tsygankov, "Vladimir Putin's last stand: the sources of Russia's Ukraine policy", *Post-Soviet Affairs* 2015, vol. 31, no. 4, p. 287.

лин-Львов-Киев 2013 [A. Gil, T. Stępniewski, eds., *Facing a Dilemma. The Future of Ukraine under Systemic Destabilization*, Lublin-Lviv-Kiev 2013].

²³ Author participated in the lecture of the Harvard Summer School course: "Society, Culture, and Politics in Modern Ukraine" by Serhii Bilenky, Ph.D. (Department of Political Science, University of Toronto).

The fact that 2015 brought further escalation of Russia-Ukraine conflict and successive peace talks with the EU, Ukraine and Russia is noteworthy. This, however, does not change the fact that Russia's plans for Ukraine remain unchanged. The short- and medium-term goal of Russia is to destabilise the situation in southern and eastern Ukraine with a view to separating those areas from the country or to establishing "occupied territories" there. While the annexation of Crimea was easy to carry out, the east and south of Ukraine do not seem likely to readily follow the same scenario, though it is not unfeasible. Support for the integration with Russia is considerably smaller in those areas than in Crimea. Russia is using the activities of separatists to provoke Kyiv to further military action and in this way seeks to unleash a civil war in Ukraine and destabilise the country. All diplomatic effort possible should be made to prevent an armed conflict – so that the scenario from Georgia, whereby, in 2008, yielded to provocation and lost part of its territory does not repeat itself. Under the present circumstances, such a course of events is highly probable.

Conclusions: Why Ukraine is not Russia?

We are witnessing an attempt at stopping Putin's Russia neo-imperial policy. Russia's invasion of Ukraine (hybrid warfare) came several years too late.²⁴ Immediately after the dissolution of USSR, Ukraine as a newly formed state, whose statehood was only emerging, was susceptible to Russia's influence. The same was true for Ukrainians. However, the reality changed in the course of time as generational change and the growth of Ukrainian national identity took place. As a consequence, a political nation, which was non-existent at the moment of the dissolution, emerged. What is more, the emergence of the political nation was boosted by Russia's neoimperial war against Ukraine. Annexation of Crimea and destabilization of south-eastern Ukraine led to the permanent separation of Ukraine from Russia. Hostility between Ukrainians and Russians, but also between Russians and Ukrainians, has risen. Common Soviet past is becoming alien to Ukrainians. It is perceived as unwanted, limiting the freedom of action, choice and tyrannizing the country and its people. We are witnessing a gradual withdrawal of Ukraine and Ukrainians from the post-Soviet political space.²⁵ Removal of more than 500 monuments of Lenin in 2014 in Ukraine, including eastern Ukrainian towns, is the best example of the phenomenon. There-

²⁴ A. Eberhardt, "Ukraińska wojna o niepodległość", *Nowa Europa Wschodnia* 2015, no. 3-4, p. 42.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

fore, Ukrainians are seen as renouncing their Soviet legacy and the division into the Ukrainian and the Soviet worlds.

The question „Why Ukraine is not Russia and why we are witnessing the two countries' ways part?” needs to be addressed. Roman Szporluk is of the opinion that the origin of the conflict is the Ukraine's drive towards becoming a part of Europe, its willingness to be one of democratic, independent and lawful states. Russia, on the other hand, does not seek to be a part of Europe, which brings about issues with Ukraine. To paraphrase, Ukraine is not Russia because Russia does not want to be in Europe²⁶. According to Szporluk, due to the conflict, relations between Russia and Ukraine have reverted to the model present several centuries ago. Adam Eberhardt claims that we are dealing with the greatest blow to Russia's influence upon Ukraine, the influence which has been developed since the Treaty of Pereyaslav 360 years ago²⁷. On one hand, Ukraine is gravitating towards Europe. On the other hand, Russia rejects Europe and cooperation with the West by its assertive policy, contesting the post-Cold War order and strives to develop a new set of rules. The weakness and internal problems of the EU (threat of Grexit, Brexit) along with the inconsistent approach towards the eastern neighbours have had their effect on the growth of Russia's neo-imperial policy. The lack of eastern strategy encourages all geopolitical actors, including Russia, to compete with the EU (the West) for influence in this part of Europe.

In conclusion, one needs to refer to Ivan Krastev's statement: „*For us (Europeans), everything that is happening is post-Cold War. For the rest of the world it is very much post-colonialism. Turkey and Russia, for example – they were empires, but because they were peripheral empires they have imperialism and at the same time a feeling that they themselves have been colonised by the West. As a result we have a different idea of what is going on in Ukraine. We see the Ukrainians' struggle for independence. They got formal independence in 1991, but it was simply the decision of the Soviet elite who moved to gain control over the assets for themselves. People who voted were not sure what they wanted and who they were. And now they want to be truly independent and sovereign.*”²⁸

When evaluating Russia-Ukraine conflict, the fact that Russia in its foreign policy, especially towards post-Soviet states, is driven by the imperial mentality cannot be forgotten. As George Soroka indicates, how would USA react to e.g. a desire to put Russian military bases in Cuba? Would we not witness USA's reaction, an attempt

²⁶ Author participated in the lecture given by Prof. Roman Szporluk titled “Why Ukraine is not Russia,” Harvard University, 15 July 2015.

²⁷ A. Eberhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

²⁸ I. Krastev, “Speaking Tough on Russia is not Enough” (interviewer: Matthew Luxmoore), *New Eastern Europe*, 30 June 2015, at <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/interviews/1639-speaking-tough-on-russia-is-not-enough>, 30 June 2015.

at stopping or preventing the desire turning into facts?²⁹ Such Russian decision makers' frame of mind seems to be acknowledged by Andrej Krickovic who claims that Russia "only respects powers such as USA, China and Germany. People do not understand that. The Kremlin is constantly speaking about independence but never respects it. However, Russia's independence does not take small nations into consideration. America ought not to interfere in Russia's or China's affairs. Small states, however, present prospective spoils."³⁰

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²⁹ Author participated in the lecture of the Harvard Summer School course: "Introduction to Comparative Politics" by George Soroka, Ph.D. (Lecturer on Government and Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies, Harvard University).

³⁰ K. Wężyk, "Niedźwiedziowi wolno więcej" (rozmowa z Andrej Krickovic), 18 July 2015, at <http://wyborcza.pl/magazyn/1,146875,18384515,niedzwiedziowi-wolno-wiecej.html>, 18 July 2015.

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Abstract

The relations between Ukraine and Russia are extremely complex as they are built on a shared history, religion, language and culture and they should not be gauged with Western standards. Evaluating the current situation from a broader perspective, the fact that Ukraine plays a significant role in Russia's foreign policy needs to be emphasised. Ukraine is considered the key post-Soviet state, a significant "near abroad" country whose position, potential and geopolitical location are vital for the balance of power in both Eastern Europe and Europe in general. The present paper aims at a synthetic examination of the current Russia-Ukraine conflict from the point of view of Ukraine's strife for full independence, memory and identity.

Keywords: Russia-Ukraine war, Ukraine's security, Ukraine's identity, Russian Neo-Revisionism

MYKOLA DOROSHKO

“Frozen” Conflicts on the Territories of Countries Participating in “Eastern Partnership” As a Toll of Russian Influence in the Region

More than twenty years ago, on the wave of the the collapse of the Soviet Union which was accompanied by the activation of national liberation movements of peoples oppressed by the Communist empire with hidden and sometimes overt military support of the Russian Federation (RF), the self-proclaimed Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetian and Transnistrian Moldavian republics have appeared. Neither of them has become a full subject of international law, and yet their existence became a threat to national security and barrier to an independent pro-European foreign policy Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova.

In 2014, during Euromaidan and the Revolution of dignity in Ukraine, taking advantage of the overthrowing of Yanukovych regime by Ukrainian people, the government of the Russian Federation annexed the Crimean Peninsula and began military aggression in eastern Ukraine, seeking by these actions an opportunity to prevent the implementation of the new Ukrainian government's European integration course. Now, just like a quarter of a century ago, the Kremlin tried to implement the scenario of annexation of the territory of independent state with one goal - to prevent the Europeanization of Ukraine, its exit from the geopolitical, and then - civilizational influence of Russian Federation. In this connection, the question of clarifying the root causes of Russia's aggressive behavior in the former Soviet Union arises. Having found the reasons, we can find an adequate response to aggressive actions of neo-imperial Russia on the post-Soviet space.

Historical and political preconditions of «frozen» conflicts in member states of the «Eastern Partnership» have been described in detail by Ukrainian¹ and foreign researchers². However, they are not fully able to clarify the causes of separatism in NIS countries and the role of Russia in the escalation. Because reasons of origin of most ethnic and political conflicts on the post-Soviet space, in our opinion, are not to be found on the plane of ethnic hatred of neighboring nations, but in the process of forming state territories of the former Soviet republics by the Bolshevik totalitarian regime, which was based on the “divide and conquer” principle.

Caring about inviolability of the Union under any historical events and disasters, the communist regime in the Kremlin divided ethnic groups, consolidated in the past, between several national and state formations. The same happened with Armenians. They, having a majority in the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, found themselves, because of national territorial demarcation in 1920s, in Azerbaijan SSR. Where it was not possible to apply this principle, the imperial laws of population assimilation were used, initially in the Russian Empire and later in the Soviet Union they gained the form of mixing people of different ethnic groups in national republics with an emphasis on creating a majority of Russian or Russian-speaking population and a population without a clear identity (this circumstance played a crucial role in the separation of the Transnistrian region of Moldova, as well as were used to implement the Kremlin's project of «Novorossia» in southeastern Ukraine).

The aim of Bolshevik policy of assimilation was to neutralize reluctant creation by Russian Bolsheviks quasi-state structures in the form of Soviet Socialist Republics with mandatory release of the titular nation, but eventually led (which could not have been foreseen by communist leaders) to the fact that the Communist Party's elite of the Union republics became aware that their corporate interests that were not entirely matched with the priorities of the Kremlin. Only a totalitarian political regime was able to keep in obedience the population of the borderlands of the former Russian Empire.

Once its foundations started to shake, for example, the constitutional norms of the «Communist Party as the core of the political system» were removed from the Basic Law of the USSR in 1990, the Soviet Kremlin could not act contrary to the logic

¹ Г.М. Перепелиця, *Конфлікти в посткомуністичній Європі*, Київ, 2003, р. 432; Г.В. Шелест, “Російсько-грузинський конфлікт і його наслідки для енергетики та безпеки в Чорноморсько-Каспійському регіоні”, *Central Asia and the Caucasus, Journal of Social and Political Studies* 2009, no. 4-5, pp. 58-59.

² E. Herzog, *The new Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*, London 1999, p. 166; D. Lynch, *Russian peacekeeping strategies in the CIS: The cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan* London 2000, p. 265; А.Г. Здравомыслов, *Межнациональные конфликты в постсоветском пространстве*, Москва, 1999, р. 286; С. Панарин, “Конфликты в Закавказье: позиции сторон, перспективы урегулирования, возможный вклад России”, *Вестник Евразии = Acta Eurasica* 1999, no 1/2, pp. 113-126.

of history that has put on agenda the question of elimination of the remnants of the global colonial system, to maintain in force the «voluntarily» established Union of national republics. All that it was able to keep in its orbit, that is within the Russian sphere of influence, is now a self-proclaimed «state» like Transnistrian Moldavian Republic, Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR) and other separatist entities not recognized by the international community.

Because history does not give examples of eternal empires, the communist Soviet Union has also collapsed, but its disintegration was accompanied not only by the proclamation of new independent states and their international recognition, but also with the preservation of quasi-separatist entities for a long period, with the support of which a new phase of “gathering genuine Russian lands”, which was in future to be the third option of existence for the Russian Empire, began. At the same time, the authorities of the Russian Federation completely ignored the experience of the builders of the USSR and against the main trend of the world in the twentieth century, cherished the plans to build a new empire.

The main reason for such course of action was unwillingness and inability of its leadership to live in a world in which there is no division between «historical» and «non-historical» nations, the subjects and objects of international relations, etc. Once in a cohort of secondary actors in international politics in early 1990s, Russian political elite sought revenge. The current president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, a Soviet KGB alumnus, was the personification of such political elite. With his leadership, Russia not only strengthened its impact (military, political, economic, informational) in the self-proclaimed «states» on the post-Soviet space, but also resorted to undermining of global rules enshrined in the UN Charter, the Helsinki Act and other international documents by starting war in Georgia in 2008 and completing the annexation of Ukrainian Crimea in 2014 and armed aggression in eastern Ukraine.

Putting misinformation into the global information space that it was only thanks to the Russian Bolsheviks that such countries as Ukraine, Moldova, Kazakhstan, etc. appeared on the political map of the world, the Kremlin deliberately ignores the state-millennial traditions of the peoples of the former Soviet Union, taking advantage of the banal ignorance of history of peoples of ordinary citizens of «civilized» countries and Russian and «Russian-speaking» population of the newly independent states. The purpose of these insinuations is implementing the project to recreate the Russian empire. For this purpose the Kremlin willingly uses «fifth column» - Russian or Russified locals in former Soviet republics - the potential achieved by assimilation policy of the Russian and Soviet empires. If the number of Russians and «Russian-speaking» population is not enough to fuel separatist sentiment in the country that seeks to get away from the sphere of Russian influence, then the impact tool of the Institute of Russian citizenship is at work, which is available to all who are against their historical homeland, as it happened in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region of Geor-

gia, Moldavian Transnistria and Ukrainian Crimea. Then indigenous ethnic group is forcibly displaced from their historical homeland, and the Kremlin propaganda machine convinces Russian population that so-called «Novorossia»³, the northern part of Kazakhstan and other regions never were a part of Ukraine and Kazakhstan respectively, and should be returned to Russia⁴.

If the above arguments fail, Russia uses the last resort – a military intervention. Thus, Transnistria was taken from Moldova as a result of direct involvement on the side of Tiraspol separatist of military of the 14th Army General O. Lebed of the Russian Federation, who during the acute phase of the conflict in June 1992, said to the Moldovan authorities: “If you do not stop, I will have breakfast in Transnistria, dine in Chisinau and supper in Bucharest”⁵. With the direct intervention of Russian military units deployed in Georgia, the latter lost control of its former autonomies of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 1992-93.

To destabilize the situation in Ukraine Russian authorities resorted to the use of tools proven by Stalin’s regime during occupation of Central and Eastern Europe after the Second World War. The technology, currently called “hybrid” War, was also used by Russia in order to occupy the Ukrainian Donbas and actually copies the actions of the USSR in Central and Eastern Europe in the second half of the 1940s. The well-known Western researcher of Soviet totalitarianism Ann Applebaum emphasizes this aspect: “I was a very strange feeling .. when I watched the occupation of eastern Ukraine. I saw how it was, they also sent advance units ... of Russian secret service officers in various places. They handed out weapons there, trying to recruit or convert criminals or other groups of dissatisfied to their cause, they immediately engaged in the construction of so-called state ideology, and it was almost the same as done by NKVD in Poland in 1945”⁶. This similarity is not surprising to Applebaum, because “it is not so much about the historical parallels as of historical continuity, continuity between the Soviet and current Russian special services” - the researcher sums up⁷.

The fact that for Western researchers is a discovery, for Ukrainian historians, who professionally explore the specificity of “establishment” of Soviet power in Ukraine

³ Historical science defines the term “Novorossia” as the former territory of the northern Black Sea region, which included the lands of the former Zaporozhian Host and the Crimean Khanate. In the eighteenth century, the Russian Empire included them in its membership. Meanwhile, the Kremlin today and separatists in the Donbas call south-eastern regions of Ukraine as «Novorossia».

⁴ *Про технологію «підпалу» конфліктів*, День, 13 січня 2015, р. 8.

⁵ «Восточная Украина и северный Казахстан – следующие мишени Путина?», «The New Republic», 11 March 2014, at <http://inosmi.ru/world/20140311/218432356.html>, 12 January 2015.

⁶ «Кремль використовує на Донбасі ті ж методи, що у Східній Європі 70 років тому – Appelbom», Radio Svoboda, 16 January 2015, at <http://www.radiosvoboda.org/content/article/26797079.html>, 16 January 2015.

⁷ Ibid.

and other former Soviet republics in the 1917-21, Russian occupation of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and part of Ukrainian Donbas are too reminiscent of similar actions of the Russian Bolsheviks in the above specified period. Unable to capture Ukraine and other national outskirts of the former Russian Empire with the support of the general population, the Russian Bolsheviks inspired local Communists uprising, sanctified by illegitimate decisions of “popular” government authorities, and sent detachments of the Red Army in order to help “rebels”, after which puppet “national” governments arrived, formed by communist Kremlin. In this way Soviet Russia liquidated independent statehood which appeared in the crucible of World War II Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, etc. This historical overview gives us reason to believe that the nature and essence of Russian imperialism remained unchanged. Just like almost 100 years ago, the war of Russia against Ukraine, according to Ukrainian conflictologist H. Perepelytsia, “held in the form of military occupation (Crimea. - Ed.), and then ... it was the task of implementing actual military intervention on the Donbas territory”⁸.

Of course, Russia does not reenact everything that relates to tactics of spreading its influence. For example, a purely Russian invention of post-bipolar era history has become the practice of peacekeeping service by the actual initiator and participant in the conflict, under the guise of putting peacekeepers into the conflict zone. The presence of peacekeeping forces of Russia in conflict areas only contributed to the “freeze” for an indefinite period situation in Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, former Georgian autonomies of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

In the arsenal of Russian influence in the area of “frozen” conflicts there is a practice of imposing diplomatic mediation services by Kremlin. The “experience” of Russian mediation in the “5 + 2” in Transnistria or Russian joint chairmanship in the Minsk Group to resolve the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, resulting in an imitation of active steps or deliberate slowing down the negotiation process that has brought negotiations to a standstill, convinces us of real intentions of the Kremlin. Moreover, they consist in maintaining its influence and preventing nations of the former Soviet republics from accession to the European community. Successful pro-European Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia are a mortal threat not only for sole power of Putin in Russia, but also for its colleagues from the “club of authoritarian leaders”: Lukashenko in Belarus, Nazarbayev in Kazakhstan, Karimov in Uzbekistan, etc. After all, they preserve political and economic backwardness of their countries and delay for an indefinite period the liquidation vestiges of Soviet totalitarianism. Rejecting this inheritance, as experience has shown in Poland, Czech Republic, Baltic countries, is the key to economic prosperity, democracy and creation common European security space.

⁸ “Час вимагає визначеності”, *День*, 15 January 2015, p. 4.

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Abstract

The article analyzes the causes of ethno-political conflicts in post-Soviet countries, participating in “Eastern Partnership”. Using the method of historical analogies, the author concludes that the conflicts were inspired by the leadership of former Soviet Union to preserve the Union State. The authorities of Russian Federation, as successors to the USSR, are extremely interested in freezing them and escalating new ones, like the conflict in eastern Ukraine. The Kremlin uses “frozen” and new conflicts as building tools for a new empire.

Keywords: “frozen” conflicts, post-Soviet space, the Bolshevik regime, totalitarianism, war, occupation, aggression, Empire, European integration, “Eastern Partnership”

ROMAN KRYVONOS

Changes in the European System of International Relations due to the “Ukrainian Crises” of 2014-15

After the shooting of Ukrainian citizens on Euromaidan on February 20, 2014, organized by the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB), the appearance of «little green men» in the Crimea and the Autonomy's government agencies seizure on February 27, Ukraine, unexpectedly not only for the new “aftermaidan” leadership, but for the majority of its fellow citizens, fell into the core of European international political crisis, which threatened a chain reaction and escalation into a new armed confrontation between the West and Russia. According to some researchers and politicians¹, the crisis may become aggravated and can involve the world in a third world war (though such development was already discussed earlier, immediately after the election of Vladimir Putin for the third presidential term

¹ Воронов В. “Славянское братство по оружию. И деньгам”, *Совершенно секретно*, no. 3/298, 25 February 2014, at <http://sovsekretno.ru/articles/id/4047/>; Душенов, К. *Путин готовит Россию к Третьей мировой войне*, at <http://rusprav.tv/i-konstantin-dushenov-i-br-putin-gotovit-rossiyu-k-tretej-mirovoj-vojne-16667/>; Кравчук Л. “Мне 80 лет, но я возьму оружие и буду защищать свою землю”, *Snob.ru*, at <http://snob.ru/profile/28139/blog/72834/>; Левыкин, Ю. “Россию готовят к большой войне”, *Utro.ru*, at <http://www.utro.ru/articles/2014/08/12/1207938.shtml>; La Rouché L. *Obama Could Ttrigger World War III*, at <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/03/15/354762/obama-could-trigger-world-war-iii/>; Tayler J. Putin's Nuclear Option. Would Russia's President Really be Willing to Start World War III?, *Foreign Policy*, 4 September 2014, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/09/04/putins-nuclear-option/>; “О возможности возникновения мировой войны и некоторых особенностях ее ведения”, at http://vpk.name/news/52351_o_vozmozhnosti_vozniknoveniya_mirovoi_voinyi_i_nekotoryih_osobenostyah_ee_vedeniya.html.

in 2012²). The further existence of the Ukrainian state as a subject of international relations, the Ukrainian statehood and the survival of the Ukrainian people as state-building and “historic” people, in the words of Hegel’s “Philosophy of History”³ depend on the results of a hybrid war waged by Russia in the Eastern Ukraine today.

Since many researchers consider the “Ukrainian crisis” to be a typical mediation war (proxy war) in the relations of the Russian Federation with the West⁴, it is clear that the conflict is systemic. Hence, an urgent task arises to find out the systemic aspects of the Ukrainian-Russian confrontation as a part of all-European changes taking place today in front of our eyes.

Aim of the research

The research investigates the current crisis of the European system of international relations in order to forecast its further development. The study aim places on the agenda the solution of several problems:

- 1) to analyze the characteristics of the contemporary European system of international relations and single out the features distinguishing it from the bipolar and post-bipolar systems;
- 2) to find out the features of Putin’s foreign policy and predict the further steps of Russia, as the Russian Federation is just a state that seeks to turn to its advantage the international order existing in the modern system;
- 3) to formulate recommendations for the Ukrainian authorities as to the repulsion of the unannounced Russian aggression and the strengthening of Ukraine’s positions in the international system.

² А. Морозов, “Третий срок Путина и третья мировая война”, *Forbes.ru*, 10 September 2012, at <http://www.forbes.ru/sobytiya-column/vlast/119981-tretii-srok-i-tretya-mirovaya-voyna>; М. Шмаков, А.Исаев “Три запроса России к Путину”, *Московские новости*, 4 September 2014, at <http://www.mn.ru/politics/20120904/326400238.html>.

³ For detail see: Г.В.Ф. Гегель, *Лекции по философии истории*, Санкт-Петербург 2000, pp. 70-71.

⁴ J. S. Belcher, *Aftermath: Rebuilding Global Security After a Century of Warfare*, Franklin, TN 2014, p. 140; A. Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis: What It Means for the West*, Yale 2014, p. 5; М. Роиц, *Путин живет в другом мире? Попытка разобраться в российской (внешней) политике*, Киев 2015, p. 8.

European system of international relations nowadays

Let's start with the features of the modern European system of international relations. As it is known, any system is a combination of elements and relationships between those⁵. The European system of international relations should be understood as the international political region in the interpretation of the American political scientist of Austrian origin K. Deutsch, i.e. as a group of countries that "for many obvious options are more dependent on each other than on other countries"⁶. In the context of the European system this group is composed of countries geographically located in Europe plus the United States and Russian Federation (partially located in Europe) that exercise a determinative influence on political processes and structuring of relations between states in the region. In this connection it would be more convenient to talk about the system of relations between the countries included into the Euro-Atlantic space, to which Canada should also be analytically attached, as it is closely associated with the USA in the fields of economy and security.

The European system is a subsystem of the global system of international relations and its development is considerably determined by events at the global level. The current state of the system results from the return of the former Soviet republics and the countries of the Soviet sphere of influence into the world economy and on the global market and their transformation into the systemic autonomous actors of international relations. Which new features did the European system gain in the 21st century?

Obviously, we are dealing with a transitional international system. Over the previous half a century Europe experienced a number of systemic changes, which can be divided into three phases. The first was the period of the bipolar system in international relations from the World War II end up to the global changes of the late 1980s - early 1990s. During the second period including the 1990s and the early 21st century up to the global economic crisis in 2008, the post-bipolar system was established. Finally, the global economic crisis gave a start to the modern international system formation, important events of which, in our opinion, were so-called "color revolutions" in the former Soviet countries (some of them took place in the early 2000s, like "Rose Revolution" in Georgia or "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine), "Arab Spring" in the global context and undeclared Russian military intervention into Ukraine in 2014-15. This aggression has turned Russia into a country seeking to change the modern European international system in its favor.

⁵ М.З. Мальський, М.М. Мацях, *Теорія міжнародних відносин*, Київ 2003, р. 80.

⁶ K. W. Deutsch, "On Nationalism, World Regions and the Nature of the West", in: *Mobilization, Center - Periphery Structures and Nation-Building. A Volume in Commemoration of Stein Rokkan*, ed. by P. Torsvik, Bergen-Oslo-Tromsø 1981, pp. 145-146.

Describing the configuration of the new international system, we should obviously pay attention to its unipolarity. After the Soviet Union's collapse and the liquidation of international sphere of its influence in the Euro-Atlantic area, one superpower remains able to feel quite autonomous from systemic influences. This is the United States. The country came out of the "Cold War" as the only superpower winner. At the global level the USA militarily, economically, culturally, technologically and, to a considerable extent, ideologically exerts the defining influences on the international relations. The US significantly determines the system of international relations in the Euro-Atlantic area. Despite the events of September 11, 2001, it keeps its invulnerability to territorial threats from other states and relative self-sufficiency in providing strategic resources⁷.

It is clear that the leading role of the US in the European area arouses objections from a number of states with different interests. They aim to weaken the United States influence within the European system and / or build a system of checks and balances against the American influence. Among them there are the Russian Federation and EU leading continental states, namely, France and, to a far lesser degree, Germany.

In this context Russia's actions in the international arena can be characterized as some kind of revanchism or striving to question the very principles of the international system emerged after the USSR collapse. In the words of Henry Kissinger, today's Russia is an "offended party", which "seeks to overthrow the international order"⁸. However, it does not want to draw Europe into a new large-scale war. It lacks resources for this. For Russia it is important to restore its dominant position in a new situation, even in a reduced space version. Russian policy aims to renew the bipolar system in Europe with its division into Euro-Atlantic space and Euro-Asian space. The latter shall embrace the post-Soviet countries, and the border of the Russian sphere of influence, which after the Cold War has shifted from the Elbe on to the Bug river, must obtain the international political and international legal recognition.

To ensure this sub-regional leadership at the global level, Russia strives to establish multipolarity instead of unipolarity. It is supported by the efforts of other "offended" countries, first of all of China, and uses the model of the European states concert of the first half of the 19th century.

Between Russia and the United States there is a space of small and medium-size European states differing in their power potential and, therefore, in their status in the international system. This space obviously can be described as two-centered, with France and Germany being its centers, which nevertheless successfully cooperate within the framework of the European Union.

⁷ А. А. Субботін, "Структура міжнародних відносин в умовах пост біполярності", in *Україна в постбіполярній системі міжнародних відносин*, Київ 2008, р. 13.

⁸ Г. Киссинджер, *Дипломатия*, пер. с англ. В. В. Львова, послесл. Г. А. Арбатова, Москва 1997, р. 13.

During the 2000s the global system of international relations and its European subsystem have acquired new features under the influence of global social processes, each of which had a political dimension. They include globalization and global society formation, digitalization and expanding the influence of electronic technologies and communications; erosion and limitation of state sovereignty and reduction of states autonomy in the international system; multilateralism and international cooperation development; institutional regulation strengthening; and new global challenges, which or, more precisely, awareness of which humanity has faced never before.

Therefore, such development can be thought of as the beginning of a new, so to say, «after-post-bipolar» system of international relations in the Europe of the 21st century, where Russia is a state questioning the international order, but not being able to act like similar states in previous times, because its capabilities are limited by new international political processes induced by the scientific and technical and, consequently, economic advance of mankind.

Russian policy: the empire restoration, post-Soviet space “reintegration” and superpower status recovery

It is necessary to dwell upon the peculiarities of Russia's foreign policy. The emphasis should be placed on the different formulation of national interests in the Russian Federation and in western powers. Western countries define their interests in a postmodern way as ensuring the safety and welfare of their citizens⁹. Russia defines its interests in a manner characteristic for the 19th century. The restoration of the empire, territorial extension, “reintegration” of the post-Soviet space and recovery of the superpower status (based on the examples of the Russian empire development in the 18th - 19th centuries and of the Soviet Union during Stalin's rule) are increasingly becoming its purposes.

Russia seeks to strengthen its positions and raise its systemic status at both global and regional levels. In such situation the post-Soviet states Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova attempting to integrate into the western regional associations and military alliances will inevitably become some «bargaining chips» in the Russia's global opposition to the US, which has considerably inertial character and expresses the pursuit

⁹ H. Arnold, *Deutschlands Größe*, München 1995, p. 35; H. Arnold, *Europa neu denken: Warum und wie weiter*, Bonn 1999, p. 48; A. Baring, *Deutschland, was nun?*, Berlin 1991, p. 84; A. Baring, *Scheitert Deutschland? Abschied von unseren Wunschwelten*, Stuttgart 1997, p. 25; W. V. Bredow, T. Jäger, *Neue deutsche Außenpolitik: nationale Interessen in internationalen Beziehungen*, Opladen 1993, p. 58.

of revenge for the defeat in the «Cold War». However, Russian scholars and politicians, including Putin, recognize that the country does not have sufficient potential to implement such global ambitions, so this confrontation is most probably the Russians' game to save their prestige. As it is known, such policy of maintaining prestige in the international community by diplomatic and military means, especially with an aim to make other nations and peoples dependent, was considered as «imperialistic» by H. Morgenthau¹⁰. He stated that it did not promote national interests and destabilized an international system¹¹.

On the other hand, at the regional level Russians want to regain control over the post-Soviet space regarding it as a legitimate sphere of their vital interests. Understanding of such Russia's position was repeatedly expressed by the US and its NATO allies.

Therefore, the prevention of further enlargement of NATO and the EU at the expense of the post-Soviet region has become the main goal of Russia. And here the Russian authorities met the understanding of the West. Let us remember, for instance, the 20th summit of NATO in Bucharest on April 2-4, 2008¹², when the *NATO Membership Action Plan* (MAP)¹³ was not given to Georgia and Ukraine because of the opposition of France and Germany. It is also worth mentioning the regular statements of the EU authorities and some European Union countries about the lack of preparation of Ukraine and other post-Soviet states, except the Baltic States incorporated in 2004, to the European Union membership. Moreover, the implementation of the *EU-Ukraine Association Agreement*¹⁴ was delayed on September 12, 2014 for 15 months up to 2016 under Russia's pressure.

Putin's leadership of Russia, for its part, with the connivance of western countries gradually evolved from the exertion of predominantly economic, information, cultural and ideological pressure on the post-Soviet countries, the EU and NATO up to launching the undeclared armed intervention into Ukraine. As a result, in an editorial article on the murder of Russian opposition politician Boris Nemtsov the influential American edition of *The Wall Street Journal* without any extra reservations called Putin's Russia «gangster state»¹⁵.

¹⁰ H. J. Morgenthau, *Politics among nations: the struggle for power and peace*, rev. by K. W. Thompson, Boston 2006, p. 186.

¹¹ In detail see also: М.З. Мальський, М.М. Мацях, *op. cit.*, p. 290-291.

¹² «Bucharest Summit Declaration. Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008», at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm.

¹³ *Membership Action Plan* (MAP), Press Release NAC-S(99)66, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-066e.htm>.

¹⁴ *Угода про асоціацію між Україною та Європейським Союзом*, at http://www.kmu.gov.ua/kmu/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=246581344.

¹⁵ The Murder of Boris Nemtsov. Another Putin Opponent is Killed by Unknown Assassilants, *The Wall Street Journal*, 27 February 2015, at <http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-murder-of-boris-nemtsov-1425080733>.

Putin's methods: between O. von Bismarck and A.Hitler

The main source of Putin's conceptual approaches to the reintegration of post-Soviet republics lies in the Soviet political experience. However, as Putin's career in KGB was linked to the German Democratic Republic, it's possible to argue that as a person long enough engaged in analytics in the German subject area, he looks at the phenomena of international politics subconsciously and perhaps partly consciously through a kind of "German glasses" and uses the historical precedents from German history and politics in his political designing.

Some approaches to the Russian contemporary foreign policy could be regarded as creative synthesis attempts based on the mentioned ideas. In particular, such synthesized concepts include the ideas of dividing the world into spheres of great powers' influence and necessary singling out the proper "zone of vital interests" for the Russian Federation. This model was tested by the "Big Three" leaders during the World War II¹⁶.

From Bolshevik and Leninist-Stalinist approaches Putin has borrowed the use of military bases in the territories of other states for the control over their political development (let's remember the withdrawal and introduction of Soviet troops to Budapest in 1956, their movement during martial law in Poland in 1981-83 and other less obvious moments). The seizure of governmental institutions in the Crimea by Russian military personnel stationed at military bases reminds of the Soviet experience of the Baltic States annexation in 1940. Proclamation of the Donbass and Lugansk "people's republics" is a classic Bolshevik method that has been used since the early days of Soviet power in the Bolshevik Russia. Mention may be made, for instance, of the establishment of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic with the People's Secretariat in 1917 in contrast with the Ukrainian People's Republic and its government – the State Secretariat, or the activities of the puppet Finnish Democratic Republic and its «People's Government» headed by Kuusinen during a military conflict between the Soviet Union and Finland called the Winter War of 1939-40¹⁷.

Implementing his policy of the post-Soviet space reintegration, Putin deliberately relies on two approaches of the most famous persons who (at least for certain periods) quite successfully managed to implement the idea of German unification in one state. They were Otto von Bismarck and Adolf Hitler.

From von Bismarck's approach Putin borrowed not only the famous "The great questions of the time will not be resolved by speeches and majority decisions... but

¹⁶ A. Resis, "The Churchill-Stalin Secret 'Percentages' Agreement on the Balkans, Moscow, October 1944", *American Historical Review* 1978, no. 83, p. 368-387.

¹⁷ М. И. Мельтюхов, "Народный фронт для Финляндии? (К вопросу о целях советского руководства в войне с Финляндией 1939—1940 гг.)", *Отечественная история* 1993, no. 3.

by iron and blood”¹⁸ [citation according to: 31, p. 331], but also an idea of extracting territory from neighboring states having regions inhabited by ethnic Russians or Russian-speaking population and their conversion into quasi-independent “states” with the further joining to Russia in seemingly legitimate way. Bismarck did such things coordinating them with local monarchs and Landtags, which was very progressive for the 19th century. And Putin does such actions through referenda which are the instrument of the 21st century. In this regard the wars with Georgia in 2008 and with Ukraine in 2014-15 resemble the German-Danish War of 1864 for Schleswig and Holstein.

But it is well known that for von Bismarck the main problem in such a political construction was ensuring a friendly neutrality of other major powers, which later resulted in “nightmare of coalitions”. His successors who, in the words of the next chancellor von Caprivi, were “able to juggle only two glass balls simultaneously”¹⁹, while von Bismarck could juggle five, more relied on the military force than diplomacy. As a result, Germany has lost two world wars, triggering by its policy the unity of other great powers in their efforts to prevent its hegemony in Europe.

Putin’s problem is that setting before himself the goals similar to von Bismarck’s, in the methods of their achievement he consciously copies the other German chancellor and “Führer of the German nation” – Adolf Hitler. Hence the desire to put other great powers before accomplished facts (as it was in the cases of the Crimea or Abkhazia and South Ossetia). This leads to narcissism and constant inclination to the escalation of conflict relations with other states. For instance, the annexation of the Crimea somehow reminds of bringing the Reichswehr military units to the Rhineland in 1936, when according to witnesses and participants’ statements there was a desire to act with «bloodless methods» at the first stage. The conflict in the Donbas is heated up by undeclared armed intervention (a reminiscent of the Axis Powers’ participation in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39). Russian demands to Ukraine at the talks in Minsk in September 2014 and February 2015 (so-called «Putin’s plans») remind of the Nazi Germany claims to Czechoslovakia in Munich in October 1938, just as an attempt to detach the southern regions from Ukraine should turn it into a kind of «the remainder of Czechoslovakia» («Rest-Tschechei» or as it is more often called by historians the «Second» or «after-Munich Czechoslovak Republic») of the 21st century.

However, it is well known what practical joke the Hitler’s inability to limit his interests in proper time (in contrast to Bismarck who deterred the king and military troops from the idea to go to Vienna after the Battle of Sadova/Königrätz in 1866)

¹⁸ Citation according to: *Deutsche Militärgeschichte: Grundkurs*, in 3 Bd. Hrsg. von K.-V. Neugebauer, Bd.1: Die Zeit bis 1914, München 2006, p. 331.

¹⁹ Citation according to: E. Frie, *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich*, Darmstadt 2004, p. 57.

played on him. He destroyed himself and his own state. It is interesting whether the Russian leader who repeatedly and publicly expressed admiration of notorious Nazi leaders would deduce something from such facts. For instance, at a meeting with representatives of international non-governmental and religious organizations, including Hasidic rabbis from Israel, he tactless characterized the Nazi party ideologue and organizer of its propaganda machine Joseph Goebbels as «a talented person»²⁰.

Ukraine's strategy

What can Ukraine do in a situation of undeclared aggression from the Russian Federation? How can it counteract new threats and which answers can it give to the new challenges?

In our view, the key issue for Ukraine is the fact that the Ukrainians by their mentality belong to the circle of nations that Huntington described as the Orthodox civilization including the Greeks, Russians and population of other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, majority of which practice Orthodox Christianity²¹.

At the same time, Ukrainian national interests, including the very existence of the Ukrainian state, require the most distinct separation from the powerful northern neighbour – the Russian Federation, because based on linguistic, cultural and religious affinity a significant part of Russian society denies Ukrainians the right to an independent state existence. This is not just a Ukrainian problem. Turks and Arabs deny Kurds the right to statehood based on the analogous principles. History has shown even more similar situations, for instance, it is possible to recall the struggle of the Bulgarians, Irish, Norwegians, Slovaks, Croats and many others for the restoration of the statehood.

As the Russian Federation seeks to reintegrate the post-Soviet space under its leadership, the joining to the Western integration associations and military alliances can be the only reliable measure to prevent reintegration.

History shows that the formations of states with different civilization basis are able to easily create various alliances and coalitions, if they have common interests. Let's remember at least the anti-Hitler coalition in the World War II or the example from the 17th century, when Richelieu was a cardinal of the Roman Church in France

²⁰ “Встреча с представителями международных общественных и религиозных организаций, Москва, Кремль, 9 июля 2014 года”, at <http://www.kremlin.ru/news/46180>.

²¹ С. Хантингтон, *Столкновение цивилизаций*, пер. с англ. Т.Велимеева, Ю. Новикова. Москва 2003, p. 56.

professing Catholicism, which did not prevent him from being actively involved into the Thirty Years' War (1618-48) on the Protestant side based on the «national interest» («raison d'état»). Those events could be described in Huntington's terminology as a clash of two western civilization versions, namely, of northern Protestant and southern European Catholic types.

Tactical solutions for the Ukrainian leadership

We can distinguish four groups of practical measures, which the Ukrainian leadership must resort to in the conditions of undeclared Russian aggression.

The first task is to strengthen the defense of the country, build its military forces and ensure their material security.

The second aspect is the provision of a diplomatic support in the confrontation with Russia. It should be achieved, firstly, by the increase of Western pressure on Russia and pro-Russian forces in Ukraine, including Donetsk and Lugansk regions, as well as the Crimea (not a rescission of personal sanctions against persons guilty of mass violations of human rights in Ukraine during the rule of Viktor Yanukovych, as well as Russian leaders who committed aggression against Ukraine, but expanding the list of such persons; strengthening the economic sanctions against the Russian Federation, in particular, expanding the list of business entities and individual businessmen who are exposed to such penalties, disconnection of Russia from the international payment system SWIFT etc.).

Secondly, it is necessary to expand the Western support to Ukraine (to provide the IMF loans in a full declared amount up to \$40 billion during the next five years²²; to write off (at least partially) previous debts; to provide a bilateral economic assistance from the West countries etc., with such measures being aimed at the maintenance of Ukrainian military forces by the West in terms of providing the most advanced lethal arms and material resources, quality combat clothing etc.).

The third plane is to build multilateral and bilateral cooperation with the EU and NATO states. It is necessary to immediately make the applications to join the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (especially because the application does not mean the automatic membership, but the submission itself will become an active tool of diplomatic pressure on Russia).

²² Яресько: перший транш кредиту від МВФ може становити \$5 млрд., УНІАН, 11 March 2015, at <http://economics.unian.ua/finance/1054114-yaresko-pershiy-transh-kreditu-vid-mvf-mo-je-stanoviti-5-mlrd.html>.

The unnecessary talking and non-constructive carping should be stopped and the international cooperation should be persistently and consistently developed in the formats that the mentioned organizations as well as the NATO, the EU, the Council of Europe, the Visegrad Group and others offer to Ukraine. Finally, it is necessary to intensify the bilateral cooperation, especially in the military sphere and especially with the USA, Great Britain, France, Germany, Sweden, but also with other Western countries, for instance, with Canada – home to powerful and influential Ukrainian diaspora.

The fourth direction is patriotic education and further Ukrainization of the Ukrainian society. The invasion planned in Russian political and military circles is selectively targeting the most Russified regions of Ukraine, first of all, the Crimea, where the ethnic Russian population really exceeds 58 %²³, and the Donbass, where, according to many years of sociological observations, the population's value characteristics and orientations are very different from other part of Ukraine²⁴. The Russians did not even try to attack the Chernihiv or Sumy borderlands, which are much less Russified. This indicates that the Russian leadership pays much attention to ethno-national factor, trying to capture and join to Russia just the Russian-speaking regions. Therefore, the obvious conclusion comes to mind about the need to strengthen the further Ukrainian infusion and cultural-educational activity of the state in the eastern regions of the country.

Summing up, it seems thus reasonable to refer to the ideas of the first post-war Chancellor of Germany Konrad Adenauer. When lifting out the West Germany of the state, which Stalin in Potsdam defined as a «purely geographical concept», Adenauer used the term «normalization» envisaging the gradual reconstruction and step by step recovery of the state sovereignty. Ukraine has to become a «normal» European country, such as neighboring Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania or further located Bulgaria, Belgium, Greece or Portugal. This requires the constant development of modern state institutions including the legal system (with adherence to the rule of law), the army, the police, civil service etc.; fighting corruption; the creation of normal conditions for business and economic activities; the formation of culturally homogeneous Ukrainian political community and the development of civil society and its institutions.

²³ About Number and Composition of Population of Autonomous Republic of Crimea by Data of the All-Ukrainian Population Census, *State Statistics Committee of Ukraine*, 5 December 2001, <http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/>.

²⁴ М. Рябчук, Неправильні Українці, In *Zbruc*, 12 January 2015, at <http://zbruc.eu/node/31397>; Цінності українців pro et contra реформ в Україні, УКРІНФОРМ, 3 June 2015, at <http://www.ukrinform.ua/ukr/news/2059668>; І. Ведернікова, Ю. Мостова, С. Рахманін, “Південний Схід: гілка дерева нашого”, *Дзеркало тижня*, 18 April 2014, at <http://gazeta.dt.ua/internal/pivdenniy-shid-gilka-dereva-nashogo-.html>; В Україні є єдність і “особлива думка” “особливого регіону”, Фонд “Демократичні ініціативи ім. Ілька Кучеріва”, 7 Oktober 2014, at <http://www.dif.org.ua/ua/events/v-ukrerti.htm>.

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Abstract

The article analyzes the changes in the European system of international relations that resulted from the undeclared Russian intervention to Ukraine. The analysis of the Russian Federation's policy intended to change for its benefit the post-bipolar international system and of the leading Euro-Atlantic states responses is made. The possible measures of Ukraine to counter the undeclared Russian aggression are recommended.

Keywords: European system of international relations, Euro-Atlantic space, Ukraine, Russian Federation, instruments of foreign policy, undeclared aggression.

VAHE KHUMARYAN

Coup d'État vs. Revolution: The Scopes of Regime Change Legitimacy in Ukraine during and after the Euromaidan and before the Annexation of Crimea

While the world has witnessed the outcomes of the uprising in Ukraine, the contrasting political reactions to those became deeper both within the Ukrainian society and internationally. The fact that the interpretation of the Ukrainian events became a cornerstone of an international political crisis demands to look deeper into the perceptions of the Ukrainian regime change from the academic perspective. Namely, it is important to understand how differently the overthrowing of Yanukovich's government is interpreted. The process around Ukraine is yet crucially uncertain and the new regime has not provided a considerable account of its operations to let us reflect on its nature. However, it is still possible to analyze some of the consequences of the regime change and emphasize its basic characteristics.

The Prerequisites of the Regime Change in Ukraine and Its Justification in the Theories of Regime Change

In the history of independent Ukraine there was at least one other regime change realization attempt. The Orange Revolution brought new leadership into power. Despite the very negative memory of Yushchenko's presidency in the Ukrainian society,

it did, however, introduce some major improvements in terms of some basic liberties, like freedom of speech and press. Besides that, later the transition of power to the Party of Regions was carried out without significant electoral violations. However, some observers agree on the fact that throughout all the years of independence Ukraine has kept an extremely low level of institutional development¹. A brief observation of the Ukrainian political realities may give a clear vision of its available institutional assets (and their failure), which could be a response to the mass manifestations at the very launching of Euromaidan.

Unlike the dominance of siloviki and other informal clans among state elites in Russia, Ukraine is more divided between different groups representing certain financial or business interests. Unlike more autocratic clan systems, in Ukraine the arena of interest clashes has been more visible and clearly projected to the political discourse. Moreover, in Ukraine there are numerous informal practices present, which are common for the whole post-Soviet area².

By contrast to the misleading image of Yanukovich's regime as a thoroughly authoritarian one, willing to suppress both the basic human liberties and political participation, the situation in Ukraine before Euromaidan was quite moderate, when we compare it with the democratic progress in other post-Soviet states. First, a free TV channel broadcast existed in Ukraine, among which there were a number of shows conducting exclusively political debate. Apart from that, citizen journalism and internet channels were quite accessible in Ukraine before Euromaidan³.

However, what is more important in this regard is how the state power is distributed administratively. According to Ukrainian legislative acts, the state was divided into 27 units, among them 2 are cities of Kyiv and Sevastopol and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. However, the major part of the country consists of 24 regions, which keep a certain level of autonomy. It is important to take into account that some regions were governed by opposition by the time the protests in Kyiv and other areas erupted into a civil disobedience. This fact provided a strong springboard effect for the protesters. Even some local officials from the West of the country declared their solidarity with Euromaidan⁴.

It is important to understand which were broader causes and context of Euromaidan. Among many other opinions, the equilibrium of fair descriptions for Eu-

¹ N. F. Campos, "What drives protests in the Ukraine? This time, it is institutions", *Voxeu*, 22 December 2013, at <http://www.voxeu.org/article/what-drives-protests-ukraine>, 1 February 2016.

² A. V. Ledeneva, *How Russia Really Works: The Informal Practices That Shaped Post-Soviet Politics and Business*, Ithaca 2006.

³ "The Civil TV", Hromadske TV, at <http://hromadske.tv>, "Shuster Live", at <http://3s.tv/home/>, broadcasted on the public channel "Inter".

⁴ "2 Ukrainian Mayors Play Different Hands in Crisis", *New York Times*, 28 February 2014, at http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/01/world/europe/ukrainian-cities-reflect-nations-deep-divisions.html?_r=0.

romaidan is well presented by Anastasiya Ryabchuk, who characterizes the mass mobilization in Ukraine in its mature phase as “resistance to police violence and demands of better living standards associated with utopian visions of “Europe” and “democracy”⁵.

Euromaidan is one of the cases where both two core factors of democratization – “elite pact”⁶ and “mass mobilisation”⁷ do perform very visibly. However, these theories of regime change would be better applicable to the explanations of the failed democratization in the period *between* the Orange Revolution and Euromaidan. In this paper, the conventional literature is referred to, which emphasizes the problems of the power transfer in the scope of *revolutionary developments*.

The aforementioned notable features and the general data available to us draws a rough picture in understanding the recent Ukrainian case of regime change. However, there is a gap in the minds of everyone who generally follows the updates from Ukraine connected with the absence of an authoritative qualification of the events.

It seems to be a very questionable argument that the interpretation of the Euromaidan's outcome as an illegitimate revolt of a right-wing minority is exclusively a privilege of Russian state-funded media. On the other hand, even the highest officials in Russia accept that there was a mass mobilization and, basically, a consensus within the civil society against the unskillful regime of Yanukovich.

From an academic perspective, it is yet difficult to define which element played a decisive role in the overthrowing of the regime: the inability of certain figures to meet the demands of larger public, the loss of the exclusive legitimate right to apply force or maybe it is all about the institutional weakness of the whole system under the extensive pressure of socioeconomic circumstances.

What should be assumed possible at the current level is understanding different constructs and meanings of the media, state officials and even experts, who gave differentiated qualifications for the Ukrainian process.

⁵ A. Ryabchuk, “Right Revolution? Hopes and Perils of the Euromaidan Protests in Ukraine”, *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* Vol. 22, no. 1, at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0965156X.2013.877268>.

⁶ G. Casper, M. M. Taylor, *Negotiating Democracy: Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, Pittsburgh 1996; and also J. Higley, M. G. Burton, *Elite Foundations of Liberal Democracy*, Lanham 2006.

⁷ A. Karatnycky, P. Ackerman, “From Civic Resistance to Durable Democracy”, *The International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law* Vol. 7, no. 3, at http://www.icnl.org/research/journal/vol7iss3/special_3.htm#_edn1; and also: G. O'Donnell, P. C. Schmitter, L. Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, Baltimore 1986.

The construct of the “Coup d’état” in relation to Ukrainian Revolution in the present day public discourse

The whole spectrum of opinions on Ukraine may be divided into two main groups. If the international community would be inclined to adopt either of these, it would bring two different outcomes for Ukraine. If the Ukrainian overthrow of the government has been called a democratic revolution or coup d’état would change the very basics of policies towards Ukraine.

Coup d’état (coup of the state) is a term which is popular in relation to Ukraine in the public discourse and media, especially among the critics of the Ukrainian uprising. It was first voiced in Davos by Mikola Azarov, still the prime-minister of Ukraine in January 2014, thus bringing up the issue, which was later well supported by Russian state-funded media⁸. Coup d’état became then the core interpretation of the seizure of Yanukovich’s government, and it was also approved by Yanukovich and Putin⁹.

Coup of the state is a term traditionally bearing negative connotations about the fact of power change in the state. In the academic sphere, most of the studies refer to “military coup d’état” which happened every now and then in the states of the third world in XX century. Broader conceptualizations of this notion may be found in the book by Edward Luttwak from 1979: “a coup consists of the infiltration of a small, but critical, segment of the state apparatus, which is then used to displace the government from its control of the remainder”¹⁰. He also notes that the coup is by definition illegal¹¹. To what degree these definitions may yet be applied to the Ukrainian parliamentarians voting to remove Yanukovich from presidency as news of his flight spread on February 22th? While the legality of this step is contested, it is clear that it was more of a symbolic gesture with the aim to take control over the violent situation in the streets. Political legitimacy is a longer path the new Ukrainian government should handle, at least by the time free and fair democratic elections were held in the country. The nature of the provisional government in Kyiv, however, still needs to be clarified.

In his book Luttwak also notes that a coup is usually politically neutral. The main goal of a coup is to provide and secure possibilities of power succession in the state.

⁸ “Coups for export: US has history of supporting anti-government upheavals”, *Russia Today*, 22 March 2014, at <http://rt.com/news/us-sponsored-coups-ukraine-517>, 1 February 2016.

⁹ “Russia reserves the right to intervene in Ukraine, says Putin”, *Euronews*, 4 March 2014, at <http://www.euronews.com/2014/03/04/putin-use-of-force-in-ukraine-is-a-last-resort>, 1 February 2016.

¹⁰ E. N. Luttwak, *Coup d’État. A Practical Handbook*, Cambridge, MA 1979, p. 27.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 172

As it was already mentioned, the study of coups mainly concentrates on the cases where the “critical segment” are military elites. As we see in the Ukrainian case, there is no major political or military group, which presents itself as a neutral intermediary body. Moreover, the Russian state propaganda in its accusations is not much concrete, when it comes to definition of the coup. To finalize Luttwak's approach, it is worth to add, that he put the formulation of future policies of the state not into causal dependence with the coup, but with the post-coup regimes¹².

The political figures of the current provisional government of Ukraine, such as Alexander Turchinov, Arseniy Yacenyuk, Arsen Avakov and others are very famous actors of the political arena with a considerable background and relatively clear intentions. Another strong semi-civil and semi-political group is the “Praviy Sector” (The Right Sector) a right-wing nationalist organization, which is supposed to be the core player in Euromaidan organizational and self-defense activities. Praviy Sector as a semi-militarized group is a newcomer to Ukrainian politics, however, it represents a broader range of ideologically close informal groups, parties, right-wing clubs and etc., which are traditionally located in the western part of the country. While the political dimension of Euromaidan, namely Vitaly Klichko (“Udar” party), Arseniy Yacenyuk (“Batkivshchina” party of Yulia Timoshenko) and Oleg Tyagnibok (“Svoboda” party) do somehow participate in the formation of the provisional government, the Praviy Sector does not. However, in fact the latter is the main target of internal (east of the country, Crimea) and foreign (mainly Russian) criticism. Right Sector with its charismatic leader Dmitriy Yarosh are even compared to Hitler in their neo-fascist agenda¹³.

This is the central notion of the Russian state position on Ukraine. As Russia claims Ukrainian “coup” is illegitimate, state propaganda works in the direction of disqualification of the whole popular movement (Euromaidan) in Ukraine. However, this is mostly superficial and selective information, presented merely for the sake of supporting Russian foreign policy.

However, the term of “coup of the state” has changed in the recent decades, and especially with the Arab Spring. While analyzing the Revolution in Egypt and overthrow of Hosni Mubarak, Ozan Varol has suggested a new term “democratic coup

¹² M. N. Zald, M. A. Berger, “Social Movements in Organizations: Coup d'Etat, Insurgency, and Mass Movements”, *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 83, no. 4, pp. 823-861.

¹³ “Ukraine: Yarosh is Hitler number 2. Opinions”, *Ia Rex*, at <http://www.iarex.ru/interviews/46022.html>.

And also: Anonymous, “A comparative analysis of Hitler's coming to power and events in Ukraine in the beginning of 2014”, *Politikus.ru*, at <http://politikus.ru/articles/14691-sravnitelnyy-analiz-prihoda-k-vlasti-gitlera-i-sobytiy-na-ukraine-v-nachale-2014-goda.html>; and also: D. Babych, “Dmitry Yarosh – the ‘commander’ of Maidan's ‘Right Sector’”, *The Voice of Russia*, at http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2014_02_04/Dmitry-Yarosh-the-commander-of-Maidan-s-Right-Sector-8928.

d'état"¹⁴. According to him, a classical academic approach towards the notion of a coup is entirely anti-democratic, and is not applicable to such cases as the Egyptian revolution as well as the role of military in Turkey. He then brings up the main characteristics of the phenomenon, which could refer to coups which are determined by democracy-oriented incentives. So far, this approach as well has drawn too much attention to the military dimension of the coup elites.

Nevertheless, the latest argument changes the whole perspective from which coup of the state is perceived nowadays. Indeed, in some states coup is legitimizing itself, when after a period of stronger upside-down regulations it provides good ground for democratic participations. In this regard, an extreme negative approach to any kind of social activity, mass mobilization or change of constitutional order, as it is perceived in Russia, stands alone in the global discourse even when it comes to such a traditionally "backward" phenomenon as coup d'état.

As we can see, coup of the state is hardly applicable to the Ukrainian case, and serves as a broad label to the whole internal political process of Ukraine in order to challenge its legitimacy. From the Russian point of view, the "coup" label applied to a regime change in a certain country proves its illegitimacy. However, within the scope of social science such terms as coup d'état or revolution do not necessarily evoke either positive or negative implications. We can trace such general discursive opinions back to 1963, when Hanna Arendt was arguing that the Bolsheviks' revolt might not be called revolution, because it had not brought positive change ("freedom")¹⁵. However, until now there has been no conceptualization of revolution as a positive or negative event. In a post-Soviet political discourse, the "coup" usually has critically negative meaning. A seizure of the current regime is called a coup or "putch", when it is done by the use of force, namely with the support of "power structures" (silovie strukturi). It is usually understood as an illegal event, thus even many conservative circles within Russia had named the "putch" of August 1991 in Moscow as a coup d'état.

In Russia even the Arab Spring is often compared to the "infamous" Color Revolutions in the states which Russia traditionally considered as its "zone of privileged interests". Namely, the absolute importance of preserving countries' sovereignty is usually stressed, implying the Western interference as a cornerstone factor which brings unrests¹⁶. This conspirational approach indicates a certain degree of sensitivity towards any kind of civil movements and revolutionary processes in other states.

¹⁴ O. O. Varol, "The Democratic Coup d'État", *Harvard International Law Journal* Vol. 53, 2012, no. 2.

¹⁵ H. Arendt, "Revolution and the Idea of Force", *Journal of Political Thinking Hannah Arendt. net*, at <http://www.hannaharendt.net/index.php/han/article/view/293/420>.

¹⁶ A. El Myurid, "The Experiment is Over", *Vzglyad*, at <http://vz.ru/opinions/2013/4/24/630131/p3>, and also: V. Cheterian, "The Arab revolt and the colour revolutions", *openDemocracy*, at <http://www.opendemocracy.net/vicken-cheterian/arab-revolt-and-colour-revolutions>.

In order to conclude, we must indicate that the discourse over “coup d'état” in Ukraine was brought up by internal reactionist elites and largely supported by the Russian state and state-funded media, provoking only skepticism in the West¹⁷. However, in case of Russian uncompromising position there is even a deeper dimension of constructs, which are related to the goal of satisfying the internal audience.

Conclusions

The overthrow of Yanukovich's regime and coming of the provisional government to power in Kyiv was followed by the active participation of right-wing groups and in the end was successful due to an illegal decision by Ukrainian parliamentarians. However, these consequences are just overstated symbolic episodes of a large-scale protest in Ukraine, which brought such results due to the inflexibility of the state-elites and the eruption of violence in the country. Nevertheless, these facts are exaggeratedly presented in the media and public discourse. The definition of “coup d'état”, which is voiced by the Russian state officials in fact does not carry an extreme negative perception of the Ukrainian revolution, and is hardly a justification for the Russian foreign policy towards Ukraine. However, it is important to emphasize that there are two main dimensions, which serve as a ground for the Russian position on Ukraine: the misleading interpretations of the Ukrainian revolution based on selective arguments for the sake of short-term foreign policy support and the misleading perception of the “coup” as an evil circumstance itself, which takes its roots in the conservative stance of the current Russian regime.

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¹⁷ L. Harding, “Kiev's protesters: Ukraine uprising was no neo-Nazi power-grab”, *The Guardian*, 13 March 2014, at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/13/ukraine-uprising-fascist-coup-grassroots-movement>.

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Abstract

In this paper a certain theoretical framework of regime change which is considered applicable to the Ukrainian case, will be presented. Then some key interpretations of the Ukrainian regime change, which vary from a legitimate democratic manifestation of the public will to a coup d'état will be evaluated. Finally, the following question will be answered: what kind of different perceptions produce the diverse attitudes to the events in Ukraine? In this part, the Author is going to use discourse analysis and a broader constructivist approach to the problem.

Keywords: Ukraine, regime change, coup d'état, revolution, Maidan

SONG LILEI, REN SANG

Chinese perspectives and discussions on Ukraine Crisis¹

The outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis started directly with the announcement in November 2013 by Ukrainian President Viktor Fedorovych Yanukovich when Ukraine decided to suspend the EU–Ukraine Association Agreement. As a core component of the EU’s Eastern Partnership, the signing of the Agreement means closer political and economic ties between the EU and its partner countries. Because Ukraine is a geopolitical pivot in the Eurasian grand chess game, Russia deems it as the core belt in its rivalry with the US and Europe, and the crux to its rejuvenation, while the US and Europe view it as an important component in containing Russia. Because of this, after the Cold War, Ukraine has always been one of the key states prone to the geopolitical rivalry between the West and Russia. Ukraine has been vacillating between the West and East, eking out a living amid fierce contest between Europe and the US as one side and Russia as the opposite for a long time. The impact of the geopolitical rivalry on Ukrainian domestic politics, coupled with economic, social and ethnic factors, has resulted in a sudden change in the Ukrainian political situation. It is inevitable that the relationship between EU and Ukraine, EU and Russia, Russia and America, Russia and China will be intensely affected by the Ukrainian crisis.

From the Chinese point of view, Ukraine has great strategic values. China and Ukraine have established diplomatic relations since January 4, 1992. And then both countries extended the relationship to comprehensive friendly and cooperative re-

¹ The paper is supported by Fudamental research founding of Tongji Univeristy “China’s public diplomacy to Central and Eastern European Countries” (No. 0703219038).

lations in 2001 and jointly announced a strategic partnership in 2011. Ukraine is a huge market: its vast farmland helps safeguard China's food imports; Ukraine and China have both agreed a vast farmland leasing program; the Bank of China and Ukraine signed for a total of \$3 billion in an agricultural loan agreement in December 2012.² On bilateral military cooperation, Department of Defense of Ukraine and China signed a major military-technical cooperation agreement in 1995.³ China and Ukraine have maintained close cooperation on science and technology.⁴ Ukraine is committed to help China with manufacture engines and fighters. In addition to bilateral cooperation based on strategic partnership, the agreement also covers other projects, for example, it is well known that China's first aircraft carrier came from Ukraine.⁵ Currently, Ukraine is China's fourth largest trading partner in CIS region's and China is Ukraine's second largest trading partner and also the largest trading partner in Asia. But, due to influence of Ukraine crisis, China-Ukraine bilateral trade decreased by 22.7% (\$8.594 billion) in 2014. China's import has noted an increase of 6.5%, which amounted to \$3.486 billion, but export has dropped by 34.9 %, with the total of \$5.108 billion⁶.

As one of the most serious geopolitical crisis since the end of the Cold War, the Ukraine Crisis has impact not only upon the reshaping of the Eurasian political architecture, but also upon the reconstruction of the world order. So far, the Ukraine crisis has experienced three stages. Namely, the opposition took power by organizing street protests, Crimea crisis took place, and the instability in southeast region followed. Chinese scholars also pay great attention to the breakout and development of Ukraine Crisis. Substantial academic articles with this very research subject have been published in Chinese core journals (CSSCI). Several round table meetings and seminars were held for open discussion on Ukrainian issue in Chinese think tanks and universities. Chinese mass media such as "People's Daily", "China Daily" and "Global Times" also opened columns that commented on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Chinese officials keep a cautious attitude to Ukraine Crisis. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang spoke at a press conference after the conclusion of China's annual parliamentary session recently that China respects Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and hopes the Ukraine issue can be settled through dialogue. He also

² "Sino-Ukrainian cooperation Introduction", 24 April 2015, at <http://ua.mofcom.gov.cn/article/zxhz/201404/20140400567670.shtml>, 25 April 2015.

³ Gu Z., "Relationship between China and Ukraine", at <http://euroasia.cass.cn/news/85018.htm>, November 1998, 20 April 2015.

⁴ "'The seventh China and Ukraine conference on science and technology cooperation' was held in Kiev", 4 June 2010, at <http://ua.chineseembassy.org/chn/xwdt/t706435.htm>, 20 April 2015.

⁵ "Ukrainian military technology export to China: help Chinese aircraft carrier", 25 June 2012, at http://news.ifeng.com/shendu/fhzk/detail_2012_06/25/15540071_0.shtml, 20 April 2015.

⁶ "China and Ukraine bilateral relations", at http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/gjhdq_676201/gj_676203/oz_678770/1206_679786/sbgx_679790/, April 2015, 20 April 2015.

repeated the same words when meeting with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Switzerland in January.⁷ As Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Qin Gang said: “In consideration of the history and the current complexities of the Ukrainian issue, China has been just and objective on the Ukrainian issue. We will continue to promote peace talks and play a constructive role for the political settlement of the Ukrainian issue. We have made our own suggestions, which focus on establishing as soon as possible an international coordination mechanism joined by all parties to explore a political approach to defusing the Ukrainian crisis.”⁸ In Chinese academic community, Chinese scholars give different interpretations to the development of Ukraine Crisis according to their research background. More than 10 round table seminars were held for open discussion on Ukrainian issue. For example, China Institute of International Studies held the “Ukrainian crisis, the European situation and China-EU relations” seminar on November 15, 2014. Officials and experts from the Chinese Ministry of European Affairs, European Institute and Russian Central Asia, Eastern Europe Institute of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Institute of Contemporary International Relations and Diplomatic Academy participated and discussed Ukraine crisis in the meeting. Whether they did have different judgments on what is right and what is wrong, China had great interests in opposing any military move and advocated for moderation and political solutions, a stance that cuts both ways, applying to the actions both of the West and of Russia.

Chinese perspectives cover a series of conceptual issues related to Ukraine Crisis, such as the clash of civilizations, geopolitics, the legitimacy of domestic and foreign affairs, regional processes and great power relations, military alliances during peacetime, the buffer area among great powers, and even long-term trend of international power shifts. This paper presents findings through comparative study of Ukraine politics in the Chinese scholars’ opinions before and after the outbreak of Ukraine Crisis. Using datasets from papers selected in core journals by content analysis, this study explores the extent to which the Ukraine crisis has challenged the Eurasian political architecture in the eyes of Chinese national elites and considers the implications for the China-Ukraine strategic partnership.

⁷ Zhao S., “China respects Ukraine’s sovereignty, territorial integrity: Premier”, 15 March 2015, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015twosession/2015-03/15/content_19815476.htm, 20 April 2015.

⁸ “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Qin Gang’s Remarks on the UN Security Council’s Vote on the Draft Resolution on the Referendum in Crimea”, 16 March 2014, at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/cgit/eng/fyrth/t1137754.htm>, 20 April 2015.

Methodology

To answer the questions regarding how Chinese scholars interpret the development of Ukraine Crisis, this study used the method of content analysis to find out the answer.

This study was based on a sample of 56 academic papers of which the research subject is “Ukraine politics” in Chinese core journals (CSSCI) from January 2004 to November 2013 and 45 academic papers of which the subject is “Ukraine Crisis” in Chinese core journals from the December 2013 to April 2015. In total, 101 papers written by Chinese scholars in the past 10 years collected from Chinese core journals were used as the data set. Each paper is a unit for analysis.

Code book development

The analysis in this study includes following categories:

1. Basic information (including scholars’ job area: Beijing, Shanghai or other place; working type: think tank or university).
2. Content issues (including content topics and international relations theories used).
3. Narrative features (including judgment and forecast of Ukraine crisis).

Three researchers (RS, SLL and ZAN) read through each paper independently and used single words to describe the thesis of each paper. Next, this team held a discussion to group them into 4 categories according to theories, including Realism, Institutionalism, Constructivism and Hybrid theory. Then the team grouped them into 4 sub-categories according to their topics: “traditional security” such as geopolitical conflicts, “non-traditional security” such as energy guarantee, “economic integration” and “cultural or ethnic identity”. They were also categorized into 2 sub-categories according to the judgment on Ukraine crisis – whether these are events challenging the international order or just a regional conflict; the forecast of Ukraine crisis in the future – whether it is an intermittent but long-term repeated crisis or the one that may last for a period of time but can be solved in the end. This study also assessed the attitude of each paper, measured the comments to Ukraine crisis influence in EU, America, Russia and China (from negative to neutral or positive position).

Coding procedures and inter-coder reliability

Three trained coders independently reviewed and coded all papers. In order to develop and complete the codebook for content analysis of all the papers, a random sample of 10% of all posts ($n=10$) was selected. Each paper was classified into only one theme. In the case of disagreement between the two coders, a third coder was used to determine the final coding. The kappa score of 0.815 was calculated, which demonstrated that the inter-coder reliability was valid. If the content of the paper did not fit any one of the themes, it was then coded as 'other' and was not included in the final analysis of this study.

Results

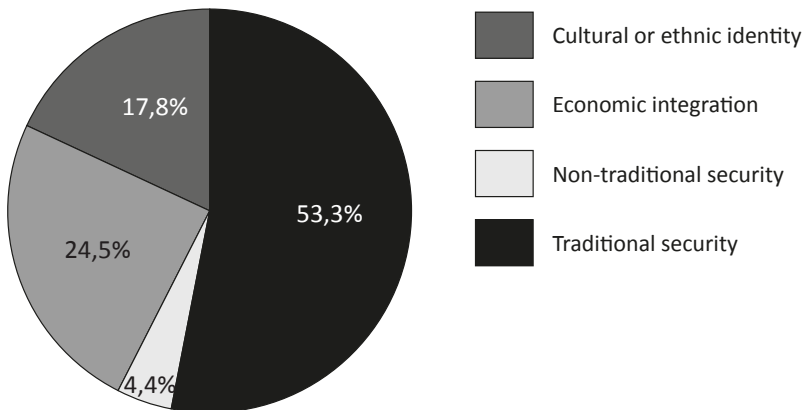
The research found that among those 45 papers with subjects of "Ukraine Crisis" in Chinese core journals from the December 2013 to April 2015, 30 papers are written by scholars from Beijing (66.8%). 10 papers written by scholars from Shanghai, and the others are submitted from other regions in China. This is because internal information and academic resources are mainly concentrated in Beijing and high level research institutions and researchers are likely to be based in Beijing. There is no doubt that Beijing has more output of high quality academic achievements as the Capital than other regions in China.

Sources of papers are split equally in think tanks and universities – 46.7% of papers originate from scholars in think tanks, such as the top three important think tanks, Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS), China Institute of International Studies (CIIS) and China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR). 53.3% has been contributed by scholars in university, such as the Center for Russian Research of East China Normal University and Center for Russian Research of Shanghai International Studies University that have traditional reputation on Russian and Central Europe research.

After outlining important key words used by 56 academic papers of which the research subject is "Ukraine politics" from January 2004 to November 2013 and 45 academic papers of which the subject is "Ukraine Crisis" from December 2013 to April 2015, the research compared these keywords between two periods. Surprisingly, most typical words to describe the Ukraine are very similar (See Figure 1 and 2).

In the 4 sub-categories according to their research topics, traditional security such as geopolitical conflicts (53.3%) ranks the top among the four types of research topics undertaken, which means that research on the background of power politics of Ukraine Crisis is the most heated topic in that period from Chinese views, followed by Economic integration (24.50%) that occupies the second biggest part. The EU's constant adjustment of its eastern neighborhood policy had finally led to Ukraine's choice of European economic integration as its development path, which triggered the Ukraine Crisis. The crisis has resulted in the big contraction of Ukrainian economy and slowdown in Russian economic growth, which further hit the weak European economy. The cultural or ethnic identity (17.80%) ranks third, most Chinese scholars believe that it can also be observed from the perspective of ethno-national politics. Ethnic hatred and confrontations in history are naturally important causes of the crisis. Non-traditional security (4.40%) such as energy guarantee can also be emphasized. In spite of the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis, the overall European and international energy markets have not experienced any sharp rises and falls and the oil and gas prices remain steady with a slight decline, indicating a hidden energy game being played among Russia, the EU and the US, though, apparently, with Russia as one of the key energy producing countries and Ukraine as one of the major transit countries. The energy issue could be very instrumental to the promotion of domestic and foreign policies for Russia, the US, or the EU. (See Figure 3).

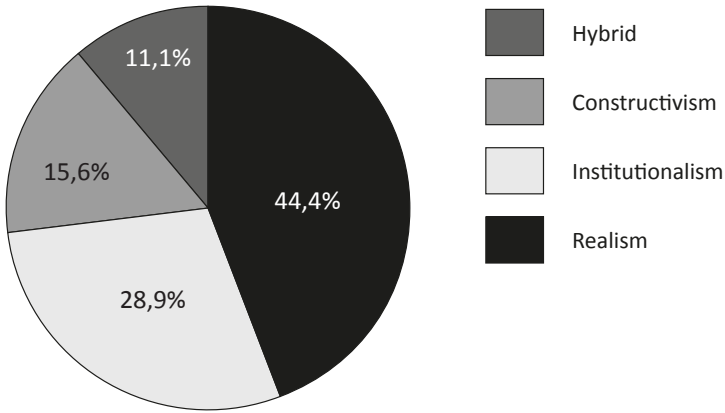
Figure 3. Distribution of research topics on Ukraine Crisis



Within the 4 sub-categories according to theoretical perspectives including Realism, Institutionalism, Constructivism and Others, Realism (55.6%) occupies the biggest part, such as the comments that the Ukraine crisis is caused by interactions of the country's domestic political struggle and the geopolitical competition between the West and Russia. The crisis triggered a series of chain reactions. At the present

stage, as Ukraine strategically leans towards the West, U.S. and Russia drift into strategic adversaries and the EU—Russia geopolitical competition intensifies, while China and Russia are on the way to “quasi-allies”⁹. The institutionalism (28.9%) then follows, such as that the domestic causes of the Ukraine Crisis have been analyzed through IPE methods. Constructivism (16.6%) ranks third, Hybrid theory (11.1%) is also used. It is easy to explain the breakout of Ukraine Crisis from different angles, for example, some scholars pointed out that the crisis can’t be interpreted as the result of regime competition between democracy and autocracy. Instead, the proper way is to combine three different analytical angles: legitimacy, cultural identity and geopolitics. (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. Distribution of theories perspective on Ukraine Crisis



Regarding the question whether Ukraine crisis is the event that challenges the international order or just a regional conflict compared with some judgments (28.9%) that Ukraine crisis challenges the international order and the new cold war is emerging¹⁰. Most papers (71.1%) regarded it as a regional conflict, the most agreed opinion is that incorporation of Crimea into Russia has dramatically changed the European geopolitical fabric and the post-war European order, posing severe challenges to Europe’s security, the biggest of which is how to cope with its relations with Russia¹¹. Meanwhile, when referring to how the Ukraine crisis will look in the future, most Chinese scholars trust it to be an intermittent but long-term repeated crisis (65.0%) or one that may last for a period of time but can be solved in the end (35.0%). Most

⁹ Zhang W.-Z., Xue W., Li X.-G., “An Analysis of Strategic Implications of the Ukraine Crisis”, *Contemporary International Relations* Vol. 24, 2014, no. 8, p. 19.

¹⁰ Feng Sh.-L., “Russia after 2014”, [2014 年之后的俄罗斯], *Russian Studies* 2014, no. 6, pp. 3-17.

¹¹ Huang P., “Impact of the Ukraine Crisis on Europe”, *Chinese Journal of European Studies* Vol. 32, 2014, no. 6, p. 2.

scholars choose the answer that it is a repeated crisis, considering the complexity of the background of Ukraine crisis, the fact that it is a developing trend and that its final outcomes in the short term are not clear, but it is a challenge to European order which has been gradually revealed. It can be said that in the current situation, the risk of a direct military conflict between Russia and Ukraine has not been eliminated and relations between Russia and the US will continue to cool down in a period, but Europe will not repeat the mistakes of the Cold War¹². (See Table 2).

Table 2. Distribution of Judgment and Forecast on Ukraine crisis

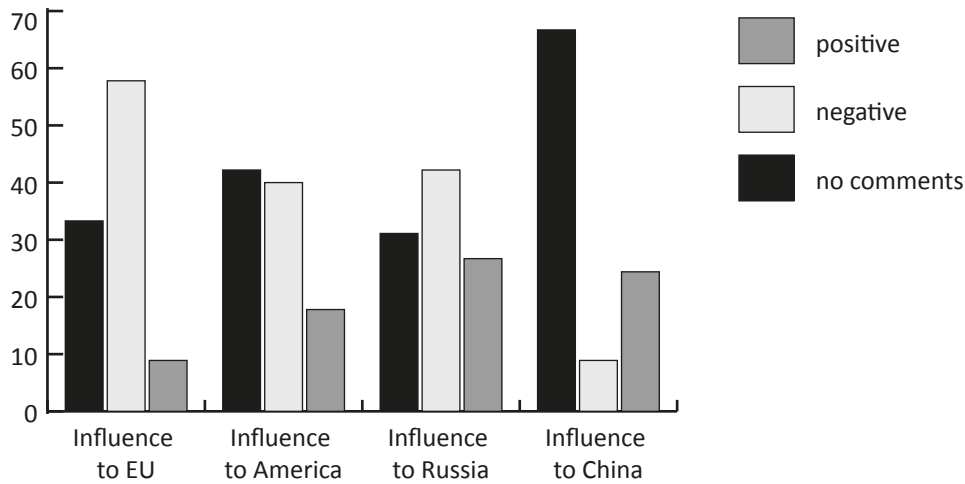
Judgment on Ukraine crisis		Forecast of Ukraine crisis	
Event challenges the international order	28.9%	Negative: intermittent but long-term repeated	57.8%
Regional conflict	71.1%	Positive: last a period of time but can be solved	31.1%
		No comments	11.1%

The research found that the comments on the influence of Ukraine crisis to EU, America, Russia and China (from negative to positive or neutral position) of each paper vary greatly. Chinese scholars insisted that Ukraine crisis severely influenced the credibility of EU's external action (57.8%), compared with positive influence (8.90%) on promotion of European integration through Associate Agreement with Ukraine. Meanwhile negative comments on America (40.0%) focus on the fact that what happened in European continent is distracting the attention from American pivot strategy, but it benefits America (17.8%) in the way that it provides another opportunity for America to continue to interfere European security affairs and strengthen the dependence of European members on America who has joined EU after 2004. It is worth paying attention to the fact that Russia plays the good cards in this geopolitical game (26.7%). Russia has been forfeit to the Crimea and become the largest geopolitical winner¹³ even at the cost of its declining reputation in world stage (42.2%). When referring to most sensitive topic, whether China benefited or lost in Ukraine crisis, from the point of reapproachment of China and Russia and Energy cooperation, China did a real bargain according to its own political and economic advantages in the diplomatic reaping benefits (24.4%). But still some scholars stress the negative aspects (8.90%) from a geopolitical point of view: the confusion in Eurasia did great damages to China's 'Silk Road Economic Belt' project, especially because Ukraine is in the middle position on the Silk Road. The instability of Ukraine will really obstruct the interconnection of Eurasia. (See Figure 5).

¹² Ibid., p. 22.

¹³ Yue X.-K., "Ukraine – the world four big power center geopolitical arena", *Journal of China Youth University for Political Sciences* 2014, no. 6, p. 106.

Figure 5. Distribution of Attitudes Ukraine crisis influence to EU, America, Russia and China.



Discussion

The Ukrainian crisis starting from late 2013 soon escalated from a domestic constitutional crisis to an international political conflict. Some scholars interpret the resulting confrontation between major powers as the beginning of a new “Cold War”. Behind this extremely complicated situation, different stakeholders have proposed very different interpretations of the causes and nature of this crisis. In sum, Chinese experts pay high attention and discuss the influences of the Ukraine crisis from a wide range of perspectives including economy, politics, security and international relations. The empirical findings indicate that two important parts are worth attention in the following discussion. On the one hand – the reasons that caused Ukraine Crisis. On the other hand, how the Ukraine crisis influences more complicated competition and alignment among major countries.

The root causes of the Ukraine Crisis

First of all, a considerable number of Chinese scholars think that in the sense of Ukraine’s choice of its economic and social development path, the EU’s soft pow-

er has gained upper hand over Russia's hard power¹⁴. The comparative analysis has shown that the most key words in the past 10 years of analysis Ukraine political life did not change much. The figures deliver the message that the outbreak of Ukraine crisis is not accidental but inevitable. The cause of conflict has been rooted more than 10 years ago. As regards Ukraine, to keep the geopolitical balance of power is most favorable to its development. However, economic setbacks and the delayed CIS economic integration forced Ukraine to put an emphasis on its external economic relations with the EU. The EU's constant adjustment of its eastern neighborhood policy had finally led to Ukraine's choice of the European economic integration as its development path, which finally triggered the Ukraine Crisis.

Furthermore, from its formal independence in 1991 till now, along with changes of the constitution, there have been reversals of Ukrainian regime. The reason lies in, on the one hand, the constitution that could not reflect the balance of power among the President, the Prime Minister, the parliament and the legal system, whereas on the other hand, in the separation between pro-Russian forces and pro-European forces within Ukraine, which makes none of the constitutions a stable public foundation. Analyzing different regimes within different constitutional frameworks in Ukraine, especially those theoretical and practical ones when Ukraine resumed its premier-presidential system under the 2004 constitutional framework in February 2014 will help to understand further the institutional factors of Ukrainian domestic conflicts and to have reasonable judgment regarding the future trends of Ukrainian constitution and regime changes.

The reason behind Ukraine Crisis can also be observed from the perspective of ethno-national politics. The issue of identity is a common challenge for various former Soviet countries and areas in transition¹⁵. Firstly, ethnic hatred and confrontations in history are naturally an important cause of Ukraine crisis. However, how they are kept and revived in memory is the key to our perception of the cause. Ukraine's ultra-nationalism was prevailing in the elite class, which became a great check on the Poroshenko government. Secondly, the growing tension and conflicts between the state-led view of national development and the view held by the dominant ethnic groups over the past twenty years have been the primary domestic cause of Ukraine crisis. After that, President Poroshenko promulgated the Act of Political Cleanup and National Strategy against Corruption after he assumed power, which affected more than one million public employees. This increased the political and economic risks of Ukraine. Thirdly, its political system and cultural tradition, the integration of modern

¹⁴ Huang P., "Impact of the Ukraine Crisis on Europe", *Chinese Journal of European Studies* Vol. 32, 2014, no. 6, p. 1.

¹⁵ Wang, X.-J. "The Influence of Ukrainian Crisis on Russia's Domestic and Foreign Policies", *Academic Journal of Russian* Vol. 4, 2014, no. 5, p. 45.

party politics and traditional ethno-national politics in Ukraine's democratic practice and signs of immature transformation have contributed a lot to the internal conflicts which led to the Ukrainian crisis. Fourthly, the abuse of national self-determination turned the Ukraine crisis into an international crisis. Fifthly, given that the Ukraine crisis is largely related to the failures in national development, any efforts in terms of ethno-national politics should be more focused thereon than otherwise. With slim chance in sight for immediate improvement of the situation, the country is still faced with possible escalation of the crisis and challenges in post-crisis conflict management. And as far as it can be seen, the negative effects of its ethno-national politics will remain a tough problem in future Ukrainian political life.

The influence of Ukraine crisis to EU, America, Russia and China

It should be noted that the majority of Chinese scholars mentioned the Ukraine crisis influence on the EU, America, Russia and China in their papers and held opposite views. It can also provide the prediction of what this crisis implies for future world order and interstate relations. The Westphalia system is under serious pressure and the world system may switch back to great power coalition and key features of the early 20th century.

1) Is Russia experiencing great suffering or is it the real winner?

Ukraine divorced from Russia completely and made its own choice between Europe and Russia, between European common market and CIS integration. Ukraine has been developing substantive cooperation with NATO. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has said that Ukrainian membership of NATO will be decided by a nationwide referendum. Meanwhile, Russia not only lost Ukraine but also suffered economically and diplomatically. On the one hand, Russian domestic capital outflow has increased dramatically. It was estimated that the amount could top 150 billion dollars in 2014. But on the other hand, the West discontinued the provision of capital and technology, which heavily disrupted Russian oil and gas production in new energy areas such as Siberia and the North Pole¹⁶. In addition, Russia has faced unprecedented diplomatic isolation. The long last round negotiations over Russian accession to the OECD in recent years have been shelved.

But some Chinese scholars comment that Russia has absorbed the entire Crimean peninsula and become the largest geopolitical winner. The Ukraine crisis and the

¹⁶ Bu S.-H., "Seminar on Ukraine Crisis. The European situation and Sino-European Relations, *China International Studies* 2015, no. 50, p. 129.

return of Crimea to Russia has reaffirmed the limit and boundary of the eastward expansion of the Europe-dominated “New Versailles system”. Instead of settling the border issue by military force as it has been always done, Russia managed, peacefully, to retain its borders, the bottom line of its existence and the very foundation and prerequisite of its future revival, and consequently rendered it almost impossible for the EU to step up its eastward expansion in the foreseeable future. Crimea is vital to Russia and yet, registers only as “important” to the European interest. Thus, Russia would mobilize all its resources in the case of Ukraine crisis, but the West would not. Given the history of Russia in Ukraine, the Ukraine crisis marks only the beginning of Russia’s strike back against the EU expansion¹⁷.

2) What EU does to cope with its relations with Russia?

Although Ukraine crisis continues developing, the EU’s confidence in dealing with this problem is not weakened but strengthened. The EU position in the future will still be focused on three areas: First, closely observed developments in the eastern region to monitor the implementation of the Minsk agreement to strengthen the OSCE’s support and continue to condemn Russia’s “illegal annexation” Crimea and Sevastopol as a violation of the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine. The second is to implement the agreement of the associated countries, especially the deep and comprehensive free trade agreement already signed with Ukraine, and to provide strong political support and technical and economic assistance to the Government of Ukraine, in particular, to invite Ukraine to join the Europe 2020 Agenda to strengthen bilateral technical cooperation and personnel exchanges¹⁸. Third, at the same time, maintain a dialogue between the EU and Russia, showing Russia the enhanced relations between the EU and partner countries are not at the expense of Russian interests for the price.

But Meanwhile, the Ukraine crisis made the EU more divided internally and more difficult to coordinate. The Central and Eastern European countries have been split into two camps. Poland, three Baltic countries and the Czech Republic belong to the hardline camp when facing the challenging of European security order. Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria were swinging due to their close economic ties to Russia. From a geopolitical perspective, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia are the neighbors of Ukraine. Poland and Ukraine belong to the eastern side of Korba footpath, so that the security threat Poland is faced with is very urgent. The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania on the west side of Korba footpath,

¹⁷ Zhang W.-M., “The Ukraine Crisis: What does it Mean to the World and China?”, *Journal of International Security Studies* Vol. 32, 2014, no. 4, p. 3.

¹⁸ “Council conclusions on Ukraine”, Council of the European Union, Foreign Affairs Council meeting, Luxembourg, 20 October 2014, at http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/145211.pdf, 20 April 2015.

so they do not feel that imminent threat exists¹⁹. As the crisis in Ukraine escalated, the EU has imposed a series of sanctions towards Russia, leading to a de-facto confrontation between the EU and Russia. However, in the long run, in order to maintain stability in Europe, the EU should promote the building of a European security framework with Russia as its equal partner. In addition, the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy is still far from being materialized, which can be seen from the different attitudes of the Central and Eastern European countries towards Russia after the Ukraine crisis broke out.

3) Is there a "Re- adjustment" of America's pivot strategy in considering Ukraine Crisis?

America and Europe were by no means monolithic during the Ukraine crisis; rather they maintained a relationship of "selective alliance." America paid more attention to power shift and international patterns in Eurasia, while Europe focuses on energy security issues and encountered a dilemma. Ukraine crisis had a negative impact on Russia's traditional presence on European energy market, which is leading to a shift of balance of the bargaining power between Russia and the EU. America not only has strengthened the dominance in the trans-Atlantic alliance, but also improved its status as the sole superpower in the international system.

Owing to economic globalization and the comparative strategic edge of the West over Russia, the crisis will not lead to a new cold war between U.S. and Russia and a revival of China-Russia Alliance. Neither does it dramatically change U.S. rebalancing strategy to Asia-Pacific²⁰. Obama focused on consolidating the domestic economy followed by foreign strategic overall contraction. U.S. still needs Russian cooperation on the Asia-Pacific, the Iranian nuclear issue, Afghanistan, Syria and so on. The crisis is likely to cool off in the near future, but if it could not be resolved in the long run, U.S. may adjust its military strategy in response to its domestic pressure, to stand firm to Russia, which may have consequential effects on international politics.

4) Whether Russia and China will make alliance under the Ukraine Crisis background or not?

Due to the geopolitical reason, it's difficult for China to take a tough stance on Russia. China and Russia have a long border and solved their disputes just in 2000s. Both sides depend on each other as a major trading and strategic partners. Two countries have committed themselves to developing a powerful pipeline network worth of hundreds of billions of dollars to support new contract of \$400 billion new gas

¹⁹ Zhu X.-Z., "Several factors impact Central & Eastern European countries position on the Ukraine Crisis", *Chinese Journal of European Studies* Vol. 32, 2014, no. 6, p. 30.

²⁰ Zhang W.-Z., Xue W., Li X.-G., *op. cit.*

deal. For China, Russia is the main source of advanced military hardware. The two countries both face the impact of the United States containment, with a deep strategic mistrust to the United States.

Nevertheless, in the Ukraine issue, China did not provide diplomatic support to Russia. First, the use of a referendum tricks – Russians let the Crimea become independent from Ukraine, which stroke up a discordant tune of core principles of Chinese diplomacy, namely mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, and non-aggression, non-interference in the internal affairs of another country. Considering religious extremism, ethnic separatists and international terrorist forces of violence in Xinjiang and Tibet, China does not support the referendum and appealing to separate organizations seeking independence. Second, while Russia seeks to strengthen relations with Beijing to avoid isolation by the West, Beijing will make a cautious response to the so called “strategic alliance”²¹. If the relations between China and the United States deteriorated, maybe China will be encouraged into forming further alliances with Russia, but Sino-American relationship has long been China’s top diplomatic priority. Xi Jinping stressed in seeking to establish new relations between big powers with the United States, calling for mutual respect and non-confrontation and cooperation. Moreover, with China’s sustained economic development, China hopes to work with the United States and keep good relations with the international community. Both the EU the United States are China’s largest trading partners. The strengthening and deepening cooperation between China and Russia does not mean that the alliance between the two countries will be formed. Because geopolitical relations, economic factors, history and culture still cause internal conflict between the two countries, both sides do not want to form an alliance and bear disproportionate and unnecessary obligations²². Finally, China and Ukraine have traditional link in trade, agriculture and military aspects, China still hopes to continue to maintain these contacts with Ukraine’s new government. In one words, although China gives some understanding and support to Russia in Ukraine problem, it is difficult to go too much further.

5) Is China “winning anything” from the Ukraine crisis?

Most Chinese scholars stand by the above comment. Besides the interruption of cooperation between China and Ukraine, there are positive impacts to China. First, China benefits from Ukraine crisis most because of the distraction of American “pivot to Asia” strategy. Washington needs to focus on the security needs of its Eu-

²¹ Yan X.-T., “The Weakening of the Unipolar Configuration”, in Mark Leonard (ed.), *China 3.0. European Council on Foreign Relations*, London 2012, p. 112.

²² Cheng Z.-J. “Network Partnership Diplomatic Mechanism: The New Path in Sino-Russian Cooperation - On the Sino-Russian Joint Dominance of BRICS Governance Mechanism”, *Journal of China and International Relations* Vol. 2, 2014, no. 2, p. 141.

ropean allies. Most US strategic thinkers trust that it is China, not Russia, that poses the most significant 21 century geopolitical challenge to the United States, hoping that Russia should be a counterweight to rising China but Russia is helping to fuel China's rise due to the adversarial relationship of United States and Europe with Russia. Second, Russia made some concession to China. Russia has changed his doubtful attitudes to "one belt, one road" strategy, which is regarded to provide central Asian states with alternative export markets, reducing their dependence on Russia. Russia has declared they try to combine the Eurasian Union plan with China's 'Silk Road Economic Belt' project. Third, the promotion of the RMB internationalization, US and European financial sanctions affect the transactions in dollars or euro with third countries by Russian companies. Therefore, the number of China-Russia trade in RMB will certainly be growing, especially when Russia may accept RMB as an investment currency²³.

The contrasting opinion is Ukraine crisis does great damage to China's 'Silk Road Economic Belt' project. The Silk Road has been also extended to Western Europe. The best example was the Chongqing-Xinjiang-Duisburg cargo rail route, opened in 2011, which is seen now as a part of the Silk Road. Xi Jinping, during his trip to Germany in the early 2015, has visited Duisburg where he witnessed the arrival of a cargo train at the city's railway station from Chongqing. The vision of the New Silk Road has since become a cornerstone of relation between China and Europe. In logistics meaning, while China is hoping to pass the "Iron Silk Road" to expand exports through international railway. Ukraine is a link between Western Europe and China. But Ukraine crisis does great damage to China's 'Silk Road Economic Belt' project, especially because Ukraine is in the middle position on the Silk Road. The instability of Ukraine will really obstruct the interconnection of Eurasia. Even Chinese scholars appealing that China should be more actively involved in the mediation of the Ukraine crisis, give constructive criticism, initiative mediate relations between the EU and Russia. China is not an involved party, so it has certain advantages in keep neutral position²⁴. China needs to integrate relationships of many coastal countries in Silk Road Economic Belt. Mediation of the Ukraine crisis can become a touchstone to do further integration of countries along 'Silk Road Economic Belt'.

²³ Ding Y.-F., "The impact of Ukraine crisis on the European economy", *Chinese Journal of European Studies* Vol. 32, 2014, no. 6, p. 18.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Conclusions

The Current Ukraine Crisis resulted from the comprehensive interaction among manifold factors in domestic and international domains. Historical grievances, divisions between the east and the west regions of the nation, political corruption and economic recession from the domestic domain have constituted its internal factors, whereas the interventions of big powers like Russia, EU and USA from the international domain have become its external factors, which added fuel to the fire and aggravated the situation. The Ukraine Crisis, in essence, embodies competition and mutual confrontation between EU and Eurasian Union. So far, the Ukraine crisis has experienced three stages. Namely, the opposition took power by street protests, Crimea crisis and the instability in southeast region followed. It's urgent time to recognize a series of critical issues of current world affairs, including conceptual issues such as the clash of civilizations, geopolitics, the legitimacy of domestic and foreign affairs, regional processes and great power relations, military alliances during peacetime, the buffer area among great powers, and even long-term trend of international power shifts. Each of these issues is sufficient to stir changes in international situation for quite a long time and international disputes at all levels.

Furthermore, In the Ukraine crisis the importance of Sino-Russian relations is emphasized. The two sides are taking a series of measures to expand economic and trade cooperation. From Chinese perspectives, the most favorable solution is under the mediation of Russia, the United States and the European Union, because the political powers represented the benefits of the Midwest and eastern regions, Ukrainian and the Russian, through dialogue and negotiations, may reach a feasible, effective mediation about Ukraine crisis. The content may include the state system, the power division between the central government and local governments, the status of Russian.

This study basing on 101 papers written by Chinese scholars in the past 10 years are collected from Chinese core journals, all authors are experts focusing on research regarding Russia, EU and CIS. In addition to academic articles, they also give public comments on mass media such as "People's Daily", "China Daily" and "Global times" to guide public opinions. Further study could focus on tracing Chinese public comments on Ukraine Crisis on new media, such as in webchat or blogs and Weibo (micro-blogs), but considering the geographical distance between China and Ukraine, Chinese public is less familiar with this hot topic and could hardly submit valuable suggestion or impact on government decision-making process.

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Abstract

As one of the most serious geopolitical crisis since the end of the Cold War, the Ukraine Crisis has an impact not only upon the reshaping of the Eurasian political architecture, but also upon the reconstruction of the world order. This paper deploys content analysis of 45 academic papers on "Ukraine Crisis" in Chinese core journals (CSCD) from December 2013 to April 2015, which are further compared with 56 papers whose research subject is "Ukraine politics" in the same journal database from the January 2004 to November 2013. It explores how the Chinese academia discusses Ukraine from a wider range of perspectives including international political economy, politics security and international relations in the past 10 years. It finds that Chinese scholars give different interpretations to the development of

Ukraine Crisis. From a perspective of institutional transformation, Ukraine is an important case of a political failure leading to social disorders. From a geopolitical perspective, Russia, the United States and the European Union each have their respective objectives in Ukraine. From a perspective of imperial studies, although the “new Cold War” thesis has been overplayed, Russia will double its efforts to look for alignment with anti-west forces, resulting in more complication in alignment among major countries. The impact of the crisis is yet to be felt globally and its warning lessons are to be learned by China.

Keywords: Ukraine crisis, EU, Russia, geopolitics, cultural identity

KAMILA SCHÖLL-MAZUREK

When geopolitics hinders transformation – the impact of geopolitical games on social-economic development in Ukraine

Since 1989, East-Central Europe has witnessed various processes of transformation and modernisation. The eastern regions of Germany, Poland and Ukraine carried a similar communist burden, however, each of the three decided to go on its own path towards transformation¹. The diverse process of transformation of a society and a state may display many aspects, while progress regarding its implementation depends upon historical, cultural, economic and international considerations. The process of transformation in Ukraine, due to numerous conflicts inside and outside of politics, is the most problematic one. The eastern part of Germany and Poland did not face such a complicated geopolitical situation as that of the transformation in Ukraine. Presently, both countries aim their foreign policies at supporting Ukrainian changes by means of various instruments in bilateral relations, at the EU forum, and in the international arena.

The article attempts to prove that in times of conflict and complicated geopolitical games, transformation cannot progress because society and politicians are focused on maintaining the status quo and not on finding solutions or developing the mechanisms of civil society, good government or free trade. Moreover, in the case of Ukraine, the condition of wide social approval of the direction and shape of transfor-

¹ M. Sapper, *Konflikte in der Transformation Osteuropas: Zur Spezifik der Konfliktkonstellation und Konfliktkultur*, [in:] *Der Osten Europas im Prozess der Differenzierung. Fortschritte und Misserfolge der Transformation*, Jahrbuch 1996/97, Köln: Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, p. 323.

mation has not been satisfied due to the country's internal divisions into the western, Catholic part, and the eastern, Orthodox part.

The paper outlines the specificity of the Ukrainian transformation. It presents considerations and barriers, as well as selected aspects of the role played by Germany and Poland as the catalysts for this process. The discourse concludes with a presentation of the recommended changes.

Specificity of transformations in the post-communist countries, particularly in in Ukraine

A transformation comprises three phases: consolidation, liberalisation and modernisation. The listed phases should occur in three key domains: politics (democratisation), economy (a free, competitive market), and society (an active, participating civil society conscious of its interests). The multidirectional processes of transformation should progress along with the changes in the regions. Effective transformation is characterised by: clarity of conception, authority and competence of the elites implementing the reforms; the ability of the central political actors in charge of the process to take decisions and react, and to regulate the intensity of the reforms paving the way for change².

The endogenous factors which influence the process of transformation include a constellation of structural conditions within political and social circumstances, cultural considerations, and the structure of post-communist vestiges. The success of transformation is also dependent on the acceptance of the public and the attitude of the elites. Among the exogenous factors we may list the structure of international surroundings and dependencies, support from business circles, a readiness to cooperate and integrate, willingness to collaborate with external actors expressed by the government, growth in the number of foreign investments, expansive trade relations with foreign partners, and support of domestic and international institutions.

One of the prominent conditions influencing the course of transformation is the communist heritage. The burden of the communist period weighs heavily on the present conversion of Ukraine. The backwardness of the economy, delayed industrialisation, lack of experience in articulating interests by citizens and lack of national

² H.-H. Lehmann, *Gemeinsamkeiten und Divergenzen im Prozess der osteuropäischen Wirtschaftstransformation: Stichworte für eine Zwischenbilanz, Der Osten Europas im Prozess der Differenzierung. Fortschritte und Misserfolge der Transformation*, Jahrbuch 1996/97, Köln: Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, p. 195.

independence are the factors characterising unstable post-communist countries. In such societies, the legal order used to be imposed from above. Power was wielded by the people who had held the top level government positions during the times of communism, thus creating a conviction that there was no justice. This, in turn, developed a sense of helplessness in the public, hindering citizens' participation. On the other hand, making the society accustomed to the conviction that responsibility for the public's social situation is taken over by the state was a main obstacle to implementing an entrepreneurship and liberal market model. The regulations and authorities imposed by force have never been legitimised by the people.

A peculiar type of legal culture developed, in which the citizens continuously searched for gaps in the regulations and various (also illegal; i.e. corruptive) ways of negotiating³. It is this unsound attitude which frustrates the introduction of reforms in Ukraine and has undermined the international society's trust in Ukraine. Communism was built on a utopian idea of a community of people in which there was no room for the needs of the individual⁴. Thus, the introduction of the notion of individualism, so characteristic of West European neo-liberalism, encounters problems. For this reason, the success of transformation depends upon the existence of the pre-communist tradition of citizens' spirit and the rule of law, to which society and the elites may presently refer. In the case of Ukraine, yet another important factor is its functioning for twenty years in a more or less effective democratic reality, as well as the specificity of the Euromaidan generation, driven by European values.

A common feature of post-socialist regions of East-Central Europe is the unique attitude to the idea of a nation state. Its dominant position is being acknowledged mostly thanks to historic experience and a craving for finding national identity and this fact leads to a popular support for a strong state held in esteem in international relations. At the same time, in the face of a multitude of tasks at the central level, the state should not take upon itself the whole responsibility for building civil society and a regional identity at a local level, mainly due to lack of competence in this respect. Some burden should be borne by Ukrainian civil society, and the starting point is overcoming history and directing transformation efforts towards pragmatic economic reforms.

Political-economic transformation in post-socialist countries was supposed to boil down to the election of new authorities and preparing the economy to enter world markets. In most cases, however, new authorities would originate from the

³ S. Avineri, *Chancen und Hindernisse auf dem Weg zu einer bürgerlichen Gesellschaft in Mittel- und Osteuropa*, [in:] *Demokratie und Marktwirtschaft in Osteuropa*, W. Weidenfeld (ed.), p. 66.

⁴ W. Lamentowicz, *Politische Instabilität in Ost- und Mitteleuropa: innenpolitische Gefährdungen der europäischen Sicherheit und Integration*, [in:] *Demokratie und Marktwirtschaft in Osteuropa. Strategie für Europa*, W. Weidenfeld (ed.), p. 87.

communist nomenklatura, which negatively impacted the effectiveness of political transformation. The processes of political conversion in ex-communist countries required “social redefining of the new situation, and thus involved attempts to attribute to it new meanings, not only based on a scientific model, but on actual experience of people. After 1989, Central-East Europe witnessed history accelerating at an unprecedented rate, which resulted in a missing sense of stability and a psychological and social destabilization. Many of the old reference points lost their validity, as well as all the cognitive categories which earlier used to organize and order the common imagination”⁵.

Political transformation involves processes of internationalisation and globalisation, as well participation in international cooperation at the lower levels of government. The partnership of Ukrainian regions with their German and Polish counterparts could be the key to initiate these processes. One of the foundations of such an undertaking is the Europeanization of Ukraine. Lack of prospects for the realisation of the country’s European aspirations is viewed as a denial to carry out effective transformation, and strengthens the idea of a nation state in its local dimension and, thus, may weaken pro-European circles in Ukraine. This is an argument for supporting the consciousness of the Ukrainian public with regard to building a civil society and creating an effective state following the example of Western Europe.

Good practices and the cause of the failure of transformation efforts in Ukraine

The political, social and economic transformation in Ukraine has had to face many challenges. The weakness of the process and, in consequence, the lack of any effective decentralisation resulted from economic, geopolitical, but also mental considerations.

The social-political system in Ukraine is not stable. The country has witnessed many changes of power. The governmental perturbations frustrated the development of democracy, civil society, and the free market economy. The geopolitical games of Russia leading to the armed conflict in Donbas were devastating for the state budget and blocked the process of change at the lowest, the local level. The conflict and the related economic problems impacted the quality of life, which, in turn, resulted in the society’s unwillingness to support the changes. Economic conditions worsened

⁵ *Po komunizmie. O mitach w Polsce współczesnej*, M. Frybes, P. Michel, Warszawa 2000, p. 182.

the quality of life for Ukrainians. The Human Development Index of 2013 ranked Ukraine at the 83rd place after Mexico and Peru⁶⁷.

Difficulties in carrying out the process of political transformation based on democratic rule in Ukraine also follow from the lack of approval of transformation strategy by society and some elites. Moreover, Ukrainian institutions are ineffective and block each other's actions. Poorly developed market structures and unfavourable economic solutions prevent foreign investors from entering the market⁸. The successful implementing of political decisions often used to be dependent on negotiations with local politicians. Authority was used to realise private, egoistic, regional interests⁹.

Trust, indispensable for social transformation, motivating people to accept renunciations for the sake of reconstruction of the foundations of the state and economy has always been undermined. The Ukrainian government, by refusing to sign the Association Agreement with the EU in 2013, provoked the popular protests in the Maidan. Politicians who should act according to the will of the people acted against it. The Maidan protests were about objection to the government's policy, corruption and to the Ukrainian political system which created a regime that fully admits to corruption and nepotism. The suppression of the protest manifested disregard for the values represented by the protesters. Euromaidan, being the "revolution of dignity", cared much less about national identification than for the values which the society had wanted to introduce: democracy, economic growth and a free market.

Transformation requires at least a minimum sense of safety in the closest international neighbourhood. This condition could not be met in the dangerous times of the annexation of Crimea by Russia and continued fighting in Donbas. The barrier to the realisation of change is Russian opposition to the EU's political engagement in the region. Ukraine will be able to develop when it is no longer dependent on Russian financing and energy, and when the Donbas conflict ends. Russia also obstructs all attempts to build stability (so important for transformation), using financial means (e.g. influencing trade, customs, raising gas prices or threatening to "turn off the valve").

⁶ Human Development Report 2014 Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience, at <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr14-report-en-1.pdf>, p. 37.

⁷ A. Pradetto, *Die Ukraine-Krise: Geopolitik und Identität im Verhältnis zwischen Russland und dem Westen*, [in:] *Die Friedens-Warte. Journal of International Peace and Organization*, Band 89, Heft 1-2, Berlin 2014, p. 51.

⁸ A. Wittkowsky, *Die ukrainische Krankheit: Kleine politische Ökonomie einer hausgemachten Transformationskrise*, [in:] *Deutschland, Polen, Europa. Deutsche und polnische Vorüberlegungen zu einer gemeinsamen Ostpolitik der erweiterten Europäischen Union*, D. Bingen, K. Wóycicki (ed.), Wiesbaden 2002, p. 152.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-155.

Successful transformation in Ukraine also requires reforms within its energy policy. A reduction of gas consumption by increasing the effectiveness of Ukrainian industry and the utilisation of alternative sources of energy would reduce the country's dependence on Russian supplies. And in this respect, following Poland's request, the EU made a move in the right direction by facilitating the redirection of gas supplies to Ukraine. Thus, in the critical moments of "turning off the valve", Ukraine would be able to obtain Russian gas from Europe. However, according to the experts, this instrument is bound to be ineffective.

It is the young people who are the catalysts of change. They have a lot in common with their European peers - they get scholarships, participate in school exchanges, etc. The Euromaidan generation comprises people who know Europe and who know the world thanks to educational programs and modern technology¹⁰. International projects offered by foreign institutions are often directed exclusively to them.

Twenty years of Ukrainian democracy created hope for a better state, in spite of the fact that the country has a problem with fear and society's strong distrust. Social problems are aggravated by people's readiness to emigrate. An American researcher, Stephen Castes¹¹, views migration as a phase of transformation. Accepting this thesis, we may risk a claim that the social transformation is never going to end, unless we resolve migration issues which are intense in Ukraine. According to Polish and Ukrainian sources, the number of Ukrainians in Poland keeps growing. More and more Ukrainian students study at Polish universities. In 2014, the consulates issued 800.000 visas in Ukraine, and this number may increase¹². Such a significant number of Ukrainians in Poland enables Poland to influence prospective changes in Ukraine. Poland should offer training in methods of management and social development, which may help educate politicians for transforming the Ukrainian state in the future.

At the forum of the EU it was Poland and Germany who tried to help Ukraine, and their motivation does not merely stem from "playing chess" against Russia. It becomes evident in the example of the proposed association agreements in which no limits to trade with Russia are introduced, whereas the Eurasian Customs Union imposes barriers to business contacts with other countries.

Poland joined the EU in 2004, thus creating a new geopolitical order in which Ukraine was cut off from the West. This fact had a negative impact on social and

¹⁰ E. Brok, *Sanktionen – Amtsenthebung – Neuwahlen*, [in:] *Majdan! Ukraine, Europa*, C. Dathé, A. Rostek (eds.), 2014, p. 80.

¹¹ Por. S. Castles, *Migration and Social Transformation*, Inaugural Lecture for the Migration Studies Unit (MSU), LSE 15 November 2007, at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/government/research/resgroups/MSU/documents/eventsRelated/castles151107-presentation.pdf>, 29 June 2015.

¹² In Poland, the number of Ukrainians has significantly increased, at <http://www.kresy.pl/wydarzenia,spoleczenstwo?zobacz/w-polsce-znaczo-wzrosla-liczba-ukraincow#of12th>, 16 October 2015.

political attitudes within the country. While up until 2004 Ukraine had a positive effect on the difficult process of transformation and intercultural contacts with the inhabitants of eastern regions, the subsequent sealing off of the EU zone at the Polish-Ukraine border deepened the divisions and led to a worsening of the economic condition of numerous individuals on the Ukrainian side, especially those who had benefited earlier from cross-border trade. This situation could be remedied by the abolition of visas for Ukrainian subjects, proposed by the head of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker¹³.

Social-economic transformation is determined by external factors such as the support given to Ukraine at the international forum. Germany played a significant role in this respect as it convinced the EU to impose a policy of sanctions on Russia and dialogue initiated on several levels (postponing the Russia-EU summit, freezing assets of selected individuals and enterprises, imposing travel bans, the suspension of EU support to Russian projects, economic sanctions against Crimea).

According to the German expert Kai Olaf Lang, further steps should be aimed at including Ukraine in the “deep and comprehensive free trade zone (DCFTA) by signing an Association Agreement and stimulating economic integration and political association streamlining ‘pragmatic engagement’ in key domains and areas – Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Crimea, and possibly in the future in the demarcation zone in Donbas. This should be done by means of at least partially covering these regions by regulations concerning trade. Under some conditions this might extend to mobility and the EU’s expanded presence (in the sphere of foreign policy and security) based on stabilisation programmes in the Western Balkans. The reforms of the security sector could be conducted by means of small advisory missions such as EUAM (*Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine*) which earmarked technical-economic support for modernisation and reorientation of the arms sector, which, however controversial, might have the potential to develop in the context of possible Ukrainian membership in NATO. The EU could also propose some forms of security partnership within the Organization for Security and Co-ordination in Europe in a shape that would be tolerable for Russia”¹⁴.

Western Europe realises the financial bankruptcy of Ukraine and its inability to undertake the transformation effort without external support, and has tried to ease part of the country’s financial burden. Part of this program is a donation of 3 billion euro from the EU budget, a loan of 1,6 billion euro, and 8 billion euro transferred

¹³ Ukraine erhält 20 Prozent Schuldenerlass, at <https://www.tagesschau.de/wirtschaft/finanzkrise-ukraine-103.html>, 12 October 2015.

¹⁴ K.-O. Lang, B. Lippert, „Optionen der EU für den Umgang mit Russland und den östlichen Partnerländern »Kooperative Konfrontation« als Richtschnur über den Riga-Gipfel hinaus”, *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik Aktuell* 2015, no. 43, p. 6-8.

by the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development¹⁵.

However, economic reforms are still indispensable, since due to the conflict with the pro-Russian separatists, inflation has reached a level of 24,9%, and, according to data, as of the end of 2014, the country's indebtedness amounted to 61,7% in foreign currency and assumed a level of 1100,6 billion hryvnia, being the equivalent of 70% of GDP¹⁶.

The transformation of Ukraine is an important element in the stabilisation of the region, since any internal weakness in the country makes it easy prey for neo-hegemonic powers such as the Russian Federation.

The conditions of decentralisation should promote new initiatives and non-governmental organisations. The success of transformation hinges on the transfer of knowledge concerning civil society. Mobility, the modernisation of the economy, the transfer of structures and organisational culture, know-how and intercultural exchange result from regional openness and international relations, intensifying the conversion processes. Mutual relations secure stability. Thus, understanding the process is expressed in the policy of assistance rendered to Ukraine by international institutions and EU funds. Among the most important instruments we may list are the Support Package for Ukraine¹⁷, the activities of the European Endowment for Democracy, and programs financed by the EU, including the program Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-20 realised within the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument, or Program Erasmus+. In Poland, one should note the efforts of the International Solidarity Foundation reactivated in 2011, which intends to finance 25 projects in Ukraine in 2016 out of the Polish-Canadian Endowment for Democracy funds, and the program of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs the "Eastern Dimension of Polish Foreign Policy 2015", "Humanitarian Aid 2015".

In order to support the development of a civil society as a condition necessary for successful transformation, the German Office of Foreign Affairs allocated 14 million euro for projects involving countries of the Eastern Partnership. The political goal of these actions is strengthening Ukraine in its efforts to build civil society, providing young people with economic and social prospects so that they may work within their home countries on creating open, pluralist societies. This aim is to be achieved by supporting transformation and integration processes, by projects developing educa-

¹⁵ Package for Ukraine, at http://europa.eu/newsroom/files/pdf/ukraine_pl.pdf, p. 2, 16 October 2015.

¹⁶ S. Sadykow, *Die Ukraine unter der Kuratel der Kreditgeber*, 30 January 2015, http://ukraine-nachrichten.de/ukraine-unter-kuratel-kreditgeber_4204/?hide_cookie_warning=1, 16 October 2015.

¹⁷ Support package for Ukraine, at http://europa.eu/newsroom/files/pdf/ukraine_pl.pdf, p. 1, 16 October 2015.

tion and culture (in particular focused on the mass media, academic circles, vocational education, cultural initiatives involving youth). These measures are intended to stabilise Ukraine and consequently create or foster the structural foundations of civil society.

Ukraine – directions of changes and recommendations for the future

Ukraine needs an effective, independent bureaucracy and free media. Some steps have been taken to achieve this end, as Ukrainian state television will be converted into public television based on the British or German model. However, there is still a strong need for reform, since politics is corrupt and a lot of money has been used improperly.

The project of the Eastern Partnership is designated to mitigate the effects of blocking the intercultural transfer. Hopes are high that common initiatives within the EU program, even if they end in failure, not only in the case of Ukraine, but also Armenia (accession to the Eurasian Customs Union), should lead to the opening up of society and establishing new ties with neighbours. Ukraine is interested in obtaining help, however, the condition for effective transformation in Ukraine is the modernisation of Russia. No country can exist in isolation from its international environment. History proves that homogenous societies functioning in isolation are apt to degenerate.

Full cooperation aimed at bringing about transformation may be only ensured providing that positive impulses occur in three domains: foreign and regional policy; in politics at a governmental level, focused on the intensification of combined trans-regional efforts; and in a European policy that is favourable for the Eastern Partnership. The latter may stimulate the engagement of Poland and Germany in renewal of collaboration with their partners by means of the EU's Eastern Partnership programs¹⁸.

Cooperation within the Eastern Partnership is more important because the abolition of visas is a long-term project due to the related threats for European security (migration, crime, smuggling, etc).

It is possible that by adopting a fully professional attitude regarding the Eastern Partnership, realization of trans-regional tasks may be achieved as well as encouraging the enhancement of Polish-German cooperation.

¹⁸ Compare: *Polacy i Niemcy wspólnie w integrującej się Europie. Szanse i wyzwania*, K. Mazurek, O. Plaze (ed.), Kraków 2010.

The development of partnerships is in the best interests of the Ukrainian state and European security. Germany and Poland, who are both important partners for Ukraine, should play a main role in this process, creating at the same time, a new model of effective cooperation within the European Union.

Keeping in mind the unique experience of transformation and their relatively strong position in the international arena, Poland and Germany may assist their neighbours to identify their goals without interfering in the selection of a method of improving the living standard of their citizens, but rather indicating the threats and presenting the possibilities created by a trans-border and inter-regional cooperation.

The attitude of the European Union, and in particular of Poland and Germany, should be focused on an awareness of the complex character of changes in Ukraine, on financial support, but also on cautioning against a willingness to adopt partial or compromised solutions. Monitoring and supporting the transformation processes in the countries where democracy is in its infancy is in the interest of the EU, since political instability in Eastern Europe is a threat for European security and integration¹⁹, while geopolitical disputes delay the progress of transformation and impact the lives of ordinary people.

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¹⁹ S. Avineri, *Chancen und Hindernisse auf dem Weg zu einer bürgerlichen Gesellschaft in Mittel- und Osteuropa*, w: *Demokratie und Marktwirtschaft in Osteuropa*, W. Weidenfeld (ed.), Gütersloh 1995, p. 66.

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Abstract

The article discusses the problems of transformation in Ukraine. It examines the issue of the financial and tangible support provided by Poland, Germany and the European Union. It concludes with the statement that armed conflict hinders social-economic transformation, thus actions aimed at backing the development of civil society and strengthening the region politically are particularly important.

Keywords: Ukraine, social-economic development, geopolitics

JEFFREY ELLISON BROWN

Europeanization Postponed: The Role of Veto Players in Shaping Convergence With The EU's Conflict Resolution and Internal Market Integration Policies in Moldova and Georgia

Launched in the wake of 2004's 'big bang' accession round, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and the Eastern Partnership (EP) are designed to foster stability, democracy and prosperity in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. The ENP in particular seeks to draw states in the Eastern neighborhood closer to the European Union (EU) by creating incentives for them to "accelerate political association and further economic integration" (Council of the European Union 2009:6). However, by stressing the approximation of national legislation to that of the EU through Association Agreements (AAs) and Deep and Comprehensive Free-Trade Areas (DCFTAs), the EU pursues a brand of convergence in which its Eastern partners are expected to unilaterally implement the EU's model. The one-way nature of the EU's policy diffusion through the ENP means that states in the Eastern neighborhood are meant to implement EU policies without the finality of EU accession. There is, however, great variation in what EU rules and policies ENP states adopt and implement.

Given the conditions outlined above, how successful can the EU be in affecting change in Eurasia when employing its newest version of conditionality? To what extent do regimes in the Eastern neighborhood implement EU rules and policies aimed at harmonizing their markets and politics with the EU? How does implementation differ across 'partner' states and policy domains? In order to measure the scope and

depth of policy implementation, I investigate two policy areas – conflict resolution and the internal market – in what are considered two of the three ‘most likely cases’ for successful policy implementation: Georgia and Moldova.¹ By comparing differences and similarities in policy implementation across policy fields and states, I also address a more analytical question: how do domestic veto players shape implementation (or non-implementation) of EU policies in the Eastern neighborhood?

In this paper, I argue that implementation of the EU’s ENP policy mechanisms is overall minimal, with domestic veto players dictating the pace and depth of implementation across case studies and policy fields. I find that degree of policy implementation varies little between policy fields and case studies, with any implementation in the field of internal market integration driven by the EU’s sector-specific conditionality and technical assistance. Second, I find that formal (state) and informal (non-state) veto players maintain *the* decisive role in blocking or facilitating the implementation of EU policies in the domain of internal market integration. In the domain of conflict resolution, I find that in addition to veto players, implementation (or a lack thereof) is molded by a host of tertiary factors including the nature of the conflicts, external influence from Russia, and the EU’s own institutional weaknesses.

Surveying the literature on Europeanization, we see that it reaches quite pessimistic conclusions about the ability of the EU to induce policy change and “hit across its borders.”² Taking the indigenous circumstances of ‘partner’ states into account, recent scholarship moves away from the application of macro-level assessments of successful convergence as applied in CEE (democracy and prosperity, for example) and toward an analysis of sector-specific rule adoption and implementation.³ Indeed, Langbein and her co-authors find that sector-specific conditionality induces change in narrow fields such as regulatory compliance when tied to policy-specific rewards offered by the EU.⁴

However, cross-country analysis of policy implementation in the neighborhood has drawn mixed conclusions, with Delcour (2013)⁵ finding scant evidence of suc-

¹ J. Langbein, T. Börzel, “Introduction: Explaining Policy Change in the European Union’s Eastern Neighborhood”, in J. Langbein, T. Börzel (eds.), *Explaining Policy Change in the European Union’s Eastern Neighborhood*, Milton Park, U.K. 2014.

² T.A. Börzel, T.A., Y. Pamuk, “Pathologies of Europeanisation: Fighting Corruption in the Southern Caucasus”, *West European Politics* 2012, vol. 35, pp. 79-97.

³ O.B.P. Sierra, “Shaping the Neighborhood? The EU’s Impact on Georgia”, *Europe-Asia Studies* 2011, vol. 63, pp. 1377-1398.

⁴ J. Langbein, T. Börzel, “Introduction: Explaining Policy Change in the European Union’s Eastern Neighborhood”, in J. Langbein, T. Börzel (eds.), *Explaining Policy Change in the European Union’s Eastern Neighborhood*, Milton Park, U.K. 2014.

⁵ L. Delcour, “Meandering Europeanisation. EU policy instruments and policy convergence in Georgia under the Eastern Partnership”, *East European Politics* 2013, vol. 29, pp. 344-357.

cessful change, Dimitrova & Dragneva (2013)⁶ pointing to shallow and patchy compliance, and others finding that measurable policy change has indeed occurred despite the relatively high costs associated with compliance.⁷

DCFTA Implementation in Moldova

In Moldova, the DG Trade's 2009 recommendations were eagerly adopted by the freshly minted pro-EU coalition, which garnered just over 50% of the vote in parliamentary elections held in July of 2009. However, the new government exhibited a severe lack of negotiating prowess and technical know-how, with one DG Trade official likening the situation in 2009 to: "Romania, just after the fall of Communism."⁸ Moldova's "extreme acceptance"⁹ of the DCFTA (and later the AA) stems from the fact that the pro-EU governing coalition maintains a razor-thin margin of support, and thus seeks to cement Moldova's pro-EU orientation through compliance with the DCFTA.

While much early resistance to the DCFTA centered on agriculture and the growing and processing of food products, many small to medium size producers gradually implemented portions of the *acquis* after the institution of successive Russian embargoes on wine, apples, and vegetables.¹⁰ However, the under-developed nature of Moldova's banking and credit sector has meant that larger agricultural producers and processors facing high adaption costs have often thrown their weight behind pro-Russian political forces.¹¹ Furthermore, despite having retained Soviet-era technical facilities for the inspection of food processing facilities and farms, officials at both the EEAS and DG Trade state that corruption and a lack of basic technical expertise and training have thus far prevented Moldova from advancing far on its ambitious plans for implementation.¹² EU officials also cite a lack of strategic vision concerning the DCFTA, with young, western-educated officials systematically underestimating

⁶ A. Dimitrova, R. Dragneva, "Shaping Convergence with the EU in Foreign Policy and State Aid in Post-Orange Ukraine: Weak Incentives, Powerful Veto Players", *Europe-Asia Studies* 2013, Vol. 65, pp. 658–81.

⁷ J. Langbein, "European Governance towards the Eastern neighborhood: Transcending or Redrawing Europe's East-West divide?", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 2014, vol. 52, pp. 157–174.

⁸ Interview with a member of DG Trade, Brussels, 5 February 2015.

⁹ Interview with a member of the EEAS, Brussels, 6 February 2015.

¹⁰ Interview with a member of the Moldovan Delegation to the EU, 6 February 2015.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Interviews with members of DG Trade and the EEAS, 5–6 February 2015.

the administrative capacity of their own government to implement complex chapters dealing with everything from public procurement to standards for industrial products.¹³

Parliamentary elections held in November 2014 saw the ascendance of three political parties that have explicitly campaigned against the DCFTA and AA. They include: Patria, led by Renato Usatii, President of VPT-NN, a major supplier to Russian Railways (which is itself controlled by Vladimir Yakunin, a close confidant of Vladimir Putin);¹⁴ the Party of Socialists, headed by Igor Dodon, who has referred to the DCFTA as “the accursed trade agreement” while campaigning under the slogan “A Prosperous Moldova Together with a Powerful Russia”¹⁵; and the Party of Communists, which have vacillated between support the DCFTA and the Eurasian Customs Union.

In addition to the emergence of overtly anti-DCFTA forces, veto players lurk within pro-EU factions. The ability of supposedly pro-EU forces to negatively impact DCFTA implementation should not be underestimated: an official at DG Trade notes that, in Moldova, the ‘push’ for implementation comes from young, Western-educated officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration rather than the Ministry of Economy (which still contains between 400-500 staff from the Soviet era),¹⁶ thereby opening up space for veto players to express “dissatisfaction” with specific annexes of the DCFTA.¹⁷ In addition, multiple EU officials confirm the continued influence of two businessmen who happen to lead the two largest pro-EU voting blocs: Vlad Filat of the Liberal Democratic Party and Vladimir Plahotniuc of the Democratic Party.¹⁸ Since breaking with the Democratic Party in 2009, Filat has been dogged by accusations of smuggling and import-export improprieties during his tenure as director general of the Department of Privatization and State Property Administration. Plahotniuc, a ‘self-made’ businessman, grew his wealth while acting as custodian of a holding company owned by the head of the Party of Communists and former President, Vladimir Veronin. While Plahotniuc holds few assets in Russia, he maintains substantial business interests in Romania and Western Europe. In addition, Plahotniuc allegedly exerts control over the Office of the Prosecutor Gener-

¹³ Interview with a member of DG Trade, Brussels, 5 February 2015.

¹⁴ V. Ursu, R. Coalson, “East or West? Divided Moldova’s Tense Election Season Comes Down to the Wire”, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 27 November 2015, at <http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova-elections-east-or-west/26713779.html>.

¹⁵ V. Socor, “Russia’s New Moldovan Favorite: Igor Dodon’s Socialist Party”, *Jamestown Foundation*, 4 December 2014, at http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=43150&cHash=b57a95e78b176c6fbb0034829620a952#.VOenGEI1SJl.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Interview with a member of DG Trade, 5 February 2015.

¹⁸ Interviews with members of the Moldovan Delegation to the EU and EEAS, Brussels, 5-6 February 2015.

al and the Supreme Council of Magistrates, which theoretically makes it possible for him to appoint judges and investigate officials.¹⁹ While there are strong links between Plahotniuc and the Party of Communists led by Vladimir Veronin, it remains unclear as to whether or not Plahotniuc is willing to give up “the structure he controls” without first being offered blanket immunity from prosecution by the Moldovan government and the EU.²⁰

Other forces working against implementation of the DCFTA include the break-away territory of Transnistria and the Autonomous Region of Gagauzia. In a referendum held on February 3, 2015, 97.2% of eligible Gagauz voted against economic integration with the EU, with 98.9% voicing support for accession to the Eurasian Customs Union.²¹ Perhaps not surprisingly, the Moldovan Orthodox Church, whose Metropolitan Bishop is appointed directly by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow, has also campaigned against the DCFTA. During the 2009 and 2014 Parliamentary elections, the church often linked support for the DCFTA and AA to perceived EU permissiveness toward homosexuality, prostitution, and drug use.²²

DCFTA Implementation in Georgia

As in Moldova, resistance to implementation of the DCFTA has centered on agriculture, which employs 50% of the population and accounts for 10% of GDP.²³ While DG Trade has targeted €27 million in assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture in 2015, a non-public meeting summary of the EU-Georgia Association Committee in Trade Configuration registers tepid and halting implementation, noting: “from a technical perspective, the approximation process [in the agricultural sector] for Georgia is expected to be long and challenging.”²⁴

As is the case with Moldova, members of DG Trade and the EEAS state that Georgia has taken on incredibly ambitious targets, while also noting that administrative

¹⁹ Interview with a member of the Moldovan Delegation to the EU, Brussels, 6 February 2015.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ “Gaugazia Voters Reject Close EU Ties for Moldova”, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 26 February 2015, at <http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova-gagauz-referendum-counting/25251251.html>.

²² Anonymous interview with a member of an ENP member state delegation to the EU, Brussels, 5 February 2015.

²³ L. Delcour, “Meandering Europeanisation. EU policy instruments and policy convergence in Georgia under the Eastern Partnership”, *East European Politics* 2013, vol. 29, pp. 344-357.

²⁴ DG Trade, “Meeting Agenda of the EU-Georgia Association Committee in Trade Configuration”, (non-public), 3 December 2014.

capacity, political will, and strategic vision are more evolved and consistent. While officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have played a large role in negotiating the DCFTA and AA, technical experts at the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development are responsible for implementing the AA. While Georgia has shown slightly higher competency and consistency in implementing the DCFTA, officials at the EEAS and DG Trade note a drop off in implementation since the ouster of President Saakashvili and his United National Movement in 2012.²⁵

Before 2012, opposition to the DCFTA emanated from pro-Russian veto players marginalized under the Saakashvili administration. These include elements of the current Georgian Dream coalition and former Soviet-era business elites such as Gogi Topadze, who benefited from the privatization of state owned assets during the 1990s.²⁶ Since the election of Bidzina Ivanishvili's Georgian Dream coalition in parliamentary elections held in October 2012, the Georgian government has strived to re-establish smooth diplomatic and economic relations with Russia. Russia's embargoes on Georgian mineral water, wine, and transport have been lifted, with one former official summing up the "no questions asked" approach to Russian investment by quipping "Russian money is sweet and European money is sour."²⁷ Rapprochement has in part been fueled by a coalition of pro-Russia NGOs, which have received funds from non-transparent sources.²⁸ Furthermore, ministers and other bureaucrats from the Saakashvili era with expertise in negotiating and implementing the DCFTA have resigned or been forced from office, meaning that there is now a lack of technical expertise just as DCFTA implementation timeframes narrow.²⁹ Meanwhile, Ivanishvili, who retired from politics in 2013, remains the world's 294th wealthiest person, with assets of \$5.2 billion.³⁰ While Ivanishvili continues to exert influence within Georgian Dream, his role in hindering or aiding implementation of the DCFTA remains unclear.

The Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church has stoked resistance to the DCFTA, AA, and rapprochement with the EU more generally. While the institutional setup and hierarchy of the Georgian Orthodox Church differs from that of Orthodox Churches in Moldova and Russia, public opinion polls show that 95%³¹ of Georgians express satisfaction with the work of the church. In addition, there is evidence that the church has actively sheltered Soviet-era elites that have benefited from

²⁵ Interviews with members of DG Trade and the EEAS, Brussels, 5-6 February 2015.

²⁶ Anonymous interview with a former member of the Georgian government, Paris, 9 February 2015.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "#292: Bidzina Ivanishvili", *Forbes*, 25 February 2015, at <http://www.forbes.com/profile/bidzina-ivanishvili>.

³¹ "Georgia's mighty Orthodox Church", *BBC*, 23 July 2013, at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-23103853>.

privatization and business connections to Russia.³² As the sole Soviet-era institution left untouched by the raft of reforms introduced under President Saakashvili and Prime Minister Garibashvili, the church has also tied its opposition to the DCFTA and AA to social issues, such as the inevitable ‘implementation’ of supposed EU values such as homosexuality and women’s empowerment³³.

Conflict Resolution in Moldova/Transnistria

In contrast to Georgia, Moldova has welcomed the adoption and implementation of the EU’s package of economic measures aimed at fostering rapprochement with Transnistria. According to the EU, Transnistria’s inclusion in the DCFTA would raise local GDP by 3.6%, while its rejection would lead to a 5.2% contraction. However, according to a recent assessment by Transnistria’s President, Evgenij Schevchuk, Transnistria’s inclusion in the DCFTA would lead to a 30% reduction in (local) external trade and a drop of 28% in budget revenues.³⁴ However, while the EEAS insists that Transnistria has a “structural interest in trading with the EU,” conflict resolution in Transnistria has been treated with increasing ‘indifference’ by the Moldovan government itself.³⁵ Thus, while Moldovan authorities have permitted the export of Transnistrian goods with Moldovan customs stamps, there is reticence to engage in further substantive measures that could result in unwanted federalization or wholesale reunification.

In addition to the application of direct economic pressure and sanctions on the Transnistrian authorities, the EU has employed a raft of additional ‘low politics’ measures such as funding for IDPs, efforts to increase people-to-people interactions, and increased focus on developing civil society.³⁶ In contrast to Georgia, confidence building has taken place at the highest level, with Moldova’s Vlad Filat and Transnistria’s *de facto* “President” Yevgeny Schevchuk having their meetings in locales such as

³² Anonymous interview with a member of an ENP member state delegation to the EU, Brussels, 5 February 2015.

³³ Interview with a former member of the Georgian government, Paris, 9 February 2015.

³⁴ M. Emerson, “Countdown to the Vilnius Summit: The EU’s Trade Relations with Moldova and the South Caucasus”, *CEPS Brussels*, 31 January 2014, at <http://www.ceps.eu/book/countdown-vilnius-summit-eus-trade-relations-moldova-and-south-caucasus>.

³⁵ Interview with a member of the EEAS, Brussels, 6 February 2015.

³⁶ N. Popescu, *Post-Soviet Conflicts: Stealth Intervention*, London 2011; G. Sasse, “The ENP and the EU’s Eastern Neighbours: Ukraine and Moldova as Test Cases”, in R.G. Whitman, S. Wolff (eds.), *The European Neighbourhood Policy in Perspective: Context, Implementation and Impact*, New York 2010.

Odessa ‘certified’ by the EEAS. Meanwhile, the EU’s efforts at augmenting people-to-people contacts have revolved around an (as of yet unrealized) €30 million program to increase exchange across the Dniester river dividing Moldova and Transnistria.³⁷ Thus, while Moldova’s indifference has promoted demilitarization and the mooting of ethnic and nationalist demands for reunification, it has also resulted in less ‘pull’ for conflict resolution from Moldova. Therefore, while implementation of the EU’s conflict resolution measures has been greater than in Georgia, pro-EU forces in Moldova may very well prioritize relations with the EU over the resolution of a conflict that has now entered its 25th year.

Conflict Resolution in Georgia

The Association Agenda between the EU and Georgia lists a total of twelve general measures of cooperation in the domains of conflict resolution, which mostly cover people-to-people contact, settlement of IDPs, and commitments to continue discussions through the OSCE, UN, and Geneva talks (EU-Georgia Association Agenda 2013). Much of the friction between the EU and Georgia revolves around Georgia’s continued use of so called “occupation language” and the EU’s stated policy of ‘active engagement’ with the separatist territories.

As in Moldova, the EU attempts to influence the host government’s relationship with the separatist territories by leaving the door open to their integration into the DCFTA and AA. The EEAS maintains that it ties increased market access under the DCFTA to the ‘certification’ of contact between members of the government and separatist leaders.³⁸ Yet, while the EU states that “the objective of the DCFTA is to engage in economic integration that benefits the entire territory of Georgia” (i.e. South Ossetia and Abkhazia), it readily admits that the conditions are not present for border and customs procedures to be implemented in order to halt the trade in counterfeit and deficient goods emanating from the separatist territories.³⁹ In contrast to the EU’s more ambitious policy deployments in Moldova, even ‘low politics’ cooperation in the domain of customs management has been delayed or blocked in COREPER by the member states.

While attempts at economic engagement have for the most part been unsuccessful, the Georgian government has also used its 2008 ‘Law on Occupied Territories’⁴⁰

³⁷ Interview with a member of the Moldovan Delegation to the EU, Brussels, 6 February 2015.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Interview with a member of the EEAS, Brussels, 5 February 2015.

⁴⁰ Georgia, The Law of Georgia on Occupied Territories, *Statutes of Georgia*, N431 (2008).

to block EU confidence building and socialization measures across the Administrative Boundary Lines (ABLs). Multiple members of the EEAS and Commission report that the Saakashvili and Garibashvili administrations have slowed or hindered EU proposals to step up people-to-people contacts, confidence building, visa liberalization, and study exchanges.⁴¹ However, despite instances of domestic resistance, the case of visa and study exchanges brings into question the EU's indigenous ability to promote conflict resolution. While the EEAS has championed a policy to grant travel documents to students and young professionals from Abkhazia and South Ossetia so that they may transit through Georgia to study in the EU, the issuance of travel documents is not a community competency, and has thus been blocked by member states such as Germany.⁴² To further compound the problem, a different set of member states blocks the same students from traveling to the EU as many of them hold Russian passports. Members of the EEAS also point out the need to differentiate between the separatist territories, with Abkhazians being receptive to contact with the EU while South Ossetians mainly seek greater access to Russia⁴³.

Conclusions & Further Research

In this paper, I illustrate the limits of the EU's ENP policies in Moldova and Georgia by showing that domestic veto-players are responsible for determining convergence or non-convergence across policy fields and states. In the domain of internal market integration, I find that implementation of the EU's policies has been minimal in both case studies. I show that (at least in the early phases of implementation), veto players maintain their ability to overwhelm any technical or financial assistance offered by the EU. In the domain of conflict resolution, I find that implementation of the EU's policies has been minimal across case studies. However, in contrast to the field of internal market integration, I find that while veto players are a major determinant of implementation or non-implementation, additional factors also play a major role in molding implementation.

This thesis adds to the current Europeanization research agenda in several important ways. First, this thesis answers Delcour's (2013) and Langbein's (2014) calls for a cross state comparison of policy implementation across multiple policy domains.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Interview with members of the EEAS, Brussels, 5-6 February 2015.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ L. Delcour, "Meandering Europeanisation. EU policy instruments and policy convergence in Georgia under the Eastern Partnership", *East European Politics* 2013, vol. 29, pp. 344-357.

In doing so, it shows the limits of the EU's policy specific conditionality and financial assistance in the context of non-accession. Despite the provision of €31 million and €41 million to Georgia and Moldova, the 'carrot' of financial assistance has failed to foster meaningful and durable implementation of the EU's rules and regulations. Furthermore, Moldova and Georgia have been forced to commence implementation with the costly and time-consuming SPS chapters of the *acquis*, which has allowed opposition to coalesce among small-scale agricultural producers in Georgia and processors in Moldova, a finding that contradicts Langbein & Wolczuk's assertion that a small industrial base leads to the lessening in importance of veto players.⁴⁵

This thesis also finds a wealth of evidence to support Dimitrova and Dragneva's assessment of the role played by oligarchs and their interest constellations in shaping convergence with EU rules.⁴⁶ However, this thesis also uncovers an emerging subset of non-traditional veto players in Moldova and Georgia, a finding that goes beyond assessments of veto players as economic elites in the post-communist space. I build on this research by drawing attention to the role played by the Orthodox Church and NGOs in fomenting opposition to the DCFTA, AA, and the EU in general. The field would benefit from further research that goes beyond analysis of 'traditional' veto players to look at the role played by the church and NGOs in foiling or promoting compliance with the EU policies.

In the field of conflict resolution, I show that veto players play a major role in dictating implementation in both case studies. For example, in Moldova the interests of veto players mean that there is less 'pull' to implement the EU's rules and norms as an end to the conflict would lead to greater elite competition for power and resources. At the same time, it is clear that there are multiple factors driving implementation. For example, the particularities of each conflict, external support from third parties such as Russia, and the EU's differentiated policy prescriptions and commitments when it comes to conflict resolution

J. Langbein, "European Governance towards the Eastern neighborhood: Transcending or Redrawing Europe's East-West divide?", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 2014, vol. 52, pp. 157-174.

⁴⁵ J. Langbein, K. Wolczuk, "Convergence without Membership? The Impact of the European Union in the Neighbourhood: Evidence from Ukraine", *Journal of European Public Policy* 2012, vol. 19, pp. 863-881.

⁴⁶ A. Dimitrova, R. Dragneva, "Shaping Convergence with the EU in Foreign Policy and State Aid in Post-Orange Ukraine: Weak Incentives, Powerful Veto Players", *Europe-Asia Studies* 2013, Vol. 65, pp. 658-681.

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Abstract

This thesis analyzes the implementation of the EU's Eastern Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in Georgia and Moldova by comparing two policy fields – conflict resolution and integration into the internal market. I argue that in the absence of a concrete membership perspective, the EU's policy specific conditionality and technical assistance result in low levels of implementation, which remains constant across policy fields and states. I explain this by focusing on the presence of formal and informal veto players responsible for blocking and easing implementation of EU norms and rules. In doing so, this thesis highlights the emergence of non-traditional veto players in agrarian states with pro-EU coalitions such as Georgia and Moldova.

Keywords: Georgia, Moldova, DCFTA, veto players

MALGORZATA SIKORA-GACA

The Meaning of Geopolitical Factors in the Development of the State of Moldova in 2014 and 2015

The political situation in the Republic of Moldova which can be observed since the country regained its independence is the constant struggle between patriotic platitudes and slogans of democratization of the state. Both political ups and downs of individual governments create a policy of vicious circle, in which a specific political and economic selfishness of the elites in the former republics of the command-redistribution system is responsible for the instability of the whole country. In the case of Moldova, there have been many of such moments and unfortunately, the current political situation does not indicate much optimism, either.

The success of the Moldovan transformation includes: the development of the Moldovan pluralism in the years 1989-1994; opening elections in 1994 and the victory of the agrarians – the Agrarian-Democratic Party of Moldova (56 seats in Parliament); establishing the parliamentary form of government (in spite of the proposed presidential system, whose promoter was Petru Lucinschi), the introduction of the notion of early elections to the Electoral Code; the “Twitter revolution” of 2009, when Voronin and the Communists in power were removed; the appointment of successive coalitions for the European integration, including the last – AEI-3 – on 23 July 2015; the victory of pro-Western parties in the local elections of 2015, and the election of Dorin Chirtoacă as the Mayor of Chisinau in the second round of the elections.

The Republic of Moldova throughout the period of its independence has oscillated between a typical immature democracy to soft authoritarianism¹ or various kinds

¹ K. Całus, P. Oleksy, *Kultura polityczna a rozwój demokracji – przypadek Mołdawii po 2009 r.*, „Arena” 2011, no. 6, p. 13.

of pseudo-democratic, para-authoritarian and crypto-authoritarian² patterns which continue to be reflected in the political scene. The counterweight to these “successes” of transformation will also be its failures or political errors, which in particular may include: the return to the idea of *neomoldovenism*³, which has become an ideological tool to mobilize the elites in Transnistria⁴, and the outbreak of the ongoing conflict; the relegalizing of the Communist Party, which was supposed to be the proof of the progress of democracy and growing pluralism; the victory of the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova in parliamentary elections on 22 March 1998; the attempt by President Petru Lucinschi to introduce a presidential system based on the Russian model; the oligarchic governments of Voronin in the years 2001–2009; the victory of the Party of Socialists in the parliamentary elections of 30th November 2014; the year 2015 in the oligarchic political system in Moldova and the banking crisis associated with *Banca de Economii* and *Banca Sociala*.

The main hypothesis of the research assumes that geopolitical factors have essentially shaped the development of the Moldovan democracy from its formal existence in 1991 up to the current political situation. The parliamentary elections of 2014 also showed the greatness of problems faced not only by the party scene and the elite, but most of all by the Moldovan society. Despite the strong commitment of the Moldovan state in the Eastern Partnership and the Eastern Partnership in the policy of the State of Moldova, the direction of the state's transition it is often unpredictable. The following research questions should be analyzed: what is the relationship between the conflict in Transnistria, Russia's policy in the region and the result of the parliamentary elections of 2014? Are the relationships with the European Union and participation in the Eastern Partnership linked with the victory of the ruling coalition in the local elections of 2015? Is the political system formed after 2010 oligarchic? Do Moldova's geopolitical factors guide the state more towards the principles of the free-market economy or clan corporatism? What is the reason for the systematic reduction of the effectiveness of state institutions and their capacity to act according to the introduced law? Is the ruling coalition pro-European or “pro-European”? Is the crisis of *Banca de Economii* and *Banca Sociala*⁵ a result of corrupted connections with Russian business? Will the government appointed on 30 July 2015 strive to implement real reforms, or

² M. Karwat, *O subtelnościach badań nad państwami autorytarnymi. Refleksja metodologiczna*, [in:] *Przywódstwo, elity i transformacje w krajach WNP. Problemy metodologii badań*, T. Bo dio (ed.), Warszawa 2010, p. 54.

³ B. Zdaniuk, *Linie podziałów politycznych w Republice Mołdawii – aspekt tożsamościowy*, [in:] *Spotkania polsko-mołdawskie. Księga poświęcona pamięci Prof. Janusza Solaka*, M. Kosienkowski (ed.), pp. 177–191.

⁴ In Russian called “Pridnestrowie”. See: I. Munteanu, *Political Review and Parties Recommendations legislations for Reform in Moldova*, Chisinau 2010, pp. 20–23; M. Kosienkowski, *Naddniestrzańska Republika Mołdawska. Determinanty przetrwania*, Toruń 2010, pp. 11–38.

⁵ P. Oleksy, “System Mołdawia”, *Nowa Europa Wschodnia* 2015, no. 3–4, pp. 90–91.

is its purpose only to “trick” next financial subsidies from the West? In order to obtain answers to the aforementioned questions a comparative approach has been used, as well as the historical and empirical-analytical research methods were applied. The analysis of political rivalries allowed applying the quantitative criterion. The transactional leadership theory by James Burns⁶ has become the theoretical paradigm. The abovementioned transactional model in the context of the political system generates such phenomena as: clientelism, corruption, clan corporatism or oligarchization, and these issues will quite often arise in the course of further analysis.

The geopolitical background to the issues discussed will be the conflict in Transnistria, the role of Russia and the European Union (Eastern Partnership) in the region, relations with Romania, the United States and the situation in the Ukraine. Both ethnic and national identity, political decisions or finally the political culture of Moldovans are influenced by the aforementioned political actors, which significantly affect the quality of the entire system.

The political context – the parliamentary elections of 2010 and 2014

Moldovan pluralism is said to have a geopolitical base, but equally often it is attributed with a personal, political or social nature⁷. These lines of division – although in many cases described as marginal – are important in shaping the party scene of the country. In systems of many countries the ruling elites hold an important position – they largely represent the political and economic oligarchy of the country⁸. In the Republic of Moldova these include the rule of the “three Vlads”⁹ – Voronin, Filat and Plahotniuc, of Igor Dodon or businessman Renat Usatii – the current mayor of Balti. Their consequence is a specific system of clan corporatism in which the integration of state institutions with business structures is very deep¹⁰. In Moldova it is also the cause of numerous transformation problems, including destabilizing factors, among which the main roles are played by: the conflict in Transnistria, negative con-

⁶ See: J. M. Burns, *Leadership*, New York 1978.

⁷ See: I. Munteanu, *Political Parties Legislation in Moldova. Review and Recommendations for Reform*, Chisinau 2010, p. 13.

⁸ See: T. Bodio, *Z problematyki badawczej nad teorią i metodologią transformacji, elit politycznych i ich liderów w WNP*, [in:] idem, *Przywódstwo, elity i transformacje w krajach WNP. Problemy metodologii badań*, Warszawa 2010, p. 18.

⁹ P. Oleksy, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-96.

¹⁰ K. Całus, “Państwo zawłaszczone? Niepewne perspektywy modernizacji Mołdawii”, *Komentarze OSW* 2015, no. 168, pp. 1-9.

sequences of the economic transformation, institutional instability, unstable internal reforms and, above all, the lack of national project around which the society could be consolidated.

Since 1990 the Republic of Moldova has been governed by or has led to the “existence” of seventeen governments (recognizing the one of Valeriu Muravschi and Mircea Druc, two terms of Ion Sturza and Iurie Leancă, the cabinet of Chiril Gaburici and Valeriu Streleț – the latter has received a vote of confidence from the Parliament on 30 July 2015) and early elections have been organized several times. Thus, the party scene is constantly evolving as evidenced by the resignation of Prime Minister Chiril Gaburici, the establishment and activity of the Civic Platform “Dignity and Truth” and the new political grouping – the European People’s Party created by Iurie Leancă (the founding congress of the group was held on 27 July 2015).

In order to analyze the whole political context of current affairs in the Republic of Moldova the last two parliamentary rivalries should be discussed. On the one hand, they sanctioned (2010) a certain balance of power existing since 2009, and on the other one they introduced new partners into the political activity (2014). It should also be noted that the results of those parliamentary elections are a perfect reflection of the impact of geopolitical factors on the development of the statehood. Year 2010 confirmed the result of a political avalanche triggered by the wave of the “Twitter revolution”, the pro-European governments initiated by the Alliance for European Integration and the role of Moldova promoted by the European Union through the Eastern Partnership. Meanwhile, year 2014 emphasized the role of Russia in the region, whose interests were threatened by the Association Agreement ratified by the Moldovan parliament (27 June 2014.). The support granted to the Igor Dodon’s Party of Socialists and the appearance of Renat Usatii’s Patria Party on the political scene were to brake the huge step initiated towards further “Europeanization”.

Early elections were held on 28 November 2010. The election threshold was reduced from 5 to 4% (for a coalition of two parties – 7%, for coalitions of three or more parties – 9%). The voter turnout was 63.35%. Our Moldova Alliance won only 2.05% of the votes, thus did not exceed the election threshold. Since the elections in 2010, the Alliance for European Integration was formed by only three parties: the Liberal Democratic Party, the Democratic Party of Moldova and the Liberal Party. In 2011, the communists tried to bring Zinaida Greceanii to the election as President, however, Nicolae Timofti was chosen head of state (16 March 2012). Mihai Ghimpu proposed his candidacy. Filat accepted it fairly quickly, because Timofti was unable to threaten his leadership in the ruling structure. The president was elected thanks to Igor Dodon – a former member of the Party of Communists, who supplied the ruling coalition with the missing votes. Dodon – a supporter of modern social democracy – at the time of Voronin held the position of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy. In 2011 he achieved the second result in the election for the mayor of Chis-

inau, which initiated his further successful political activity. In the same year Dodon headed the non-parliamentary Party of Socialists. Since then his political influence has been growing steadily¹¹.

In 2013, basing on the disputes between two major oligarchs and political leaders, Vlad Filat and Vlad Plahotniuk, there was an attempt to introduce a mixed system (the bill was soon nullified) in the Republic of Moldova, the electoral threshold was once again raised (from 4 to 6% for political parties, 9% for coalitions of two parties, 11% for coalitions of three or more parties)¹². On 13 February 2013 Vlad Filat broke the coalition agreement. The Marian Lupu and Vlad Plahotniuc's Democratic Party asked for vote of no confidence for the government, which was voted for in agreement with the opposition of Communists. President Timofti entrusted the dismissed Prime Minister Filat the duties of the acting head of government and designated him the Prime Minister of the new government. The leader of the liberals – Mihai Ghimpu – filed an application to the Constitutional Court to recognize the decision of the president as non-compliant with the Constitution, although the majority of the deputies of his party expressed readiness to support the next government headed by Filat¹³. On 22 April 2013, by the decision of the Constitutional Court, Filat was prevented from further participation in political life, due to corruption allegations¹⁴. With the votes of the deputies from the Liberal Democratic Party and the Party of Communists the parliament speaker Marian Lupu was dismissed, as well as the Attorney General, who was considered to be close to Plahotniuc. Prime Minister was statutorily assigned with an office to fight with corruption and introduced the possibility of recalling the members of the Constitutional Court by the Parliament at any time. The latter two decisions provoked an outrage in Brussels¹⁵.

The new Prime Minister, Iurie Leanca, was appointed on 22 April 2013. On 30 May 2013 an agreement was signed to form a new majority coalition called Coalition for the Pro-European Governments (Liberal-Democratic Party of Moldova, the Democratic Party and seven former members of the Liberal Party). On the same day the Parliament, by votes of MPs in favor of coalition (53 + 5 independent MPs), gave a vote of confidence to the new Cabinet composed of personnel slightly differ-

¹¹ See: B. Luft, *Rumun goni za happy endem*, Wołowiec 2014, pp. 80-81.

¹² K. Całus, "Nowy rząd w Mołdawii: chwiejny konsensus", 5 June 2013, at <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2013-06-05/nowy-rzad-w-moldawii-chwiejny-konsensus>, 1 September 2014.

¹³ See: B. Luft, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁴ There were no prosecution proceedings against V. Filat. As it turned out that 4 of 6 judges who delivered the judgment, were appointed according to the political key. See: K. Całus, "Mołdawskie Sąd Konstytucyjny zakazał Filatowi objęcia stanowiska premiera", at <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2013-04-24/moldawski-sad-konstytucyjny-zakazal-filatowi-objecia-stanowiska>, 1 September 2014.

¹⁵ See: B. Luft, *op. cit.*, p. 82-83.

ent from the previous government of Filat¹⁶. Igor Corman became the new Speaker of the Parliament, replacing Marian Lupu (both from PDM). The new government was appointed in fear of early elections. Its main task was to maintain the almost completed negotiations on the Association Agreement with the EU and to wait for its signing. The culmination of the procedure was the ratification (minimum majority – 53 votes) of the Agreement on 27 June 2014 at a special meeting of parliament. Signing the Association Agreement was a major step for Moldova towards the integration with the Community structures.

Next general elections were held in Moldova on 30 November 2014 – the eighth since regaining independence in 1991, won by the Party of Socialists. Citizens voted in 1978 polling stations across the country and 99 abroad. The election was monitored by more than 3 thousand observers¹⁷. 19 political parties, one electoral bloc and 4 independent candidates took part in the election. A 6% election threshold for political parties, 9% for electoral bloc and 2% for independent candidates was in force. The electoral competition was extremely important. Even before the election, it was announced that it would be an encounter between the supporters and opponents of signing the Association Agreement with the European Union, and this is what happened. The Communists, who ran a negative campaign from the beginning, undermining Moldova's geopolitical return towards the Community, have gained a "new partner" for the concept of unification with the Russian project of the Eurasian Union – the Party of Socialists led by Igor Dodon. Among the five political parties that entered the Parliament, the ratio of the ruling coalition to the opposition was 55 to 46 (for 101 seats in Parliament).

The political encounter from 30 November 2014 was played out between the Liberal Party, the Liberal-Democratic Party, the Democratic Party of Moldova, the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova and the Party of Socialists. Before the election, due to the accusations of financing from abroad, the Renat Usatii's Patria Party was eliminated. Pre-election polls indicated that approx. 13% of Moldovan society identified with Patria and its anti-European views. Meanwhile, the pro-European parties have seen in it representations of Russia's interests in Moldova. On the other hand, many commentators share the opinion that Filat and Plahotniuc feared an oligarchic competition in the implementation of particular interests.

The result obtained by Igor Dodon's Party of Socialists was a huge surprise, especially that in pre-election polls it obtained small indicators – approx. 1-3% of citizens declared their devotion to vote for it, approx. 10% declared their confidence in the party, while only 2% of the population determined Igor Dodon as a politician in

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 83.

¹⁷ See: "Wybory parlamentarne w Mołdawii", at http://pl.sputniknews.com/polish.ruvr.ru/news/2014_11_30/Wybory-parlamentarne-w-Moldawii-2421/, 30 November 2014.

whom they put their greatest confidence; also 2% of the population declared themselves voting for the Party of Socialists if they had no other choice. In April and July 2014, among the opposition, the undisputed leaders were two groups – the Liberal Democratic Party and the Liberal Party – both holding their permanent electorate. The entrance of the Democratic Party of Moldova to the Parliament remained disputable, as its support has significantly decreased since 2009 (2013 – 6%, in 2014 – 8-9%). It was assumed that the Party of Communists will definitely enter the parliament, as its support was estimated at 24%. Due to the very high percentage of undecided voters – 25-26%, the result of the election could change dramatically at any time.

The election rivalry of 2014 was won by the Party of Socialists, by 20.51% of votes and 25 seats in Parliament. The second election result was held by one of the representatives of the Coalition for the pro-European Governments – the Liberal Democratic Party – 20.16% and 23 seats. The next were as follows: the Party of Communists – 17.48% and 21 seats in Parliament, the Democratic Party of Moldova – 15.8% and 19, and the Liberal Party – 9.67% and 13.

The result obtained by the Democratic Party of Moldova was a surprise, because it was the most-improved hitherto result of the electoral competition in which the party competed independently. In the parliamentary elections of 1998, along with three other parties, it received 18.16% of votes and 24 seats in Parliament. In 2001 – 5.02% and did not exceed the 6% threshold, in 2005 – 28.53%, in April 2009 – the 2.97% in July 2009 – 12.54%, in 2010 – 12.72%.

The result of the Party of Communists in the elections of 2014 was, in turn, the worst in the history of this grouping: in 1998 – 30.01%, 2001 – 50.07%, 2005 – 45.98%, April 2009 – 49.48%, July 2009 – 44.69%, 2010 – 39.34%.

The Liberal Party received almost the same election result as in 2010 (a difference of 0.01%). Public support in the history of this group fluctuated quite a bit and was subsequently: 1994 – 2.36%, 1998 – 0.54%, 2001 – 0.67%, April 2009 – 13.13%, July 2009 – 14.68%, 2010 – 9.69%.

The Liberal Democratic Party received a weaker result than in 2010 (April 2009 – 12.43%, July 2009 – 16.57%, 2010 – 29.42%).

The Party of Socialists was the undisputed winner of the parliamentary elections in 2014 in Moldova, which was possible thanks to the contribution of Igor Dodon. The previous election results of this party are as follows: in 1998 – 0.59%, 2001 – 0.46%, 2005 – 4.97%, in the elections of 2009 and 2010 the party did not take part in the competition at all.

The parliamentary elections of 2014 have changed the balance of power on the Moldovan political scene. A minority coalition of two parties was established on 23 January 2015: the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM) and the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM), under the name of the Political Alliance for European Moldova (APME). An informal base for the coalition is the Party of Communists (PCRM).

The Liberal Party of Mihai Ghimpu was not allowed to gain power. Iurie Leanca was prohibited from taking the position of Prime Minister. Thanks to the votes of PCRM, Adrian Candu became the Chairman of the Parliament – he is the godson of Plahotniuk. On 18 February the government of Chiril Gaburici was appointed (associated with both Filat and Voronin)¹⁸. On 12 June 2015 Prime Minister Gaburici resigned. On June 22 the same year, Natalia Gherman, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Integration, daughter of the first President of Moldova Mircea Snegur, became the acting Prime Minister of Moldova. The date for the appointment of a new government is set for 12 September 2015. If before this date a minority coalition of pro-European parties doesn't reach an agreement on a new government, the president will be obliged to dissolve the parliament and call early elections.

“The theft of the century” and local elections – year 2015

On 14 June 2015 the first round of local elections was held in Moldova. The Liberal Democratic Party, the Liberal Party, the Democratic Party and the electoral bloc “European People's Platform” of the former Prime Minister Iurie Leanca, basing on their results, can create coalitions in 22 out of 31 local governmental districts of Moldova¹⁹. On 28 June 2015, in the second round of elections in Chisinau, Dorin Chirtoacă won as the city mayor beating Zinaida Greceanii (representative of the Party of Socialists, an advocate of closer cooperation with Russia). The ratio of pro-European councilmen to the pro-Russian ones in Chisinau is currently 26:25. The voter turnout was 48.66%²⁰.

The Party of Socialists did not repeat the success of the parliamentary elections in 2014 because the pro-European parties' candidates gained the positions of mayors in more than 70% of towns and about 60% of the seats in local and regional councils. What is important – both the members of Igor Dodon's party and of the Patria Party of Renato Usatii's were able to replace the Party of Communists (PCRM) at the local level and to strengthen their influence in the regions, especially in such important cities of Balti and Komrat²¹. The local elections of 2015 ultimately marginalized the

¹⁸ K. Całus, *Państwo zawłaszczone...*, pp. 1-3.

¹⁹ “Siły proeuropejskie wygrywają wybory samorządowe w Mołdawii”, at <http://www.studium.uw.edu.pl/?post/20887>, 1 June 2015.

²⁰ See: “General Local Elections of June 14 and 28, 2015”, <http://www.e-democracy.md/en/elections/local/2015/>, 1 July 2015.

²¹ See: K. Całus, “Mołdawia: wybory lokalne w cieniu kryzysu rządowego”, at <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2015-07-01/moldawia-wybory-lokalne-w-cieniu-kryzysu-rzadowego>, 1 July 2015.

role of PCRM, which had already lost the support of the Kremlin before the parliamentary elections in 2014. PCRM's bad position also reflects the fact that the pro-Russian groups have begun to imitate the Moldovan democrats – which means to fight with one another. The elections showed that the communists are leaving the political scene, although they are still popular among some parts of the electorate²².

The Patria Party has competed in the local elections of 2015. It has won the majority of seats in the city council of Balti, and Usatii himself has become the mayor of the city. The party was blocked from competing in the parliamentary elections because of allegations of funding from Russia. The Patria Party has also enjoyed a victory in Komrat, where Siergiei Anastasov has been chosen mayor²³. Ilan Shor will become the mayor of Orhei²⁴. Each of them became involved in the process of gaining power to realize their own projects and interests in the best possible way. It is a very common phenomenon in Moldova, which, like pervasive corruption, is implemented on all possible levels of state structures.

Actually, the biggest winner of the local elections in Moldova is Iurie Leanca and the electoral bloc “European People’s Platform” (European People’s Party was founded by the former Prime Minister in March 2015, only three months before the election). In Chisinau, the support for the bloc amounted to approx. 11.55% and to approx. 6% across the country. Possibly, in the next parliamentary elections the European People’s Party will play a very important role, especially as the Moldovan political leadership is quite personalized, and Iurie Leanca himself has enjoyed a big indicator of social trust. Along with Adian Candu, Natalia Gherman and Dorin Chirtoacă, he was suggested for the position of the Prime Minister in the new government.

The Kremlin is responsible for financing the anti-European parties in Moldova and it actively supports the creation of new political-oligarchic structures. Aggressive, deep anti-European and anti-Romanian rhetoric of these groups has only one purpose – to destabilize the situation in the country. This is just one of the elements of the so-called “asymmetric war”, which Kremlin has waged against many former Soviet republics²⁵. It is Renato Usatii, who informed the media about criminal proceedings carried out in Russia against Prime Minister Gaburici – according to art. 327 (using forged documents) and 1322 (illegal crossing the state border without valid documents)²⁶. Gaburici’s resignation as Prime Minister (two days before the

²² “Siły proeuropejskie wygrywają wybory...”

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ See: “Lokalne wybory w Mołdawii: faworyt Kremla otrzymał stanowisko, władza może stracić Kiszyniów”, at <http://wschodnik.pl/swiat/item/1156-lokalne-wybory-w-moldawii-faworyt-kremla-otrzymal-stanowisko-wladza-moze-stracic-kiszyniow.html>, 15 July 2015.

²⁵ “Opinion: Kreml finansuje antyeuropejskie partie w Mołdawii”, at <http://www.studium.uw.edu.pl/?post/20912>, 15 July 2015.

²⁶ See: “Левое партнерство: союз между партиями Додона и Усатого дал трещину”, at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/levoe-partnerstvo-soyuz-mezhdu-partiyami-dodona-i-usa-togo-dal-treshchinu-15354>, 15 July 2011.

local elections) has confirmed that it is not just a political crisis in Moldova but an institutional paralysis²⁷.

At the turn of 2014 and 2015, the unstable state of Moldova underwent the banking crisis associated with the collapse threat of *Banca de Economii* and *Banca Sociala*, currently called by the media the “theft of the century”. The Moldovan Central Bank introduced commissary administration in both banks finding numerous irregularities. These institutions were controlled by Ilan Shor – a millionaire connected with Russian business. The Moldovan banking scandal referred to two important names from the political system – Filat²⁸ and Plahotniuc. The first is said to be responsible for the crisis of *Banca de Economii*, the other one of *Banca Sociala*²⁹. Therefore, the pro-European parties did not expect too much success in local elections, the outcome of which, due to political instability and protests of the Civic Platform “Dignity and truth”, could be unpredictable.

“The theft of the century” took the form of an international financial scandal, in which the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development was also involved. It refers, first and foremost, to a letter sent by the Vice President of the EBRD – Philip Bennett to Prime Minister Natalia German, in which he criticizes the actions taken by the Moldovan authorities. In 2015 Moldovan Parliament voted to amend the law on financial institutions which blocked the EBRD to acquire an additional stake in *Victoriabank* – one of the biggest commercial banks in Moldova³⁰.

It should also be noted that the financial crisis associated with the “withdrawal” of Moldovan money is not limited to banks. The practice has been extended to all possible industries, which is visible after an analysis of the loss of the Moldovan state-owned enterprises, which in 2014 amounted to 3 billion lei, which is five times more than in 2013. According to many experts, the enterprises and companies belonging to the Moldovan state budget, in many cases, exist only in order to “launder dirty money” and generate income for state officials employed there. Most energy com-

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Filat’s relatives were arrested – Ion Rusu and Vladimir Rusu, and two people connected with the company called Caravita – Igor and Tatiana Chizhova Rosioru on charges of financial mismanagement – non-payment of loans taken out in *Banca de Economii*. See: “Cate 30 de zile de AREST in izolatorul CNA pentru Ion Rusu si Vladimir Rusu, cumnatul si nepotul lui Vlad Filat”, at <http://protv.md/stiri/actualitate/cumnatul-si-nepotul-lui-vlad-filat-dusi-la-arest---1049191.html>, 28 July 2015.

²⁹ P. Oleksy, *op. cit.*, p. 90-91.

³⁰ Victoriabank was founded at the turn of the 80’s and 90’s. It was the first commercial bank in Moldova. Since 1995, it has set up a cooperation with the EBRD. In 2006, one of the shareholders of the bank, among others, was Vlad Plahotniuc. See: “Поправка пошла на поправку: минфин Молдовы хочет разблокировать сделку по покупке ЕБРР акций Victoriabank”, at [http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/popravka-poshla-na-popravku-minfin-moldovy-hochet-razblokirovat-sdelku-po-pokupke-15935](http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/popravka-poshla-na-popravku-minfin-moldovy-hochet-razblokirovat-sdelku-po-pokupke), 28 July 2015.

panies (including Moldovagaz, Moldelectrica, Energocom) lost over 2.5 billion lei in 2014. Losses of Moldovan railway are now estimated to approx. 101 million lei. Nepotism, cronyism or over-employment are common. All of this has a catastrophic impact on the Moldovan financial condition. For example, the company MoldATSA – in 2013 generated a 48 million lei profit and in 2014 it had a 29 million lei loss. The income of Moldtelecom or AirMoldova has fallen several dozen times (from more than 60 million lei to approx. 2 million)³¹.

Both the “theft of the century” and the situation of the Moldovan pre-state enterprises, as described above, are the effects of a “tradition” of inefficient management on which subsequent governments and oligarchs controlling the state “make” their money. The *Banca de Economii* managers earned 60.000 lei per month. Members of the Supervisory Board, exercising their function for just two months, received annual salaries “in advance”. The remuneration of Moldtelecom Chief Executive was 50.000 lei per month, while company profits fell three times. Deputy Minister of Economy – Octavian Calmic, as a representative of the state in the supervisory boards of five companies (*Banca de Economii*, Metalferos, Moldexpo, UNIC and Moldovagaz) received 620.000 lei per month. Another politician received approx. 500.000 lei for being a member of supervisory boards in 9 companies. Director of the Civil Aviation Department – Iurie Armas has put the state budget on a loss of 800.000 lei³². These are just some of the examples of power abuse that are ruining the Moldavian state. Moldovan officials use every opportunity to earn money at the expense of the state³³. It should be noted that the average salary in Moldova is approx. 4.500 lei. Privatization appears to be the only remedy, but in the conditions of common pillage of the Moldovan state there is a significant concern that it will only become a tool for accumulating private fortunes.

On 11 June 2015 50% of the entire banking sector of Moldova has been placed under an official supervision. The decision to nationalize *Banca de Economii* blocked launching a new credit line for Moldova by the IMF³⁴, and this led to a course of subsequent events. World Bank also stopped the payment of credit funds. For a long time

³¹ In 2013 the loss of the entities referred to amounted to 600 million lei, in 2014 it was already 3 billion. The debt increased by 50% – from 26.7 to 39.9 million lei, and their revenues increased by only 10%. See: “Как в Молдове управляют госкомпаниями: убытки, долги, а также зарплаты руководства стабильно растут”, at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/kak-v-moldove-upravlyayut-goskompaniyami-ubytki-dolgi-a-takzhe-zarplaty-rukovodstv-15079>, 6 July 2015.

³² See: “Глава Органа гражданской авиации обменял 3 млн леев на уголовное дело”, <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/glava-organa-grazhdanskoy-aviatsii-obmenyal-3-mln-leev-na-ugolovnoe-delo-13884>, 16 July 2015.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ See: K. Całus, “Mołdawia: wybory lokalne w cieniu kryzysu rządowego”, at <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2015-07-01/moldawia-wybory-lokalne-w-cieniu-kryzysu-rzadowego>, 28 July 2015.

European Union has also been considering blocking financial flows to the country, as the political situation in Moldova, after signing the Association Agreement, is highly unsatisfactory.

Sandu, Streleț and the appointment of the AEI-3 – July's coalition negotiations

On 23 July 2015 Minister of Education – Maia Sandu – has been nominated for the position of Moldova's Prime Minister on behalf of the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova. The candidacy was defined as good due to the non-engagement in corruption scandals (which is an incredible rarity among Moldovan politicians) and the support of the international environment (in the years 2010-2012 Sandu worked for the World Bank³⁵). On the same day, Vlad Filat, Marian Lupu and Mihai Ghimpu signed a coalition agreement – the “Alliance for European Integration” (AEI-3). Party leaders declared their common desire to elect a new Prime Minister by the end of July 2015³⁶. Filat declared the need to reform legal institutions that should not be subject to any political influence. He also stressed the need for support from the European Union and the United States. Yet on 23 July, the President of Romania – Klaus Iohannis, gave his support to Sandu; on 24 July Igor Dodon criticized the democratic liberals' candidate, stating that she will not receive the Socialists' support.

AEI-3 submitted the following priorities for their action: continuation of pro-European course of state policy, establishment of the rule of law and independent judiciary, elimination of corruption from public administration and social mentality, release of state institutions from the vested interests of political clans. Liberal democrats received 6 ministries, and liberals 4. A reform of the prosecutor's office in consultation with the European Commission has also been proposed³⁷.

On 24 July 2015 Maia Sandu presented conditions under which she agreed to hold the position of the Prime Minister. She demanded the resignation of the head

³⁵ See: “Ex-World Bank economist set to become prime minister in Moldova”, at <http://myinforms.com/en-ca/a/14884719-ex-world-bank-economist-set-to-become-prime-minister-in-moldova>, 28 July 2015.

³⁶ See: “Лупу подтвердил: Майя Санду – кандидат от ЛДПМ на пост премьер-министра”, at http://ru.publika.md/lupu-podtverdil-mayya-sandu--kandidat-ot-ldpm-na-post-premer-mini-stra-strany_1666711.html, 23 July 2015.

³⁷ See: “Михай Гимпу раскритиковал Майю Санду и назвал ее требования об отставках незаконными”, at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/mihay-gimpu-raskritikoval-mayyu-sandu-i-nazval-ee-trebovaniya-ob-otstavkah-nezakon-15773>, 25 July 2015.

of the National Bank – Dorin Dragutanu and Attorney General – Corneliu Gurin. She blamed both for the “theft of the century” and a withdrawal of 1 billion lei from Moldovan banks. Unfortunately, Sandu’s requests, by which she wanted to prove to the public the sincere intentions of her future governments, weakened her negotiating position. Plahotniuc stood up against her. Ghimpu called the PM candidate a “whimsical doll” and said that her demands go beyond the Alliance³⁸. Renat Usatii was also outraged by candidate’s demands. He said: “Sandu is not a queen, and Moldova is not a monarchy”³⁹.

Three days later, the Alliance introduced a new candidate for Prime Minister – the vice chairman of LDPM – Valeriu Streleț. On 27 July President Tomofti signed the official nomination. To obtain a vote of confidence for Streleț’s Cabinet the Alliance needed 51 votes, the coalition partners held 52 seats in Parliament (out of 101)⁴⁰. Therefore, nobody expected any negative scenarios, even though one should always remember about the margin of error in Moldovan politics.

Valeriu Streleț is one of the richest MPs in the Moldovan Parliament. He manages the Bioprotekt SRL company, which is one of the biggest Moldovan importers and distributors of phytosanitary products. His partner – Aurelia Bregutse owns the company Dezvoltarii⁴¹. Streleț’s nomination is a clear signal that the ruling elites have no intention in changing anything within the oligarchic political system. Sandu showed too bold independence in her demands, Streleț promised obedience to the Alliance’s discipline. On 30 July his government won a vote of confidence from the Moldovan Parliament⁴² with the votes of the coalition. Socialists, communists and members of the Leanci group voted against.

The first task of the new prime minister is to negotiate a new agreement with the International Monetary Fund, as effectively for Moldova to regain 3 billion lei of frozen foreign aid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ See: “Ренато Усатый выступил с новой порцией обвинений в адрес Владимира Филата | «Разоблачения» мэра Бельц совпали со сложностями в переговорах внутри альянса по кандидатуре нового премьера”, at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/ac:politika/d:27/m:7/y:2015>, 27 July 2015; “Бывшие обещают светлое будущее: экс-премьер Юрие Лянкэ официально возглавил Народную европейскую партию Молдовы”, at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/byvshie-obeshchayut-svetloe-budushchee-eks-premer-yurie-lyanke-ofitsialno-vozglavi-15815>, 27 July 2015.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ See: “Чем владеет кандидат на пост премьер-министра Валериу Стрелец”, at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/chem-vladeet-kandidat-na-post-premer-ministra-valeriu-strelets-15865>, 28 July 2015.

⁴² Ibid.

Experts say that the signing of this agreement will only increase corruption because in Moldova each money transfer process serves the political groups, not the state⁴³. It should also be noted that the financial aid received by Moldova in 2010–2013 did not change the structure of the Moldovan economy.

Former Finance Minister – Veaceslav Negruta – in an interview with the News Maker from 23 July 2015, used a few accurate statements that precisely characterize the socio-political and economic situation that has developed in this country, which Streleț will have to face. Like for his predecessors, this will be the first test of competence for the new Prime Minister, and also the way of checking his actual intentions regarding governance. So far, the Moldovan authorities have treated reforms as an obligation established by partners from outside, and not as the political will of the rulers and general public. The state is too heavily bureaucratic and the number of levels of corruption seems to have no end. The process of governing is nothing but the process of obtaining the benefits which is directed by political clans. Thus, the current form of the reform procedures define that individual and group interests of the elite of the elites and lobbying are endless⁴⁴. The biggest challenge for Moldova is therefore to understand the basic recipe for successful transitions – the country needs reforms not for those who give money but for its own sake. IMF's recommendations should not be implemented only to secure next financial aid transfers. The political situation in Moldova at the moment can be described as stabilized but certainly not stable.

Conclusions

The research hypothesis has been confirmed. Geopolitical factors significantly shape the development of the Moldovan democracy. The conflict in Transnistria seems to be unsolvable, which is the result of the Kremlin's policy initiated in the region. The success of Socialists in parliamentary elections in 2014 shows how strong the impact of the State is, and how low the level of political maturity of the society.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ See: "Альянс и ныне там: либерал-демократы, демократы и либералы снова будут править страной", at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/alyans-i-nynye-tam-liberal-demokraty-demokraty-i-liberaly-snova-budut-pravit-strano-15689>, 23 July 2015; "ЛДПМ, ДПМ и ЛП пообещали объявить имя кандидата в премьеры после подписания соглашения о коалиции", at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/ldpm-dpm-i-lp-poobeshchali-objyavit-imya-kandidata-v-premery-posle-podpisaniya-sog-15675>, 23 July 2015; "Источник: ЛДПМ выдвинула в премьеры Майю Санду", at <http://newsmaker.md/rus/novosti/istochnik-ldpm-vydvynula-v-premery-mayyu-sandu-15661>, 23 July 2015.

Of course, there are glimpses of political culture that allow the pro-European factions to win, but they rather seem to create a policy of a vicious circle and not a systematic regularity. Definitely, the political system in Moldova is an oligarchic system, based on the principles of clan corporatism. Bureaucracy and corruption of all levels of power reduce the effectiveness of state institutions and their capacity to act within the law. The pro-European attitude of the ruling coalition is worth as many “zeros” as much financial aid will be given to Moldova by the IMF, the World Bank or the European Union. The crisis of *Banca de Economii* and *Banca Sociala* is the result of corrupted links with business. Is the business Russian? Is it Moldovan? Is it Latvian? – this of course is the subject of ongoing investigations, but there is no doubt that Ilan Shor stands behind it, the 28-year-old millionaire, who withdrew approx. one billion US dollars from Moldovan banks. Will the government appointed on 30 July 2015 strive to implement real reforms, whether its purpose is only to “trick” the next financial subsidies from the West? This question will be answered by Valeriu Streleț, whose political decisions will sooner or later reveal the real intentions of his governance.

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Abstract

Geopolitical factors have significantly shaped the development of the Moldovan democracy from its formal existence in 1991 to the current political situation. The parliamentary elections of 2014 have also showed the enormity of the problems faced not only by the party scene and the elite, but most of all by the Moldovan society. Despite the strong commitment of the Moldovan state in the Eastern Partnership and the Eastern Partnership in the state's policy, the direction of the Moldovan state transition is very often unpredictable.

Keywords: Moldova, geopolitics, political parties, political leadership, state crisis

MICHÈLE KNODT, SIGITA URDZE

The European Union's external democracy promotion in the countries of the Southern Caucasus. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia between the European Union and Russia¹

Mikhail Gorbachev's politics of Perestroika and Glasnost beginning in the mid-1980s was the starting point for the end of the Soviet Union. With Lithuania's declaration of reinstatement of independence in 1990 the dissolution of the Soviet Union started – one Soviet republic after another declared its independence, and respectively its autonomy. At the end of 1991 the Soviet Union was formally dissolved. Almost 25 years have passed since then and the former Soviet republics have undergone very different developments. The Baltic States have been members of the European Union since 2004. Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan have experienced developments in the direction of democracy during their colour revolutions in 2003, 2004 and 2005 – developments that were partly reversed in the aftermath. In Armenia, Moldova and Kazakhstan some democratic attempts have been noted, yet overall more or less authoritarian states have been established. Tajikistan has experienced a very bloody civil war at the beginning of the 1990s. Belarus, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have strong autocratic regimes until today. In Russia, after a phase of democratization, seemingly autocratic structures are coming into force again more and more. Most recently the war in East Ukraine has made the hope of a lasting peace in Europe look like an illusion.

¹ The authors would like to thank the Volkswagen Foundation for financing the project "European Union External Democracy Promotion in the South Caucasus and Central Asia (EU-EDP)" from 1.1.2012 until 31.12.2013. The results presented here were achieved in the framework of this project.

Parallel to the democratization in Eastern and Central Europe, external democracy promotion became one of the goals of the European Union's foreign policy. In fact, since the beginning of the 1990s the EU has a policy of democracy mainstreaming and since 1995 it has included democratic values in all its new bilateral treaties with third countries. Furthermore, the EU has developed a wide range of instruments for external democracy promotion.² The scientific analysis of EU external democracy promotion began after the year 2000 and has increased over the past several years.³ Overall the EU's external democracy promotion has become a well-researched project⁴, even though several questions still remain unanswered.

Among most important questions that are still unanswered is that how the EU acts beyond its most prominent activities such as TACIS, the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Special Representatives. What about such instruments as declarations? Another question is how EU's activities are influenced by the presence and activities of other external actors – in the case of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia namely by the presence and activities of Russia. Even though since the 2013 Maidan events a clear increase of publications on Russia and EU interactions can be noted, there still is a lack of in-depth studies.⁵ In this paper the authors build on their previous work in this regard⁶ and on the results of a study on these questions for the coun-

² M. Knodt, S. Urdze, "Democratization Policy", [in:] *Policies within the EU Multi-Level System*, H. Heinelt, M. Knodt (eds.), Baden-Baden 2011, pp. 21-38.

³ Just as in the White Book of the EU Commission on the "European Union's Role in Promoting Human Rights and Democratisation in Third Countries", in the following paper the expression "democracy promotion" will include the four closely related issues of democracy promotion (in the narrower sense of free elections and democratic interest aggregation), human rights, rule of law and good governance.

⁴ Just to name a few: G. Sasse, "Linkages and the promotion of democracy: the EU's eastern neighbourhood", *Democratization* 2013, no. 20, pp. 553-591; S. Lavenex, F. Schimmelfennig, "EU democracy promotion in the neighbourhood: from leverage to governance?", *Democratization* 2011, no. 18, pp. 885-909; R. Youngs, *The European Union and Democracy Promotion. A Critical Global Assessment*, Baltimore 2010; P. Kotzian, M. Knodt, S. Urdze, "Instruments of the EU's External Democracy Promotion. EU Democracy Promotion: Drivers and Conditions", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 2011, no. 49, pp. 995-1018.

⁵ For authors having published on this subject see e.g. N. A. Lomagin, "Russia's CIS Policy and Economic and Political Transformations in Eurasia", [in:] *Shifting priorities in Russia's foreign and security policy*, R. E. Kanet, R. Piet (eds.), Farnham, Burlington 2014, pp. 115-140; D. W. Larson, A. Shevchenko, "Russia says no: Power, status, and emotions in foreign policy", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 2014, no. 47, pp. 269-279; N. Alexandra-Arbatova, "Captives of a Common Continent: Russia and the European Union after the Caucasus Crisis", [in:] *Russia on our minds. Russian security policy and Northern Europe*, B. Nygren et al. (eds), Stockholm 2010, pp. 89-110.

⁶ Inter alia *Externe Demokratieförderung durch die Europäische Union. European Union External Democracy Promotion*, A. Jünemann, M. Knodt (eds.), Baden-Baden 2007; S. Urdze, *Die externe Demokratieförderung der EU in den zentralasiatischen Staaten*, Baden-Baden 2010; M. Knodt, S. Urdze, "Jenseits von Zuckerbrot und Peitsche: Zur Messung der externen Demokra-

tries of the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia that was funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.⁷ This paper will present first results of a study in regard to the countries of the Southern Caucasus. The authors aim to answer two questions: How the EU promotes democracy in each of the three states of the Southern Caucasus? How can the differences in the EU's democracy promotion in three states of the Southern Caucasus be explained?

The general hypotheses of the study are that the EU is influenced in its external relations not only by the state of democracy in a third country but also by economic and security interests. In the latter the Authors claim that the presence of other external actors is taken into account as well. In the following the authors will first give a brief overview of the EU's relations to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Then the methodological approach which will be developed in order to allow for a comprehensive assessment of the EU's external relations will be outlined. The intention is to go beyond a positive-negative divide and analyse the EU's activities in a way which is more appropriate to this complex policy of the EU. In that section the hypothesis will also be elaborated more in detail. After that the results of the empirical findings in regard to the hypotheses will be discussed and finally the findings will be summed up.

General framework of relations of the European Union with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

The EU has had formal relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia already since the early 1990s. In July 1991, thus before the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Council adopted a regulation for "technical assistance to economic reform and recovery in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics".⁸ This regulation created the basis for the well-known TACIS programme which was initiated by following regulations. From 1993 onwards these regulations included the goal of democracy promotion.⁹ Until the end of 2006 this was the general framework for relations with countries from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

tieförderung der Europäischen Union am Beispiel Zentralasiens", *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft* 2013, no. 7, pp. 49-74.

⁷ The project "The European Union's External Democracy Promotion in the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia" was financed by the Volkswagen Foundation from January 2013 to December 2014.

⁸ Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom), no. 2157/91 of 15 July 1991

⁹ E.g. Council of the European Communities. Council Regulation (Euratom, EEC), no. 2053/93 of 19 July 1993 concerning the provision of technical assistance to economic reform and recovery in the independent States of the former Soviet Union and Mongolia 2053/93.

In 1996 Partnership and Cooperation Agreements were signed between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia respectively, which came into force in 1999. These agreements on the one hand allow for the development of closer relations and on the other hand include conditionality *inter alia* in regard to democracy. Since the running-out of TACIS, starting with 2007, the EU has applied a new policy towards *inter alia* the countries of the Southern Caucasus – the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). As part of the ENP on the 2009 summit in Prague the Eastern Partnership (EP) was launched by a Joint Declaration of EU member states, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The goal of the EP is to bring the relationship among these states “to a new level”.¹⁰ In June 2014 the so far last step of intensification of relations was finally reached for the EU and Georgia with the signing of Association Agreement that allows for developing more intense relations.

Besides these general EU relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, the EU has a range of more specific instruments for its relations to third countries that are applied towards these three countries as well. Figure 1 gives an overview of these instruments. The application of all these instruments will be included in the analysis.

Table 1. Overview of EU instruments for external activities

Instrument ¹¹	Potential measures ¹² (selection)
Legally binding	
General guidelines (formerly: principles of and general guidelines for the common foreign and security policy) ¹³	Same as instrument
Common strategies (inapplicable since the Treaty of Lisbon)	Same as instrument

¹⁰ Council of the European Union. Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit. 8435/09 (Presse 78).

¹¹ The overview of instruments focuses on instruments of the European Council, the Council of the EU and the European Commission. The European Parliament is largely excluded because it has only limited influence on the CFSP.

¹² In the following it is differed between the terms “instrument” and “measure”. While the term “instrument” is used as an overall term for a category for potential activities the term “measure” is used as the concrete application of an instrument.

¹³ Unlike for other instruments, the name of the underlying document type is not used for the general guidelines (Conclusions of the Presidency of the European Union) as ‘general guidelines’ is the term used in the Treaty on European Union Art. 25a. Furthermore, it is debatable whether the general guidelines are legally binding or not. However, because of their high influence on the CFSP as a whole – which is implied as they are listed before the other instruments in the Treaty – they are dealt with in the context of legally binding instruments.

Actions to be undertaken by the Union (formerly: joint actions)	Appointment of Special Representatives, conduct of military operations, establish- ment of monitoring missions
Positions to be taken by the Union (formerly: common positions)	Sanctions, application of specific measures to combat terrorism
Council regulation as well as regulations of the European Parliament and of the Council	Establishment of programmes such as TACIS, EIDHR, imposition of duties
Council decisions	Conclusion of agreements with third states, provision of financial assistance
Legally non-binding	
Guidelines Press releases	Guidelines on the death penalty, guidelines on children and armed conflict Political Dialogue, Declarations, Démarches

Methodological approach

As has been stated above, the goal of this paper is to analyse the EU's external democracy promotion in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Thereby the paper explicitly focuses on the EU's instrument choice and application and not on the impact. Most likely the impact influences how the EU acts towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia as well. Yet as this refers to internal learning processes in the EU which are not publicly visible this will be ignored.

In the existing literature various approaches can be found on the topic of instrument application in the context of democracy promotion. The most common approach is a differentiation between positive and negative instruments¹⁴. Another approach is to analyse the content of instruments and build categories of instrument types on this basis, e.g. political conditionality or financial incentives.¹⁵ A problematic aspect of the positive-negative division is that thereby the complexity of instruments is not really taken account of. For example, the measure of a common position by the EU enacting the easing of sanctions seems significantly less negative than the initial common position providing for sanction imposition. This problem exists to an even larger extent in the content-related categorization of instruments. The problem here is e.g. that high number of instruments is simultaneously used for political con-

¹⁴ E.g. R. Youngs, *Assessing Democracy Promotion: The Case of European Union Strategy*. CEPS Working Paper 2001, Brussels.

¹⁵ E.g. T. A. Börzel, T. Risse, „One Size Fits All! EU Policies for the Promotion of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law”, *Prepared for the Workshop on Democracy Promotion, Oct. 4-5, 2004, Center for Development, Democracy, and the Rule of Law, Stanford University*.

ditionality and financial incentives as well. If such categories are used, the finding of a study may well be that the EU follows the same democratization strategy worldwide as instruments from all categories are used for all countries and regions.

A different analytical model was developed by Hazelzet in 2001¹⁶. Hazelzet evaluates instruments according to “carrots-scale” and “sticks-scale” and concentrates more on the character of instruments. This model has been barely implemented in scientific literature but forms the basis for the analytical framework presented here. The use of this framework accommodates the above situation in which the easing of sanctions is evaluated differently than the initial imposition. However, Hazelzet focuses on each instrument as a whole and not on the individual components of an instrument. In turn, her analysis overlooks the fact that some components of a measure can have a “stick” character while other components of the same measure may be of an opposite qualities. Building on the preliminary work of Hazelzet the author’s own analytical framework is used here that differentiates between *demanding* and *supportive* character in the measures.¹⁷

In the analytical framework the application of measures can vary in three issue areas, reflecting the three areas defined by Czempel:¹⁸ (1) the normative issue area of the recognition or non-recognition of policy (system of rule); (2) the domestic political stability of the third country (security); (3) the economic success of the third country (welfare). Two different rages are used for the determining the character of a specific measure’s on these three issue areas. This is because the authors believe that a measure touching on third countries interests is seen as more interfering than a measure merely voicing rhetorical critique (see figure 1). The authors claim that these three issue areas cannot be weighed against each other. It cannot, for example, be said that a slightly supporting character in the issue area “security” outweighs a slightly demanding character in the issue area “welfare”. These are separate issues by their content. Therefore it is not possible to receive only one value for each measure, instead there are up to three values for each measure.¹⁹

¹⁶ H. Hazelzet, *Carrots or Sticks? EU and US Reactions to Human Rights Violations (1989-2000)*, Florence 2001.

¹⁷ See S. Urdze, *Die externe Demokratieförderung der EU in den zentralasiatischen Staaten*, Baden-Baden 2010 for more details on how the character of a document is determined.

¹⁸ E.-O. Czempel, *Internationale Politik*, Paderborn 1981, p. 198.

¹⁹ In some measures only one or two issue areas are dealt with. In these cases then only one resp. two values are received.

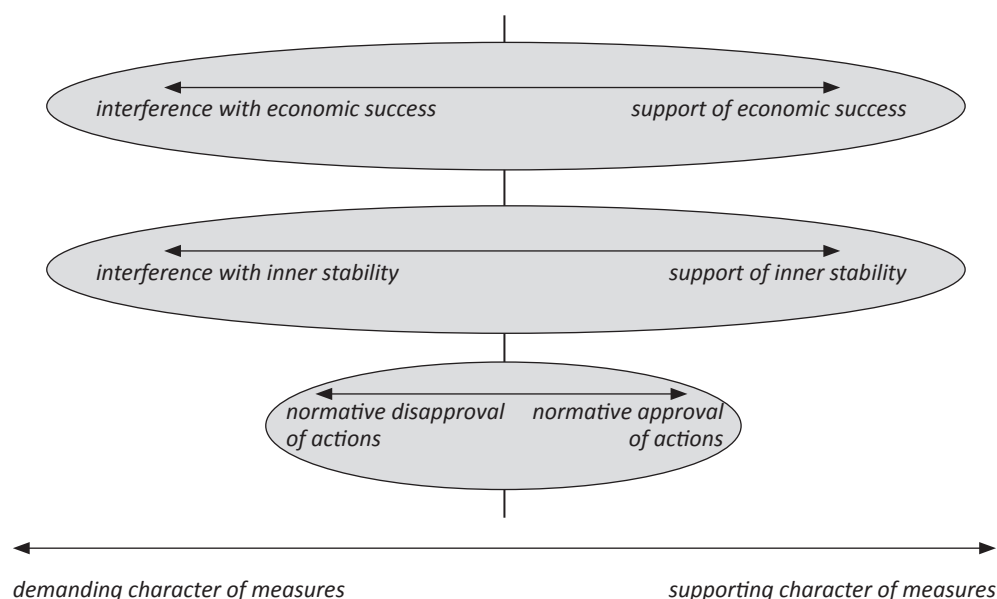


Figure 1: Analytical framework for character of measures developed by the authors

Building on this analytical framework the following hypotheses will be tested in the next section:²⁰

It could be assumed that the EU and Russia more or less pursue undifferentiated democracy respectively autocracy promotion in all third countries, with no differences. However, research has revealed that this is not the case. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider this motive as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for instrument choice and mode of application. It cannot be accepted as a single explanatory variable. In the sense of a null hypothesis that will eventually be disproved by other examined variables, the following can be stated:

H₀: The EU uses its instruments of democracy promotion in the same way for all third countries exhibiting democracy deficits.

More specifically, it can be assumed that the degree of violation of democratic standards and human rights resp. the degree of democratic tendencies affects instrument choice and application. Based on these considerations, the specified null hypothesis runs as follows:

²⁰ In this article the authors will present the results of correlation analyses. These are the results of work in progress. Regression analysis is not completed yet.

H_{0-specific}: The stronger the norm violations of a third country, the more demanding the reaction of the EU.

The authors claim that instrument's application is also influenced by public attention within in the EU itself. Certain events can lead to public attention, which may affect the instrument choice of the EU. The EU is pressured the public awareness of EU member states' citizens to react more clearly towards violations of democracy. This likewise shapes the first hypothesis:

H₁: The stronger the norm violation of a third country and the more public knowledge of the violation, the more likely the EU's reaction will be demanding.

The external activities of the EU are also always connected with security interests. For the EU security policy has been anchored in the CFSP since the Maastricht Treaty, along with the goal of democracy promotion (TEU Maastricht Art J.1.2). It is possible that democratic reform and the easing of governmental repression can cause instable transformation processes. Particularly when the development of these phases persists, they may potentially contribute to the further or total destabilization of the government or entire region. Consequently, the security interests of the EU may not be completely congruent with the interest of democracy promotion in third countries. Security interests are also challenged if third countries have access to alternative external actors as partners in security issues – especially if these alternative partners have other intentions as the EU. This limits the manoeuvring room. This idea is the basis of the second hypothesis:

H₂: The higher the security interests of the EU and/or one or more of its Member States in relation to a third country, the less demanding instruments are used by the EU. External policy is furthermore more reluctant the more access a third country has to alternative external actors.

The external activities of the EU are also related to economic interests. In the case of the EU, the primary economic orientation has been in place since the beginning of the Rome Treaties pertaining to the common market and persists today. It must be noted that foreign economic policy just as foreign policy in general is subject to divided competences, meaning that the EU as a whole as well as the individual Member States can exhibit different interests in third countries. From a rational choice perspective, it is assumed that the instruments used by the EU result from cost-benefit analysis. The cost-benefit calculation is dependent on various variables: (1) The economic interests of the EU or one of the interested Member States in one or more (raw) materials, products, etc. of a third country; (2) geographic proximity in the

sense of short transport distances and thus low costs; (3) the resource relationship between the EU and third country – a symmetrical relationship making a demanding course of action expensive for the EU, while an asymmetrical relationship in favour of the EU means that the costs of demanding democracy promotion will be less; (4) the availability or non-availability of alternative opportunities. For example, a strong economic engagement of Russia or China in a third country may influence an asymmetrical relationship for the third country beneficially and thus influence the cost-benefit analysis of the EU. The summary of these ideas is comprised the third hypothesis:

*H₃: The higher the economic interests of the EU and/or one or more of its Member States in relation to a third country, the less demanding instruments are used by the EU. External policy is furthermore more reluctant, the more access a third country has to alternative external actors.*²¹

Empirical findings

When analysing external democracy promotion of the EU in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the first step it has to be differentiated between those measures that are addressed merely to only one of these countries and those measures that are addressed to several countries at the same time. Partnership and Cooperation agreements are examples for the first case, as they are concluded with each third state separately. The same holds true for most declarations. TACIS or measures in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy are examples of the second group. In the following analysis is limited to those measures addressed to only one country. This leaves us with 73 measures in the case of Armenia, 70 measures in the case of Azerbaijan and 164 measures in the case of Georgia (table 2).

As explained in the methodological section, for determining the character of a document three issue areas of a document will be dealt with separately – welfare, security and rule of law. When analysing the character of the measures addressed by the EU towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia at first glance a rather similar pattern seems to exist (figures 2-4).²² Yet a closer look reveals quite some differences:

²¹ See also M. Knodt, S. Urdze, "Jenseits von Zuckerbrot und Peitsche: Zur Messung der externen Demokratieförderung der Europäischen Union am Beispiel Zentralasiens", *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft* 2013, no. 7, pp. 49-74; S. Urdze, *Die externe Demokratieförderung der EU in den zentralasiatischen Staaten*, Baden-Baden 2010.

²² It is important to note that every document addresses all issue areas. Therefore the number of measures included in each of the figures 2-4 is smaller than in table 2.

E.g. overall, Georgia is obviously more often addressed by measures of the EU than Armenia and Azerbaijan. In the issue area “welfare” measures applied in the relations with Georgia have overall a clearly more supporting character than in the case of the other two countries. In the issue area “security” weakly demanding measures are the ones most often applied towards Armenia whereas towards Azerbaijan this is the case for strongly supporting measures and for Georgia for weakly supporting measures. Finally in the issue area “system of rule” there is a smaller share of supporting measures towards Azerbaijan than towards Armenia and Georgia.

Table 2. Number of measures addressed to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

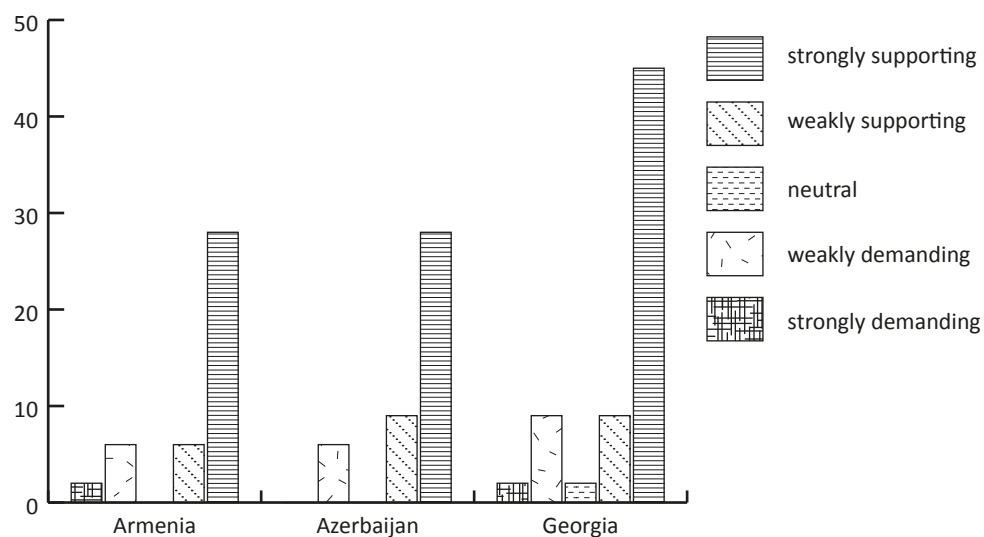
	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Georgia
Only one country addressed by measure	73	70	164
More than one country addressed by measure	120	120	118

Data source: EU-EDP

This makes it clear that the EU does not apply a “one size fits all” approach towards the countries of the Southern Caucasus. Thus the zero hypothesis, according to which the EU uses its instruments of democracy promotion in the same way for all third countries exhibiting democratic deficits is falsified. In spite of existing differences Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were not stable democracies in the research period from 1991 to 2013. Yet there is also not a clear pattern in the EU’s policy whereby it could be said that it addresses of the three countries of the Southern Caucasus predominantly by one type of measure. Thus it is necessary to look for other explanations of instrument choice and mode of application as will be done in the following.

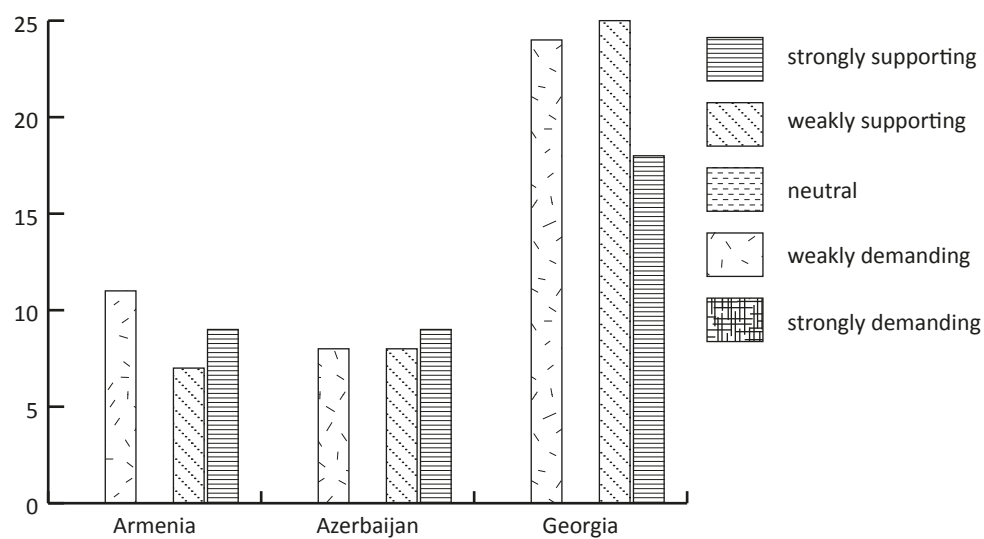
In the specified zero hypothesis it is claimed that the EU will not only look whether democratic deficits at all prevail but also at how strong these deficits are. It states that the stronger the norm violation is the more demanding the EU’s reaction will be. Therefore in the following it will tested both for the influence of the value of Freedom House in the year of the measure as well as for the influence of the average value of Freedom House for the years of measure and the three years prior to the measure. Thereby it is ensured that long-term effects potentially influencing EU policy are included in the analysis as well.

Figure 2. Median of measure character in issue area “welfare” (number of measures)



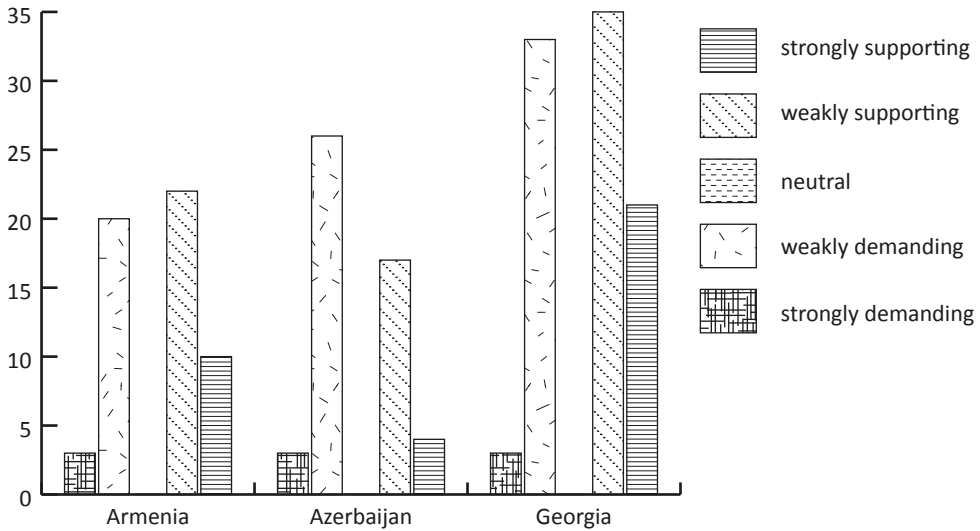
Data source: EU-EDP

Figure 3. Median of measure character in issue area “security” (number of measures)



Data source: EU-EDP

Figure 4. Median of measure character in issue area “system of rule” (number of measures)



Data source: EU-EDP

The results in table 3 show that in the cases of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia some relations between the state of democracy and the character of the EU’s measures can be found in relation to the issue area “system of rule”, yet this influence is limited. In a limited manner one can say that the lower the level of democracy the more demanding the measure. This is a surprising result when bearing into mind the democracy mainstreaming of the EU – from that point of view a stronger influence of the state of democracy could have been expected. Also it becomes clear that the EU does not link democracy promotion with its other relations to the states of the Southern Caucasus, as there is no significant correlation with other issue areas. Thus even though the EU obliges itself to democracy mainstreaming, a lower level of democracy in Armenia, Azerbaijan or Georgia does not seem to interfere with its economic or security relations with these countries. It obviously does not continuously voice critique when democratic deficits are apparent.

Table 4 also provides the results of the same correlations including whether a measure is legally binding or legally non-binding. The results show that there is a stronger link between the level of democracy in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia and the character of legally non-binding measures than of legally binding measures. Thus the EU seems more likely to express critique in more informal contexts than in formal ones. Another interesting aspect in regard to the legally non-binding measures is that the EU seems to be more interested in the short time state of democracy and not in long time developments. Correlation in the former case is low but significant (at 0.01 level), whereas it is not significant in regard to the latter. Overall it can be summed up that the specified zero hypothesis also works only to a limited extent.

Table 3. Correlation between character of measure and level of democracy (Spearman-Rho) (in brackets only legally binding measures/legally non-binding measures)²³

	Freedom House in year of measure	Average value of Freedom House in year of measure and three years prior to measure
Median in issue area "Welfare"	0.042 (0.127/0.115)	0.074 (0.108/0.197)
Median in issue area "Security"	-0.008 (0.171/-0.078)	0.038 (0.198/0.028)
Median in issue area "System of rule"	-0.183* (-0.110/-0.247**)	-0.141* (-0.175/-0.152)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Data source: Freedom House²⁴, EU-EDP

The potential variation between short- and long-time effects leads to the first hypothesis in which it is claimed that it is not only the degree of the norm violation itself that influences the character of measures adopted by the EU, but that it is the public knowledge in the EU itself of this violation as well. For including this independent variable three important weekly publications from Germany (DER SPIEGEL), France (L'Express) and the United Kingdom (Spectator) were analysed and those weeks marked in which democracy violations in Georgia or Kazakhstan were mentioned for each of the three countries of the Southern Caucasus. Publications from Germany, France and the United Kingdom were chosen as these three countries, as big member states of the EU, are important actors within the EU and have a high influence on the EU's external actions. As public attention is expected not to last as long as the awareness of EU personnel dealing on an everyday basis with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, in the following analysis it is looked for the effects of public attention in regard of the mentioning of norm violations 3, 6 and 12 months prior to the measure and not several years ago. Once again there is only a slight correlation that is significant at 0.05 level for mentioning of norm violations in 12 months before a measure in the issue area "system of rule" (table 4).

²³ In Freedom House values "1" equals the best possible state of democracy whereas "7" equals the worst possible state of democracy. For the character of measures the following code is used: 1 = strongly demanding; 2 = weakly demanding; 3 = neutral; 4 = weakly supporting; 5 = strongly supporting.

²⁴ Freedom House. Freedom in the World Country Ratings. 1972-2014, at <https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Individual%20Country%20Ratings%20and%20Status%2C%201973-2015%20%28FINAL%29.xls>, 15 May 2015.

Table 4. Correlation between character of measure and public attention (Spearman-Rho) (in brackets only legally binding measures/legally non-binding measures)

	Mentioning of norm violation in major publications 3 months before measure	Mentioning of norm violation in major publications 6 months before measure	Mentioning of norm violation in major publications 12 months before measure
Median in issue area welfare	0.068 (-0.017/-0.028)	0.068 (-0.050/0.051)	-0.019 (-0.078/-0.042)
Median in issue area security	0.004 (-0.312/0.068)	-0.009 (-0.282/0.064)	-0.033 (-0.318*/0.106)
Median in issue area system of rule	-0.013 (0.160/-0.021)	0.033 (0.344**/-0.076)	-0.144* (0.466**/0.093)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Data sources: Online archives of DER SPIEGEL, L'Express, Spectator 1991-2013, EU-EDP

Once again table 4 also differentiates between legally binding and legally non-binding measures. The results of the correlation yield somewhat surprising results when one compares them to the previous correlation between level of democracy and the character of measures. Here the result is that for legally binding measures there is a clear relation with mentioning in weekly publications 6 and 12 months prior to a measure in the issue area “system of rule”. On the issue area “security” there is a clear correlation as well, which is significant at the 0.05 level. There are no linkage for the measures that are legally non-binding.

Overall it can be summed up that there is support for the first hypothesis, notably in regard to legally non-binding measures. While the zero and zero specified hypotheses as well as the first hypothesis were mostly related to bilateral relations between the countries of the Southern Caucasus and the EU in the second and third hypotheses the presence of third countries – in particular the presence of Russia – is included as well. In the following the influence of security interests (hypothesis 2) and then of economic interests (hypothesis 3) will be analysed.

In regard to security interests the authors claim that the EU is interested in a stable situation in a region that it calls its neighbourhood. To include this in the analysis the values of the Heidelberg conflict barometer are looked at which provides information about the level of conflicts in countries worldwide. Just as before for Freedom House, these values are correlated for the year of the respective measure as well as for the four year average. In such a conflict ridden region as the Caucasus quite a strong influence of the stability on the EU's approach towards each of these countries could be expected. The results are shown in

table 5.²⁵ There indeed a clear and significant correlation at the level of 0.01 between the presence of conflicts in a four year average on the one hand and the character of EU measures on the other hand can be found, yet at first sight only for the issue area “system of rule”. A more instable situation goes along with a more supporting approach of the. This is insofar interesting as EU measures relating to the issue area “security” – whose character does not correlate with the level of conflicts – include questions of border security, police training and the like. Thus an obvious correlation between measures in this issue area and the level of conflicts would have to be expected.

Table 5. Correlation between character of measure and stability (Spearman-Rho)²⁶ (in brackets only legally binding measures/legally non-binding measures)

	Heidelberg Conflict Barometer in year of measure	Average value of Heidelberg Conflict Barometer in year of measure and three years prior to measure
Median in issue area welfare	-0.037 (-0.063/-0.148)	-0.078 (-0.099/-0.179)
Median in issue area security	0.024 (-0.284/0.111)	0.003 (-0.343*/0.185)
Median in issue area system of rule	0.195** (0.495**/0.062)	0.274** (0.594**/0.100)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Data source: Heidelberg Conflict Barometer²⁷, EU-EDP

Table 5 also shows that for the legally binding measures there is even a strong correlation between the level of conflicts in the Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia and the character of measures in the issue area “system of rule”. This closer analysis of documents also reveals that the above mentioned surprising absence of correlation with the character of measures in the issue area “security” is not true for legally binding measures. There the analysis shows a clear and significant correlation at the level of 0.05 in regard to long-lasting conflicts. What it is interesting, however, is the fact that the correlation goes into different directions in these two issue areas: A higher

²⁵ In the interpretation of the data a strong focus on the actual value von Spearman-Rho is put and not only on the significance. This is done because by including all the documents in the analysis actually the whole population is analysed and thus the results are per se significant.

²⁶ In the Heidelberg Conflict Barometer “1” equals “latent conflict/dispute” situation whereas “5” equals “war”.

²⁷ Available online at <http://www.hiik.de/de/konfliktbarometer>, 18 May 2015.

level of conflict correlates with a more demanding character of measures in the issue area “security” and with a more supporting character of measures in the issue area “system of rule”. Here the authors speculate that in an instable situation, the EU does not further want to destabilize a country by putting further pressure on the government in regard to reforms etc. Yet in regard to security questions it does put real pressure on Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Another perspective that the authors take on the EU’s security interests is whether Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are members in security-related international organisations. They claim that the EU’s strained relations with Russia which have evolved recently make visible a rivalry between the EU and Russia striving for influence in this region that has been on-going already for several years. Thus it is claimed that the EU is not in favour of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia being part of security-related international organisations that are strongly influenced by Russia. Therefore, the relationship of these countries to the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Common Security Treaty Organization is looked at. Alternatively the GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development is also included, an organization in which Russia is not a member state. A closer relationship to this organization may be applauded by the EU.

The results of the correlation analysis are shown in table 6. Once again a clear effect can be seen – that is significant at the 0.01 level – only in the issue area “system of rule” and there most prominently in regard to legally binding measures for relationship of the countries of the Southern Caucasus to the CSTO and CIS. A closer relationship to these organisations correlates with a more demanding EU approach. The relationship to GUAM does not seem to influence the EU’s policy towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Finally, turning to the relationship between EU’s economic interests and its external relations towards the countries of the Southern Caucasus, first the oil and gas reserves will be concentrated on. With energy questions continuously getting higher and higher on the EU’s agenda, Azerbaijan’s resource reserves are the topic receiving most attention in discussions on EU’s economic relations to the Caucasus. The results can be found in table 7. Several other values are included in the analysis as well that are not shown below such as import of oil to gas to the EU as a whole and also to Germany, the UK and Poland as other influential member states – besides France that is included in table 7 – and also the Southern Caucasus country’s share of total proved oil and gas reserves. However, the results for these other indicators were either statistically not at all significant or the resulting values were lower than those shown in table 7.

Table 6. Correlation between character of measure and membership in security-related international organisations (Spearman-Rho)²⁸ (in brackets only legally binding measures/legally non-binding measures)

	Relationship to CSTO	Relationship to CIS	Relationship to GUAM
Median in issue area welfare	0.166* (0.076/0.200)	0.127 (0.137/0.156)	-0.103 (0.095/0.054)
Median in issue area security	0.090 (0.228/-0.066)	0.000 (0.220/-0.139)	0.012 (-0.158/0.080)
Median in issue area system of rule	-0.112 (-0.423**/0.003)	-0.258** (-0.417**/-0.167)	0.010 (0.042/0.010)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Data source: EU-EDP

As table 7 shows, the relation between the topic of energy resources and the character of EU measures towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia is quite limited. It is once again only notable in the issue area “system of rule”, there predominantly in regard to legally non-binding measures. There is a correlation at 0.05 level, yet the degree of this correlation is quite low. This result is amazing when taking into account how important energy policy is for the EU.

In a second step the relationship of trade in general with EU's policy towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia is looked at. Here there is a focus on the one hand on trade with the EU, thus how important Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are for the EU respectively selected member states. On the other hand it is also included how big the share of the EU as well third countries is in the trade with the three countries of the Southern Caucasus. For the latter the idea is that it might make the EU more careful in its relations to a country if that country has other important trade partners as well. Once again in table 8 only the most obvious correlations are included.

²⁸ As it is differentiated between four different relation types to the included security-related international organizations (no formal relationship = 1, observer status = 2, associated member = 3 and full member = 4) correlation analysis is possible.

Table 7. Correlation between character of measure and energy-related values (Spearman-Rho) (in brackets only legally binding measures/legally non-binding measures)

	Average value of gas production (billion cubic meters in year) in year of measure and three years prior to measure	Average value of oil production (thousand barrels daily) in year of measure and three years prior to measure	Average value of import of gas to France in Euro in year of measure and three years prior to measure
Median in issue area welfare	0.006 (0.083/0.289)	0.005 (0.092/0.206)	-0.044 (0.125/0.154)
Median in issue area security	0.037 (0.156/0.027)	0.036 (0.156/0.024)	-0.093 (0.067/-0.019)
Median in issue area system of rule	-0.178* (-0.201/-0.179*)	-0.173* (-0.179/-0.190*)	-0.144* (-0.015/-0.174)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data sources: British Petroleum 2013, Eurostat²⁹, EU_EDP

The results in table 8 are indeed very interesting. When all measures are taken together, only slight correlations can be found– however, partially significant, either at the 0.01 level or at least the 0.05 level – that additionally go into different directions. Whereas closer trade relations to Turkey seem to result in a more demanding character of measures in the issue area “system of rule” the opposite holds true for trade relations to China. The picture changes once it is differentiated between legally binding and legally non-binding measures. Then it can be seen that the more trade relations Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia have to other countries than EU member states, the more supportive the EU becomes in its own measures in the issue area “system of rule”. In the cases of Turkey’s and China’s share in total imports of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia correlation goes up to 0.625 and 0.519 respectively and is significant at the 0.01 level. A clear correlation can also be identified for Iran’s and EU’s share in total export of the countries of the Southern Caucasus, both values are significant at the 0.01 level as well. It’s interesting that in legally non-binding measures one cannot find such an effect.

²⁹ British Petroleum. BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2013, at http://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/pdf/statistical-review/statistical_review_of_world_energy_2013.pdf, 22 September 2013.

Table 8. Correlation between character of measure and trade-related values (Spearman-Rho) (in brackets only legally binding measures/legally non-binding measures)

	Average of Turkey's share in total import of country in year of measure and three years prior to measure	Average of Iran's share in total export of country in year of measure and three years prior to measure	Average of China's share in total import of country in year of measure and three years prior to measure	Average of EU's share in total export of country in year of measure and three years prior to measure	Average of EU's share in total import of country in year of measure and three years prior to measure
Median in issue area welfare	-0.197* (-0.128/-0.328)	-0.038 (0.009/-0.359*)	-0.140 (-0.058/-0.235)	-0.085 (0.003/-0.347)	-0.022 (-0.120/-0.375*)
Median in issue area security	-0.036 (-0.341*/0.158)	0.052 (-0.296/0.075)	-0.200* (-0.046/-0.038)	-0.050 (0.017/-0.082)	0.185* (0.104/0.120)
Median in issue area system of rule	-0.261** (0.625**/0.086)	0.193** (0.461**/0.014)	0.168* (0.519**/0.076)	0.043 (0.425**/-0.166)	0.164* (0.267*/-0.003)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Data sources: Eurostat, World Trade Organization³⁰, EU-EDP

³⁰ Eurostat.Database- International trade, at http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/international_trade/data/database, 21 August 2013.

Conclusions

This article dealt with the EU's external democracy promotion in the Southern Caucasus and thereby aimed at answering two questions: How the EU promotes democracy in each of the three states of the Southern Caucasus? How can the differences in the EU's democracy promotion in three states of the Southern Caucasus be explained? For doing so, the authors first introduced an analytical framework which opens the opportunity for in more depth assessment of the EU's external democracy promotion than has been predominant in most existing literature.

The analysis of EU's external democracy promotion in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia revealed quite many differences in the EU's activities towards these countries. First and foremost, it can be seen that the EU is clearly more active towards Georgia than towards Armenia and Azerbaijan. A closer look also reveals that there are quite a few differences in the predominating character of measures that the EU uses towards these three countries. Thus the zero hypothesis was falsified, according to which the EU treats all countries with democratic problems in the same way, thus by applying a "one size fits all" approach. The specific zero hypothesis also had limited explanatory power. There the authors claimed that the stronger the norm violation of a third country is the more demanding the reaction of the EU will be. However only a weak correlation could be found in this regard, mostly in the issue area "system of rule" and predominantly for legally non-binding measures.

In the first hypothesis it was then claimed that more public knowledge of a norm violation will also lead to more demanding measures from the side of the EU. Interestingly, there is a clear relationship between public attention and the character of measures in the issue area "system of rule" and somewhat less strong and significant also in the issue area "security". Future research will have to explain whether this is an effect of public pressure or whether this means that norm violations receiving a substantive amount of public attention are of such a type that they are even "extraordinary" for countries having democratic problems anyway. Both aspects could explain why the EU uses more demanding measures in the case of public attention whereas democratic problems as such have only limited influence on the character of measures towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

In the second and third hypotheses the relation between the EU's security interests as well as the EU's economic interests and the countries of the Southern Caucasus was analysed. Once again, most interesting results became visible once differentiating between the character of legally binding measures and the character of legally non-binding measures. There is a stronger correlation for legally binding measures which indicates that there is a clear relation between EU's hard security and economic interests and the more "clear" measures. Once again, correlation is mostly visible and mostly significant in the issue area "system of rule". Yet some effects are

also detectable in the issue area “security”. In regard to conflict there is both a relation of the level of conflict as well as of membership in security-related international organisations. In regard to the EU's economic interests it is interesting to note that the analysis surprisingly did not reveal a relation between the character of EU's measures and energy resources. However there is no such relation in regard to trade aspects.

Overall the findings show many more details in regard to EU's policy towards the states of the Southern Caucasus. While several questions still remain to be answered the analysis presented here showed that EU's relations to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are quite multi-faceted.

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Abstract

Since the beginning of the 1990s former member states of the Soviet Union have undergone several changes. Some of these states have become democracies, others stayed or became autocracies while the third group has tried several reforms with mixed results. Among these states Russia continuously performed a special role as a foreign actor that cannot be neglected by any of these states. The role of the EU, on the other hand, cannot be defined as clearly. For some states – notably the most Western states – the EU is an important anchor for development and membership as a (future) goal of development while for other states – notably the Central Asian states – it is only one actor among several others. For the states of the Southern Caucasus the role of the EU is a more mixed one, depending on the inner framework of the states and of the period in time as the EU's attention on this region has been changing. The diverging positions of Russia's promotion of autocracy and the EU's promotion of democracy result in these states' standing between two competing poles for their future development. Yet the unclear position of the EU which only recently has started taking a systematic account of Russia's activities and has undergone several changes in the past 25 years makes it even more unclear in which direction to develop. This article analyses the EU's external democracy promotion in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia on the background of Russian influence. It first shows the differences in this policy towards these three states and then shows potential explanations for these differences.

Keywords: European Union, external democracy promotion, Southern Caucasus

MORITZ ESKEN

Post Vilnius Armenia – Still Sitting on the Fence?

Armenia's „Strategic“ U-Turn

The EaP-Summit in Vilnius was planned as a milestone, but while Georgia and Moldova initialled Association Agreements (AA) and Deep- and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTA) it became a turning point not only for Ukraine but also for Armenia. Already in September 2013 before the „Euromaidan“ one could witness that despite all progress there are some big challenges ahead for the EaP: Despite three years of intense and quite successful negotiations with the EU, the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan announced joining the Russian led Customs Union after a meeting with Putin. Already before this decision, the EU clarified that AAs and DCFTAs are not compatible with the legal regulations of the Customs Union.¹ So the Agreements were replaced by a „Joint Declaration“ without any relevant substance. It says that “The EU and Armenia [...] reconfirm their commitment to further develop and strengthen comprehensive cooperation in all areas of mutual interest within the Eastern Partnership“. It also stresses the importance of revisiting the basis for their relations.²

¹ M. Esken, Armenien – “Geopolitische Geisel?”, *ADLAS – Magazin für Sicherheitspolitik* 2014, no. 1.

² “Joint Statement between the European Union and the Republic of Armenia as agreed by High Representative Catherine Ashton and Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian, at http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/131129_03_en.pdf, 25 April 2015.

The following article deals with the background of this U-turn. Besides the analysis of Armenia's domestic and foreign political situation also it will also include the examination of Russia as a player with special interests in the South-Caucasus. Further, possible consequences for Armenia will be covered. Afterwards the problems and challenges concerning the EaP as a whole and especially those concerning Armenia will be looked at to develop some future options.

A Victim of Geopolitics

How „strategic“ was this U-turn actually? During a press conference right after the meeting with Putin, President Sargsyan said: „I have repeatedly said before, that when you are part of one system of military security it is impossible and ineffective to isolate yourself from a corresponding economic space.“³ To understand what lies behind these words one has to look at Armenia's overall situation. Besides domestic issues and economic, political and rhetoric pressure from Russia, the main reason for Sargsyans U-turn was also a security-related decision.

The economic problems stem from different reasons. Armenia still has a huge problem with corruption connected with a network of oligarchs, it has an emigration problem and it is geopolitically isolated. Due to this isolation, Russia is the biggest investor in the small country. The resulting dependency on Russia is most obvious in the energy sector: This South-Caucasus country obtains Russian gas via Georgia, and the Armenian Oil Company ArmrosGazprom is a 100 percent daughter company of Gazprom.⁴ The systematic boost of the gas price for Yerevan by Russia in 2013 up to 50 percent caused a huge increase of prices in the service sector and public sector of the Armenian economy.⁵ Armenian oligarchs benefit from the economic status quo. Hence they are interested in good relations with Russia. Also the relationship to Moscow can have a certain influence on remittances or the work permit of Armenians working in Russia. This can be used as a further instrument of pressure.

The geopolitical isolation is mainly caused by the conflict over Karabagh with Azerbaijan. Turkey closed its border to Armenia in 1993 due to its solidarity with

³ „Armenia To Join Russian Led Customs Union“, *Radio Free Europe – Radio Liberty*, 3 September 2013, at <http://www.rferl.org/content/armenia-customs-union/25094560.html>, 25 April 2015.

⁴ „Russia Strengthens Ties With Armenia“, *Natural Gas Europe*, 3 December 2013, at <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/russia-strengthens-ties-armenia>, 25 April 2015.

⁵ C. Atilgan, „Strategische Kehrtwende – Armeniens geplanter Beitritt zur Zollunion“, *KAS Länderbericht Tbilisi* 2013.

Azerbaijan, and today the Turkish position concerning the Armenian genocide still hinders a rapprochement. So, besides Russia as an indirect neighbour there are only Georgia and Iran left as direct neighbours. Furthermore, one may speak of not only an economic but also a military dependency on Moscow. Armenia belongs to the Russian dominated Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and hosts between 3000 and 5000 Russian military personnel on its territory. It obtains cheap weapons for a discount prize from Moscow and has a Russian security guarantee. However, this guarantee is very questionable because Moscow is also Azerbaijan's biggest supplier of weapons⁶.

Referring to the reasons for the U-turn there are some more things to consider: First, the question is: Why does Moscow pressure Yerevan at all? There are many answers to this question, but the main argument is that Armenia, like other post-soviet states is perceived by Putin as a „legitimate sphere of influence“ or „near abroad“ and that Russia perceives the EU as a competitor in this region.

Another issue to consider is that Yerevan tries to deal with its isolation with a strategy called „Politics of Complementarity“ or “Sitting on the Fence”. This strategy aims at good relationships with as many players as possible without offending any of them (but also without taking sides clearly) and, in this way, limiting Armenia's own options. This especially refers to Russia, the “West”, Turkey and Iran.⁷

But either this approach has reached its limit now or it has been misinterpreted by Sargsyan. From the EU perspective Armenia now has clearly set back its political options for the near future.

Consequences

In the short term Sargsyan's decision caused further isolation and more dependency on Moscow. It also caused a setback for rapprochement with the EU in the context of the EaP.

Putin announced a discount on Russian gas for Armenia. There will also be a debt relief on a part of Yerevan's debts caused by the gas supply. In return the 80 percent Gazprom daughter, ArmrosGazprom, will now be 100 percent Russian.⁸ Taking into account the constant political exploitation of the gas price by Moscow, Armenia's

⁶ M. Esken, op. cit.

⁷ A. Iskandaryan, “Armenia-Europe – Minimizing Opportunity Costs”, *The South-Caucasus 2018 – Facts, Trends, Future Scenarios*, Tbilisi 2013.

⁸ “Russia Strengthens Ties With Armenia”, *Natural Gas Europe*, 3 December 2013, at <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/russia-strengthens-ties-armenia>, 25 April 2015.

economic dependency is now higher than ever and it is very questionable how long this discount will be an advantage for this small country.

The overall security-political status will basically not change very much because the military dependency on Moscow will last. Russia will carry on selling weapons to both Armenia and Azerbaijan. This will also be a reason why the so called „frozen conflict“ (which is in fact not frozen at all) will go on.

Russia's Role

Why Russia?

For a comprehensive approach it is necessary to take Russia into account when dealing with Armenia in the context of the EaP. These are the reasons why:

1. The Russian Government views the South-Caucasus as a part of its „Near Abroad“ and its „legitimate sphere of influence“.
2. Russia is directly and indirectly involved in all conflicts in the South Caucasus.
3. The EU is increasingly perceived as a political, economic and cultural opponent.⁹

The first reason is partly caused by the deep political, economic and cultural connection of Russia and the South-Caucasus. Also despite the successive declarations of independence by Moscow's satellites in the early Nineties, Yeltsin introduced the term „near abroad“ in the context of the post-soviet Russian military doctrine. This doctrine legitimizes the deployment of Russian troops to defend Moscow's security-related interests.¹⁰

However, at least since the Russo-Georgian war and the war in Eastern Ukraine none of the post-soviet states wants to be in this sphere of influence.¹¹

The second reason refers to the conflicts in and around Georgia (South-Ossetia and Abkhazia), between Armenia and Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabagh), the conflict of secession between Moldova and Transnistria and of course the war in Eastern Ukraine. In all of these conflicts Russia is an influential player. However, although Moscow is pretending to be the mediator, it often takes sides or plays the conflicted parties off against each other.¹²

The third reason is that Putin and his government perceive the EU's growing influence as a zero-sum game for Moscow. In a speech in Brussels Russia's foreign minister

⁹ M. Esken, op. cit.

¹⁰ G. Wettig, „Die neue russische Militärdoktrin“, *Osteuropa* 1994, no. 4.

¹¹ S. Meister, L. M. May, „Die Östliche Partnerschaft der EU – Ein Kooperationsangebot mit Missverständnissen“, *DGAP Standpunkt* 2009, no. 7.

¹² S. Meister, „Sicherheitspolitischer Neustart zwischen Russland und der EU?“, *Genshagener Papiere* 2011, no. 7.

Sergey Lavrov complained: “We are accused of having spheres of influence. But what is the Eastern Partnership, if not an attempt to extend the EU’s sphere of influence to include Belarus”.¹³ The then Russian President Medvediev was even clearer: “Frankly speaking, what embarrasses me is the fact that some states view this partnership as a partnership against Russia (...). We don’t want the Eastern Partnership to turn into a partnership against Russia.”¹⁴ Without being prepared for it and without even realizing it, the EU drifted into a geopolitical competition with the Russian federation.

The „Eurasian Economic Union“

In 2011 Russia launched the Eurasian Customs Union (ECU) together with Kazakhstan and Belarus as an alternative structure for integration designed for the post-Soviet space. In 2015 the ECU became the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). From the European perspective this project is often viewed as a half-hearted attempt to develop some kind of opposing integration structure to the EU. Some even call it „Soviet Union 2.0“, which is a clearly exaggerated interpretation. Although Putin assures that he is not aiming at the reconstruction of historic power structures, there is probably more behind the EEU than economic integration. In an article in the newspaper “Izvestia” from 2011, Putin reveals his geopolitical aims: „We suggest a powerful supranational association capable of becoming one of the poles in the modern world and serving as an efficient bridge between Europe and the dynamic Asia-Pacific region.”¹⁵ This strategic view was repeated by him when he called the former ECU a chance for the post-soviet space to be an independent centre of global development instead of the periphery of Europe or Asia¹⁶.

The question which integrative and cooperative potential as well as which ambition is behind this project will shape the possibilities of future relationship between Russia, the EU and the member-countries of the EaP.

¹³ V. Pop, “EU expanding its sphere of influence Russia says”, *EU Observer*, 21 March 2009, at <https://euobserver.com/foreign/27827>, 25 April 2015.

¹⁴ J. Druker, “Partnership Against Russia”, *International Security Network – ISN*, at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?lang=en&id=100803>, 25 April 2015.

¹⁵ V. Putin, “A new integration project for Eurasia: The future in the making”, *Izvestia*, 3 October 2011.

¹⁶ C. Atilgan et al., “Die Eurasische Union – Ein Integrationsprojekt auf dem Prüfstand”, *KAS Auslandsinformationen* 2014, no. 2.

The Euro-Russian Relationship

Because of the above mentioned points that make Russia an important player in the post-Soviet space and because of conflicts of interest between the EU and Moscow resulting from this fact, it is necessary to search for institutionalized high-level formats of EU-Russian cooperation. Those formats actually exist on different levels: The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, The Four Common Spaces, The Partnership for Modernisation and the Weimar Triangle. All these formats suffer from a lacking European foreign-political consensus and Russia's zero-sum-logic. Referring to the former head of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation in Moscow Peter W. Schulze said that the Euro-Russian relationship is based on an "ideological-anachronistic framework, seen as unfeasible but tacitly accepted by both parties." (Author's own translation)¹⁷

As they did not really serve their purpose and also in the light of the war in Eastern Ukraine all these formats have to be completely reviewed and supplemented by stronger foreign-political instruments.

The EU should not accept Moscow's „legitimate sphere of influence" and it inevitably has to anticipate Russian interests in the region. However, the EaP is not designed to weaken the Russian Federation. This has to be constantly communicated, because the „Final Document of the Extraordinary Meeting of the European Council" from September 2008 actually drew a link between promoting the EaP and condemning Russian invasion of Georgia.¹⁸

Shortcomings and Challenges

The sections above already showed some of the EaPs strengths and weaknesses. One often reads that in the context of the EaP there should be more strategy, more engagement and more flexibility. But what do these buzzwords actually mean? First the EU should harmonize its partly conflicting goals and develop and communicate a clear cut strategic concept to minimize the EaPs conceptual ambiguity. It should adjust its policies to individual needs of the member countries. It should also sup-

¹⁷ P. W. Schulze, "Russland und die Europäische Union", *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, 13 January 2011, at <http://www.bpb.de/internationales/europa/russland/47974/europaeische-union?p=all>, 25 April 2015.

¹⁸ S. Stewart, "Russland und die Östliche Partnerschaft", *SWP-Aktuell* 2009, no. 21.

ply short term financial help if it is needed and it should be more responsive to the people in member countries.¹⁹

Conceptual Ambiguity

A point of criticism is the ambiguity of the EaP as a concept and a lack of geopolitical strategy. Both points are partly caused by different opinions of the EU member countries of what the EaP actually should be. Referring to the EU's „External Action Service“, the official goals are: support for democracy, good governance and stability, strengthening of energy security, mobility as well as economic and social development.²⁰ Energy security can be seen as a rather geopolitical issue especially referring to the EU's pipeline ambitions. Actually the whole EaP is (besides other factors) based on geopolitical considerations motivated by the Russo-Ukrainian gas conflict and the Russo-Georgian war (both in 2008). Hence the EaP member-countries and their people also see the EaP from a geopolitical point of view. They hope for a resolution of their conflicts and safety from Russia. However, the EU does not see itself as a competitor to Russia and conflict management is not an official part of the EaP's goals.²¹

Nevertheless, in the past the EU has shown that it is able to act in a geopolitical manner: The joining of Bulgaria and Romania made the EU a full-blown actor in the Black Sea area and also the soft stance towards Baku can be interpreted from a geopolitical point of view.²²

If the EU really wants the EaP to be a democratisation project, a geopolitical project and an instrument for conflict resolution at the same time, this would be a very ambitious goal. It could only be reached if the different policies and politics are harmonized and linked together.

¹⁹ M. Esken, op. cit.

²⁰ European External Action Service, at http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/index_en.htm, 25 April 2015.

²¹ M. Esken, op. cit.

²² A. Makarychev, A. Devyatkov, “The EU in Eastern Europe – Has normative power become more political?”, *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* 2014, no. 310.

Conflict Management

Armenian politicians criticize the fact that the EU does not mediate between the conflicted parties. Indeed, the negotiations mainly take place in the context of the so-called Minsk Group of the OSCE and the EU is only indirectly involved in this group namely through France (as part of the co-chairmanship), Germany, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Sweden and Finland. Initially, the EU's External Action Service was created with a mission of „peace building and conflict prevention.“ However, not much has been achieved in this context.

Also the ENP action plans do not really serve as a genuine instrument for conflict management.

Only the EaP Work Programme „Democracy, Good Governance and Stability“ covers this issue in the following words: „Facilitating the capacity of Civil Society Organisations, including the CSF for advocacy and promoting confidence building in the field of conflict settlement“.²³ For a supposed geopolitical project this is a very one-sided approach. This means that the member-countries' expectations neither equal with what the EaP officially stands for, nor what the EU is able to offer in this context. So one could question why there are no direct bilateral conflict related negotiations between the EU and Armenia or between the EU and Azerbaijan. In fact, the EU does not want to appear to be taking sides in the conflict. The Armenian analyst Richard Giragosian calls this a „Policy of Benign Neglect“.²⁴ The EU tries to avoid this dilemma by using an EU Delegation in Tbilisi that supports civil society involvement in the conflict from neutral territory.²⁵

Hence, not only in general terms, but also referring to conflict management it is necessary to harmonize different policies and link them with a conflict management agenda. Such an agenda, however, should stand behind all efforts of the Minsk Group. It should include conflict analysis, a deepening of dialogue (e.g. through Mediation Support Teams like in the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue) and the empowerment of the European Union Special Representative (EUSR).²⁶

²³ Eastern Partnership Platform 1, „Democracy, Good governance and Stability“ – Core Objectives and Work Programme 2014-2017, at http://eeas.europa.eu/eastern/platforms/docs/work_programme_2014_2017_platform1_en.pdf.

²⁴ R. Giragosian, „The South Caucasus – The Limits of a Resurgent Russia“, *Heinrich Böll-Stiftung*, 24 February 2014, at <http://ge.boell.org/en/2014/02/24/south-caucasus-limits-resurgent-russia>, 25 April 2015.

²⁵ M. Frichova Grono, „The EU and Conflicts in the South Caucasus“, *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*, 15 September 2010, at <http://www.boell.de/en/navigation/europa-transatlantik-eu-and-conflicts-in-the-South-Caucasus-10108.html>, 25 April 2015.

²⁶ R. Giragosian, „Challenges for the EU in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: An Armenian perspective“, *EPC Policy Brief*, 2013.

Nevertheless for the EU realistic options for engagement in conflicts in Russia's „near abroad“ will always be very limited. This is not only because of a lack of resources but mainly because Russia is able and ready to push through its own interests in the region by military means. Hence the EaP should also officially be supplemented with some conflict-management or even conflict-resolution mechanisms, because this is an absolute necessary key area if one wants to get involved in regions like the South-Caucasus²⁷.

Cut-and-Dried Approaches and a Lack of Flexibility

Armenian politicians have criticized the fact that EU bureaucracy did not leave Yerevan much room to manoeuvre between Russia and the EU. However, one should keep in mind that it was Sargsyan and the former President Robert Kocharyan before him that embraced Russian take-over of the economy. Tom De Waal called this a car crash in slow motion over several years.²⁸ This shows us another shortcoming of the EaP: the cut-and-dried approaches to individual problems and a lack of flexibility of the excessive EU-bureaucracy. It has not been communicated clear enough what EaP-member countries can achieve and what they cannot achieve in the EaP-framework, either. The economic advantages for EaP countries caused by DCFTAs will only take positive effect in the medium-term if not long-term. However, the reforms demanded of member-countries can cause negative short-term side-effects.²⁹

The EU should have considered the short-term economic and political price that countries like Armenia have to pay, by providing more immediate financial help. While the EU is following its cut-and-dried action plans, Russia exploits the „near abroad's“ needs and weaknesses³⁰. What is also important in this context is the question of (in)compatibility between DCFTAs and a membership in the EEU. In fact not only because of Russia's direct and indirect pressure but also because of the EUs (legally correct) „either-or position“ Sargsyan faced an unpleasant choice. In fact the incompatibility is caused by the EEU's regulations and not by the EU.

²⁷ S. Meister, „Sicherheitspolitischer Neustart zwischen Russland und der EU?“, *Genshagener Papiere* 2011, no. 7.

²⁸ T. De Waal, „An Offer Sargsyan Could Not Refuse“, Carnegie Endowment for Peace, 4 September 2013, at <http://carnegie.ru/eurasiaoutlook/?fa=52841>, 25 April 2015.

²⁹ A. Izotov et al., „The Post-Vilnius Challenges of the Eastern Partnership“, *Eastern Partnership Review* 2013, no. 15; L. Delcour, K. Wolczuk, „Beyond the Vilnius Summit: challenges for deeper EU integration with Eastern Europe“, *European Policy Center, Policy Brief*, 2013.

³⁰ Ibid.

The last point of criticism is that many people in the EaP countries have a wrong perception or exaggerated expectations of the EU and the EaP. Some think that an AA is the same as full EU membership. So an honest and better information policy not only by the EU itself but also by the member countries of the EaP is necessary.

Options and Prospects

According to an Armenian analyst, Richard Giragosian, the EU's door is closed but not yet locked for Armenia. This pretty much reflects the reality on the ground. The EU's response to the U-turn has been quite pragmatic. Most forms of cooperation have continued.³¹ In the beginning of 2014 an unofficial working paper called "20 Points on the Eastern Partnership Post-Vilnius" was created by 13 EU member countries. It demands everybody to search for a customized agreement with Armenia as a provisional alternative. It also demands a dialogue with Russia but also coordinated reactions against possible actions by Russia. It calls for the support and spread of studies about advantages and disadvantages of EU and EEU membership. The authors of the paper realize the necessity „[to] strengthen the EU's role in the settlement of protracted conflicts“. Furthermore, an EU-Armenian working group has been set up to work on an alternative concept of cooperation.

However, the development of such a new concept is only possible if all the detailed regulations and obligations of an EEU-membership are presented by Yerevan. It is Armenia's turn now!

Conclusions

Sargsyan made a strategic U-turn due to several political, security-related and economic reasons. Part of this is Armenia's relationship to Russia. This causes that cooperation in the context of the EaP is a balancing act for both the EU and Yerevan. In the short term the U-turn means more isolation and more dependency. Now it is a task for Armenia and the EU to search for an appropriate alternative concept for cooperation.

³¹ R. Youngs, "Armenia as a Showcase for the New European Neighborhood Policy?", *Carnegie Endowment for Peace*, 15 April 2015, at <http://carnegieeurope.eu/2015/04/02/armenia-as-showcase-for-new-european-neighborhood-policy>, 25 April 2015.

As mentioned above, the EaP must deliver policies that are more flexible, more strategic, and more engaged. In fact the EU is really trying to do this now in Armenia. But this will only be the beginning of a new and a better EaP. Referring to the words of Richard Youngs from the Carnegie Endowment for Peace “The EU invited Armenia to identify elements of the AA in which it is still interested and that are compatible with the country’s EEU membership. The EU has accepted this tailor-made and demand-driven route toward drawing up a replacement agreement. [Because] the EU’s stated aim is to help Armenia to retain a degree of multivector pluralism in foreign relations. Armenia is seen as a kind of experimental gateway between EEU and EaP”³²

This year the „Joined Consultation Process“ called „Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy“ should be seen as an attempt for a comprehensive review. This could pave the way for pragmatic adjustments which are necessary for the future summits not to become a disappointment like the Vilnius summit. Clear strategic guidelines would really be preferable because contrary to many comments these days the Author is of the opinion that the future of Europe will not be shaped in the Caucasus, in the Ukraine or elsewhere but only by strong willed and unanimous decisions in Brussels and the member countries.^{33 34}

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³² Idem, “Armenia as a Showcase for the New European Neighborhood Policy?”, *Carnegie Endowment for Peace*, 15 April 2015, at <http://carnegieeurope.eu/2015/04/02/armenia-as-showcase-for-new-european-neighborhood-policy>, 25 April 2015.

³³ J. Techau, “A Few Fundamentals of EU Foreign Policy”, *Carnegie Endowment For International Peace*, 4 February 2014, at <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=54421>, 25 April 2015.

³⁴ J. Janning, “Russia, Europe and the new international order”, *European Council on Foreign Relations*, 9 April 2014, at http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russia_europe_and_the_new_international_order245, 25 April 2015.

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Abstract

The following article deals with Armenia's situation and its prospects within the context of the Eastern Partnership of the European Union. It analyses the reasons for President Sargyan's decision to join the Russian led Eurasian Economic Union and the consequences of this choice. For this purpose it takes a look on Armenia's economic and security, as well as its geopolitical situation. Furthermore, the special relationship between Armenia and Russia and also the role of the Eurasian Economic Union is shown. The article concludes with points of criticism concerning the EaP and its possible adjustments as well as the options for an alternative framework of Euro-Armenian cooperation.

Keywords: Armenia, European Union, Eastern Partnership, Russia, South-Caucasus, Eurasian Economic Union

NAREK S. GALSTYAN

How to Deal with Armenia's Geopolitical Trilemma? Examining Public Opinion

In 2014, a joint Armenian-Georgian team from the Yerevan State University and Tbilisi State University – as a part of an ASCN regional programme – began to study the influence of norms and beliefs on the foreign policy of Armenia and Georgia. Experts correlate official policy, positions of ruling and political elites in general and public opinion. This article is a summary of public opinion survey conducted in Armenia in the framework of the mentioned regional project.

Armenia claims to have a foreign policy complementary with the dominant direction towards Russia. A large set of geopolitical conditions influences the country's foreign policy: Armenia as a small and land-locked country with complex and troubled neighbourhood in a region that is a subject to competition between regional and world power centres. In fact, this is not conducive to creating optimum conditions to carry out complementary foreign policy, yet this option seems to have no alternative for Armenia.

Indeed, in this situation, public opinion cannot have an essential influence on the foreign policy decision-making process. However, it is always interesting academically and important practically to get a grasp of public attitudes towards a country's official foreign policy course. In addition, it is also a specific indicator which may be used to evaluate decisions in the sense of how much the society supports or accepts proposed solutions. This, in its turn, can be the basis or one of the ways to legitimize the policy of the authorities.

General Geopolitical Orientation

Officially, Armenia carries out a complementary foreign policy. The National Security Strategy¹ highlights the main objectives, principles and threats to Armenia's foreign security policy. Accordingly, Armenia's external security strategy is based on the two basic principles: *complementarity*, which commits Armenia to have effective relations with all interested actors in the region, and *participation* (engagement) in those processes on international arena which are consistent with its core objectives. As a platform for a complementarity, strategic relations with Russia, the European way of the development, mutually beneficial cooperation with the USA and with Iran, membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), development of cooperation with the NATO are considered.

The public opinion in Armenia on country's foreign policy is almost identical to the above-mentioned provisions of the National Security Strategy. According to "Integration Barometer – 2014"², as regards the **socio-cultural dimension**, Armenia's society is mainly "*self-sufficient*" (see **Table 1**): a relative majority is not interested in the main components of the foreign socio-cultural attraction: history, culture, geography, modern show business (39% – the most uninterested country in this category) and the educational system (36% – the fifth most uninterested country) of any country/area. However, a relative majority (45%) prefers vacation in Europe (25% in Post-Soviet countries, 22% in other countries and 28% do not prefer any country). This is true even considering the fact that the absolute majority (52%) of respondents did not visit other countries over last 5 years, and the vast majority (82%, second place after Tajikistan) has permanent social contacts in former USSR (mainly in Russia), but also in the European countries (25% – mainly in France and Germany).

However, it is also noteworthy that Armenians prefer tourists from European countries (50%), than those from post-Soviet (37%) or other countries (39%). It is very remarkable if we compare these data with the "Caucasus Barometer – 2013" data, according to which 60% of respondents had an intermediate and 25% an advanced level of knowledge of the Russian language³, while only 14% of them had an intermediate and only 4% had an advanced level of knowledge of

¹ "The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia", *Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia*. Adopted on 26 January 2007, at http://www.mfa.am/u_files/file/doctrine/Doctrineeng.pdf, 14 July 2015.

² "Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR – 2014", *Tsentr integratsionnykh issledovaniy. Yevraziyskiy bank razvitiya*, Sankt-Peterburg, pp. 24-46.

³ "Knowledge of Russian", *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*, Generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/KNOWRUS>, 15 July 2015.

English⁴. Moreover, only 7% of them had an intermediate and only 2% had advanced level of knowledge of another foreign language⁵. It means that comparatively low level of knowledge any European language knowledge does not affect Armenians' preference over tourists from Europe.

Table 1. Interest in History, Culture and Geography (%)

	Post-Soviet countries	EU countries	Other countries	None/DK
Tajikistan	74	19	27	?
Ukraine	25	57	49	47
Uzbekistan	48	36	61	10
Armenia	42	34	37	44

In the **economic dimension**, Armenia's population has a *multi-vector orientation*, with some *predominance of attraction to the post-Soviet space* in general⁶. For 38% of respondents the post-Soviet (mainly Russian) market of temporary workers is more preferable, than European (23%) or other countries' (12%) markets. Nevertheless, the same percent of respondents does not prefer any foreign labour market at all. Post-Soviet space (mainly Russia) is attractive for 38% of respondents as a possible place of permanent residence. However, in this case, too, the relative majority (41%) does not prefer any foreign country.

For relative majority (36%) of respondents migrant workers and students from European countries are more preferable than from post-Soviet (32%) and other countries (28%), but 35% of respondents does not have any preference on this issue.

Unlike the case of foreign tourists, Armenia's society prefers post-Soviet countries as a source for the flow of capital, investment, and business companies. For a relative majority (42%) of respondents the post-Soviet space is more preferable as a geographic source for FDI, capital and business, than the European (34%) or other (37%) countries. In addition, the post-Soviet countries are also more attractive in terms of main business partners, and, according to the "Caucasus Barometer 2013"⁷, the Russians occupy the first position (after Armenians themselves) in terms of preferred business nationality. Nevertheless, Europeans, Americans, Georgians and Iranians are also preferable for the majority of the Armenia's population.

⁴ "Knowledge of English", *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*, Generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/KNOWENG>, 15 July 2015.

⁵ "Knowledge of other foreign language", *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/KNOWOTH>, 15 July 2015.

⁶ "Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR – 2014", pp. 47-66.

⁷ "Oum het en naxy'ntrowm „gorts brnel" hayery", *Barometer.am*, 16 February 2015, at <http://www.barometer.am/news/business/20150216/419>, 15 July 2015.

Surprisingly, according to “Integration Barometer – 2014”, the products made in post-Soviet countries (mostly Russian), too, are more preferable (50%) for respondents, than products made in Europe (37%) or other countries (29%).

However, the most interesting element is the orientation of respondents in case of scientific and technical cooperation. In this sphere respondents prefer other countries (40%, mainly USA, Japan, China), but Armenia has the highest percentage of answer “No one/Don’t know” (see *Table 2*).

Table 2. Preferred Countries for Scientific and Technical Cooperation (%)

	Post-Soviet	EU	Other	None/DK
Tajikistan	68	20	33	3
Moldova	46	51	38	20
Azerbaijan	26	35	67	26
Armenia	31	31	40	27

Not surprisingly, in the **political dimension**⁸, Armenia’s society is categorically focused on *the post-Soviet space*. In the matter of military-political cooperation for the majority of the population the preferable option is the post-Soviet area. Exactly in this space the Armenians see their main ally and friend. More specifically, for 87% respondents from Armenia (the fourth place after Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) consider Russia a friendly country who will be helpful in difficult times. Only for a minority of respondents, this friendly country is a European (16%) or another (7%) country. These findings are consistent with the results of “Caucasus Barometer – 2013”⁹ survey, according to which Russia is considered to be the country’s main friend by 80% of respondents from Armenia, when France got the votes of only 5% of respondents*.

Moreover, according to “Integration Barometer – 2014”, with its 81%, Armenia is in the first place among 12 post-Soviet countries to expect a military-political support from Russia in the case of war. In this regard, European and other countries got the trust of 13% and 12% respondents respectively. Interestingly, only 48% of respondents conceive that Armenia is committed to providing tantamount military-political support for Russia. Georgia (15%) is in the second place with its public support from Armenia, and Ukraine (3%) is in the third place. Moreover, 40% of respondents do not think that any foreign country merits Armenia’s political and military support. It

⁸ “Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR – 2014”, pp. 67-79.

⁹ “Main friend of the country”, *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*, generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/MAINFRN>, 15 July 2015.

* Must be highlighted that “Integration-Barometer” permits simultaneously multiple answers, and “Caucasus-Barometer” registers only one answer.

means that the vast majority of respondents is expecting a military-political support from Russia in case of military conflict, but only about half of them is ready to support Russia in the same way (see **Table 3**). In addition, the number of respondents who are for Armenia's support to Georgia and Ukraine is much higher than those respondents who expect support from these countries.

Table 3. Armenia Can Expect/Needs to Provide Support From/To These Countries (%)

	Post-Soviet	European	Other	No one/ DK
Expect support from	82 (RF -81, Geo. -7, Belarus -1)	13	12	16
Provide support to	58 (RF -48, Geo. -15, Ukraine -3)	5	4	40

It is noteworthy that in the political dimension with addition of some economic aspects, Armenia (alongside with Belarus) is one of countries that is the most oriented on post-Soviet space, but mainly on Russia (see **Table 4**)¹⁰. Moreover, only in the cultural dimension, Armenia is a pro-Europe oriented country, and other two dimensions make Armenia oriented towards the post-Soviet space.

Table 4. Armenia's Average Indexes of Attraction

	Economy	Culture	Politics	Overall
Post-Soviet	0.39	0.27	0.73	0.44
European	0.32	0.31	0.11	0.28
Other	0.29	0.15	0.06	0.30

However, these conclusions are not as unambiguous and final as they may seem.

Public Awareness, Trust and Support of Cooperation With the EU and CIS/EAEU.

Officially, one of the most important strategic directions of Armenia's foreign and security policy continues to be the Armenian-Russian strategic cooperation and relations within the CIS and CSTO. These multi-layer relations are considered strategic also in the National Security Strategy. Armenia views Russia as an integral part of the

¹⁰ "Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR – 2014", pp. 83-86.

Caucasus region. This view is conditioned by the Armenian-Russian alliance in the military security of Armenia, by the role of Russia in Artsakh (Karabakh) conflict settlement as well as by the existence of large Armenian community in Russia. The cooperation is supported by the bilateral and multilateral levels, particularly in the CIS and the CSTO framework.

According to the National Security Strategy, the development and consolidation of relations with the European structures, and with the EU above all, is a priority direction for Armenia's foreign policy, too. In this context it is considered that the Armenia-EU relations have three main components: 1. further intensification of Armenia's diverse cooperation with the EU will promote the consolidation of democracy, strengthen the rule of law, and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. 2. The development of relations with the EU, as a major global economic and political power, broadens Armenia's trade and economic links and supports the economic development. 3. Through its regional initiatives, the EU promotes a favourable environment for the establishment of lasting stability and cooperation in the South Caucasus region¹¹.

Interestingly, various studies show broad public support of Armenia's multi-vector foreign policy. However, despite the fact that this support still exists, a comparison of public opinion survey data shows abrupt changes in the public's foreign policy orientation towards the "West" (EU and NATO) and "North" (the CIS and EAEU). Thus, according to "World Value Survey 2011"¹², the EU and the CIS had comparable ratings (respectively, 43% and 46% of "confidence" and 37% and 39% of "distrust"). However, according to the "Caucasus Barometer", in 2013 the EU had only 28% confidence, 29% mistrust and 31% "indifference"¹³. The changes in public trust towards the EU are obvious also while comparing results of EU Neighbourhood Barometer 2012¹⁴ and 2014¹⁵ (see *Table 5*).

Table 5. Public Trust towards the EU in 2012 and 2014 (%)

	2012	2014	Difference
Tend to trust	63	45	-18
Tend not to trust	31	51	+20
DK	6	4	-2

¹¹ The National Security Strategy..., *op. cit.*

¹² "Confidence: The European Union" and "Confidence: The CIS", *World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-2014. Armenia 2011 (1100)*, at <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>, 15 July 2015.

¹³ "Trust – EU", *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/TRUSTEU>, 15 July 2015.

¹⁴ "Trust in Institutions", *EU Neighbourhood Barometer. Autumn 2012 wave 2*, at http://euneighbourhood.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/FactsheetENPI_wave2-AM-EN.pdf, 15 July 2015.

¹⁵ "Trust in Institutions", *EU Neighbourhood Barometer. Spring 2014 wave 5*, at <http://euneighbourhood.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/FS-ENPI-Wave-5-AM-EN.pdf>, 15 July 2015.

Although the EU has traditionally a positive or neutral image across Armenian society, this positive image is gradually crumbling, giving rise to a negative one: in 2012, the EU had a “positive” image among 49% of respondents and a “negative” one among 17%, but in 2014, the number of those claiming a “positive” image fell by 9% (40% in total) while the “negative” one rose by 8% (25% in total). The “neutral” image of the EU in the perception of the respondents also increased (32% in total in 2014).

In this context, a very *low level of awareness* and, conversely, a relatively *high level of orientation* of Armenia's population in relations to the EU, NATO, the CIS and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) are surprising. Specifically, in 2009, more than 60% of respondents considered themselves as uninformed about the EU¹⁶, and an absolute majority even deemed Armenia to be a member of the EU¹⁷. The absolute majority of respondents considered themselves uninformed about the CIS too¹⁸, but a vast majority gave the correct answer to the question of Armenian's membership in this organization¹⁹. In addition, according to the analytical organization “Integration and Development”, in 2013, the vast majority of the Armenia's population (nearly 70%) did not know exactly what the EAEU was, either²⁰. The lack of awareness is confirmed indirectly also by data from the Barometer quantitative study in 2015. According to these results, while more than 80% of respondents from Yerevan consider themselves informed about the EU²¹, around 40% of them still deems Armenia to be a member of the EU²². The most amazing thing is that 30% of respondents, who deem Armenia to be a member of the EU, consider itself as well informed, and 50% considers itself as sufficiently informed about the EU. The same misperception of Armenia's cooperation with international organization is registered also in case of NATO and CSTO (see *Table 6*²³). Moreover, amazingly, around half of respondents

¹⁶ “How much do you know about the EU?”, *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/EUKNOWL>, 15 July 2015.

¹⁷ “Is Armenia a member of the European Union?”, *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/MEMBREU>, 15 July 2015.

¹⁸ “How much do you know about CIS?”, *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/CISKOWL>, 15 July 2015.

¹⁹ “Is Armenia a member of the CIS?”, *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/MEMBICIS>, 15 July 2015.

²⁰ S. Manukyan, G. Arutyunyan, A. Safaryan, “Otnosheniye armyanskogo obshchestva k yevraziyskoy i yevropeyskoy integratsii”, IAOO “Integratsiya i razvitiye”, Yerevan 2013, pp. 20-21.

²¹ “Tsanotutyun Evropakan miutyan het”, *Barometer.am*, 9 June 2015, at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150609/2530>, 15 July 2015.

²² “Armark-zarmark. yerevantsineri shurj 40%-y karcum e, vor Hayastany Evropakan miutyan andam e”. *Barometer.am*, 11 June 2015, at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150611/2633>, 15 July 2015.

²³ This comparative table combines the data from Barometer (Yerevan) survey 2015: “Tsanotutyun NATO-i het”. *Barometer.am*, 26 May 2015, at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-poli>

from Yerevan did not know that Armenia is not only a member of CSTO, but also one of its founding-members.

Table 6. Awareness about Armenia's Relations with the EU, NATO, and EAEU (%)

	EAEU		CSTO		EU		NATO	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Informed about	77.9	21.2	41.8	58.2	82.3	17.7	81.3	18.7
Armenia is a member of	73.1	9.5	37.7	13	38.6	48.4	33.9	66.1
Support membership in					59.8	23.1	37.3	37.3

It is noteworthy that in the case of a dilemma between the EU and CIS, in 2009 a vast majority of respondents opted for cooperation with the CIS (60% for CIS vs. 25% for the EU)²⁴. However, despite the fact that in 2013 the absolute majority (55%) of respondents²⁵ advocated Armenia's membership in the EAE, a relative majority (40%) was also in favour of Armenia's membership in the EU²⁶. Up to 2013, a similar pattern was also observed in the case of NATO, but in 2013, only a minority of respondents (23%) supported Armenia's membership in the NATO²⁷.

In addition, "Integration Barometer – 2014" shows that an absolute majority supports Armenia's Eurasian integration: 64% of respondents support Armenia's membership in the Russia-led Customs union, 21% of them are indifferent and only 8% of

tics/20150526/2047; "Yerevantsineri 34%-y kartsum e, te Hayastany NATO-i andam e", *Barometer.am*, 27 May 2015, at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150527/2083>; "Yerevanum NATO-in andamaksutyany koghm nakitsnern aveli shat en", *Barometer.am*, 8 June 2015, at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150608/2479>; "Tsanotutyun Evropakan miutyany het"; "Armank-zarmank. yerevantsineri shurj 40%-y karcum e, vor Hayastany Evropakan miutyany andam e"; Yerevantsineri 60%-y koghm e Evropakan miutyany Hayastany andamaksutyany", *Barometer.am*, 15 June 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150615/2784>; "Tsanotutun HAPK-i het", *Barometer.am*, 26 June 2015, at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150626/3251>; "Yerevantsineri mot 50%-y teghyak che, vor HH-n HAPK andam e, ayn el – himnadir-andam", *Barometer.am*, 6 July 2015, at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150706/3680>, 15 July 2015.

²⁴ "Cooperation with the CIS VS cooperation with the EU", *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/COOPCIS>, 15 July 2015.

²⁵ "Support of country's membership in Eurasian Economic Community", *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/EECSUPP>, 15 July 2015.

²⁶ "Support of country's membership in EU", *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/EUSUPP>, 15 July 2015.

²⁷ "Support of country's membership in NATO", *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*, generated since 27 February 2013, at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/NATOSUPP>, 15 July 2015.

respondents are against this Eurasian choice²⁸. However, as in the case of geopolitical attraction, here, too, Armenia shows an average result when compared to other post-Soviet countries.

It is also noteworthy that in all cases in Yerevan, the number of supporters of Armenia's cooperation with/membership in the EU, EAEU, NATO or CSTO was always the highest.

Given all these accounts, it is not surprising that Armenia's society has profound complementary preferences in cooperation with the EU and Russia (see *Table 7*). Russia is a preferable partner in the fight against external threats, as well as in the industry, and the EU is preferable in the humanitarian sphere, in the sphere of science and education. However, it seems that there are many people who want to see cooperation both with the EU and Russia, particularly in the field of science, education and industry²⁹.

Table 7. Preferential Partners by Sphere of Cooperation (%)

	Russia	EU	Both
Human rights	25	52	6
Science	28	47	15
Industry	50	24	17
Karabakh issue	64	14	5
External security	72	10	3

A vast majority of Armenia's society welcomes cooperation with the EU in humanitarian, political and economic spheres: there is a widespread public perception that the EU should play a greater role in trade (89%) and economic development (86%), education (81%), regional cooperation (79%), and democracy (76%)³⁰.

In general, it seems that Armenian society traditionally perceives the EU as one of the main partners of Armenia and highlights the EU's activity in the field of development and promotion of peace and stability in the region. However, public support of Armenia's cooperation with the EU in recent years has decreased (see *Table 8*)³¹. Nevertheless, a vast majority of respondents still supports Armenia's cooperation with the EU.

²⁸ "Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR – 2014", p. 98.

²⁹ S. Manukyan, G. Arutyunyan, A. Safaryan, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

³⁰ "Perception of the European Union", *EU Neighbourhood Barometer. Autumn 2012 wave 2*.

³¹ The results of EU Neighbourhood Barometer Wave 2 (Autumn 2012) and Wave 5 (Spring 2014) compared.

Table 8. The EU's Importance for Armenia (%)

	2012	2014	Difference
The EU is an important partner of Armenia	86	67	-19
The EU brings peace and stability in the region	75	50	-25
The EU contributes to the development of Armenia	78	58	-20
The EU has the appropriate level of involvement in Armenia	66	53	-13

Conclusions

1. Armenia has an average cumulative geopolitical orientation to the post-Soviet space: this space is more attractive than Europe and other countries.
2. According to socio-cultural indicators, Armenia's population shows "self-sufficiency". Cultural indexes of orientation towards post-Soviet and European countries are close, and in this case, the European orientation dominates. However, Armenia and Ukraine are the most culturally self-sufficient countries.
3. Armenia's overall economic indicators show a multilateral orientation with a relative predominance of attraction of the post-Soviet space. Armenia's society prefers Russian products, Russian labor market and Russians as business partners. However, it is noteworthy that tourists, temporary workers and students from Europe are more preferred. In general, in the economic dimension, the post-Soviet and European indexes differ only slightly.
4. The picture is radically different in politics. According to these criteria, Armenia is one of the countries that is the most oriented towards the post-Soviet space. In the realm of military-political cooperation, a vast majority of Armenia's society prefers post-Soviet space. It seems that this political cluster is the dominant factor of Armenia's public orientation.
5. A detailed analysis of these data revealed that the main factor for the orientation to the post-Soviet space in terms of economic and political indicators is Russia. Only Russia, and not the post-Soviet space in general is the "centre of attraction" for the Armenian society. Moreover, for the society the Russian factor is crucial to assess the foreign policy of Armenia.
6. Russia is the only "centre of gravity" for Armenia in the post-Soviet space. Russia is the sole country that in general holds the image of a friend of Armenia among the vast majority of the population. Europe, and more specifically France occupies the second position, followed by Georgia. A relative majority of respondents consider these countries as Armenia's friends.

7. Russia is the preferable partner against external enemies and in the Karabakh conflict, and the EU – in the field of science and protection of human rights. In addition, European tourists, students and migrant workers are the most preferable compared to others.
8. Such a high political orientation on Russia is the cause of Armenia's general orientation on the post-Soviet space. Consequently, for the society in practice there is no "post-Soviet" or "Eurasian" choice, but precisely the "Russian" choice in foreign policy.
9. The vast majority of respondents suffer from a lack of awareness about the EU and the CIS/EAEU. An absolute majority even thinks that Armenia is a member of the EU. Nevertheless, if in 2011 both the above had mainly positive image and confidence, in 2014 the trust towards the EU fell down.
10. Despite a widespread unawareness, the vast majority of the Armenia's population is interested in Armenia's relations with both the "West" and "North". Moreover, a vast majority supports Armenia's membership in the EAEU and a relative majority supports country's membership in the EU.
11. The EU has traditionally a positive or neutral image across Armenia's society. However, this positive image is gradually declining, giving rise to a negative one.
12. In the case of a dilemma (option "or-or"), the vast majority of the population (in all age groups) chooses "Northern" direction. However, in the case of absence of a dilemma (option "and-and"), the number of supporters of the synthesis of Armenia's cooperation with the two poles (even Armenia's membership in organizations of both geopolitical spaces) increases. Nevertheless, even in this case, the predominance of the "Northern" factor remains. In general, Armenia has an average support for membership in the EAEU.
13. The number of supporters of the "Northern" direction is higher among the older generation, and the supporters of the "Western" space are mostly young people. However, even a relative majority of young people choose the "Northern" direction in the case of the dilemma of "or-or".

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Abstract

This article focuses on the analysis of foreign policy attitudes and perceptions within Armenia's society. The analysis is based on the comparison and interpretation of results of various quantitative surveys conducted in Armenia from 2009 to 2015. The results of this comparative chronological analysis are compared with the basic principles of official foreign policy, enshrined in the National Security Strategy of Armenia (2007).

In this framework, the core emphasis is placed perceptions of European and Eurasian dimensions of Armenia's foreign policy. The objective of this analysis is to identify the existing and changing features of the foreign policy orientation within Armenia's society.

It is concluded that for Armenia's society there was and is not any "Eurasian", but only a "Russian" choice: the vast majority of Armenia's population considers relations with Russia as strategic and as based not on economic or socio-cultural, but mainly on political (security) reasons. However, absolute majority also welcomes Armenia's broad cooperation with West, especially with the EU. Moreover, the majority even stands for Armenia's membership in the European Union alongside with the membership in the Eurasian Union.

Keywords: Armenia, Public Opinion, European Union, Eurasian Economic Union, Russia, Complementarity

ABRAHAM GASPARYAN

Armenian Leadership (Political and Party Elite) Stance on State's Foreign Policy Orientation

Many scholars specialized in social sciences affirm that there are always several ways in which the phenomena under study may be sorted and arranged for purposes of systemic analysis. As Kurt Lewin observed, *"The first prerequisite of a successful observation in any science is a definite understanding about what size of unit one is going to observe at a given time"*¹

Analyzing state's foreign policy orientation impact is a more deep and extensive task than describing or analyzing ordinary foreign (regional, local, global) political processes. It concerns firstly the issue of identity and includes many more aspects than foreign orientation, socio-cultural, economic, political security and ties with international community.

In this case, we'll represent the segment of foreign policy orientation of supposed state, Armenia, the attitude and stance of Armenian political parties represented in the National Assembly regarding political elite's policy toward last integration processes in the region. For this and other purposes we conducted quantitative and qualitative research, case studies and in-depth interviews with Armenian internal and foreign policy makers². These interviews revealed the behavior of foreign policy

¹ K. Lewin, D. Cartwright, *Field Theory in Social Science*, New York 1951, p. 157.

² The interviews also covers issues like the role of Armenian political elites in defining the nature and spheres of foreign policy, what they consider to be the national interest, how they characterize it and how national identity affects policy forming process and what is the relevance of both motives and ideological preferences in Armenian national behavior.

making actors, the feature of shaping that policy, its motives, incitements, volume, composition, the conduct of legal and legitimate political elite³ representatives, its preferences, political culture, values and behavioral characteristics, etc...⁴

At the heart of the field is an investigation into decision making, the individual decision makers, processes and conditions that affect foreign policy and the outcomes of these decisions. By virtue of this approach, as C. Alden mentions⁵, foreign policy analysis is necessarily concerned with the boundaries between the external environment outside of the nation state and the internal or domestic environment, with its variety of sub-national sources of influence.

The geopolitical situation and power-settings in South Caucasia obviously changed after the Moscow-Tbilisi tension in 2008⁶. After 4 years of hard negotiations with the EU⁷, Armenia's political elite decided to join Eurasian Economic Union⁸ (EEU) banding together with Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus in a Moscow-led project meant to counterbalance the European Union⁹.

³ G. Mosca, V. Pareto, R. Michels, J. Linz, J. Schumpeter, Higley and Burton, etc... Many political scientists from Classical Elite theory to contemporary "Elite Schools" define this term in various forms. We adapted the latter definition within the framework of this article. It defines the elite "as a group of individuals holding strategic positions within a political system, which enables these individuals to influence political decision making directly and regularly", J. Higley et al., *Elite Foundations of Liberal Democracy*, Lanham 2006.

⁴ As David Singer noted in his well-known schema of International Relations, in grappling with world politics, one necessarily focuses on either the study of phenomena at the international system level, the state (or national) level or the individual level. Foreign policy analysis has traditionally emphasized the state and individual levels to be the key areas for understanding the nature of the international system. J. D. Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations", *World Politics* Vol. 14, no. 1, The International System: Theoretical Essays (Oct., 1961), pp. 77-92.

⁵ C. Alden, "Foreign policy analysis", IR2137, University of London 2006, at http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/sites/default/files/programme_resources/lse/lse_pdf/subject_guides/ir2137_ch1-3.pdf.

⁶ We will not discuss here the developments regarding Armenia's and its neighbor's policy toward regional and global powers during last decade.

⁷ Negotiations for Armenia's associate membership in the EU started on July 19, 2010. An Associate membership agreement assumed close ties between Armenia and the EU in fields of improving democracy, human rights, institutional amendments, economy, energy issues, etc...

⁸ Armenia became a full member of the EEU on Jan 2, 2015. Its share in distributed customs duties from imports to the EEU is 1.13%. By preliminary data, Armenia will receive about \$250 million in 2015. EEU customs taxes on a range of goods, particularly, cars, drugs and essential goods, will be applied in Armenia in a year after the accession. The aggregate volume of economy of the EEU member states is more than \$2 trillion. The agreement implies freedom of movement of commodities, services, capital and workforce, implementation of coordinated or single policy in economic sectors stipulated by the given agreement and international agreements within the EEU.

⁹ On September 4, 2013, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan abruptly announced the decision to join the Eurasian Customs Union (which has now morphed into the Eurasian Economic Union) following a visit to Moscow with Russian President Vladimir Putin. This, after almost four

Armenia's parliament voted almost unanimously to ratify the EEU treaty in December 2014. The National Assembly's voting results on ratification of the agreement on Armenia's joining in the EEU reflected the parliamentary majority and other minority Parties decision: only 7 deputies out of 131 voted against the accession.

The President of RA stated that prospects of Armenia's accession to the EEU are good. Otherwise Yerevan would not adopt such a decision. *"I am sure Armenia made the right choice. In any other circumstances, the difficulties we are facing today would be much heavier,"* Serzh Sargsyan said pointing to the interconnectedness of the EEU economies. The President assured that the most of the agricultural produce is exported to the EEU countries, first of all, to the Russian market. *"The revaluation of the Russian ruble has led to problems for the commodity producers of Armenia. Many Armenians residing in the Russian Federation make transfers to Armenia to support their families and relatives"*¹⁰.

In spite of the statesman's repeated assurances¹¹, this decision gave rise to some fears within the Armenian society connected with their hopes and concerns for their country's future as part of this Union¹². The decision was met with skepticism in some circles, especially in political and parliamentary ones. "Why the EEU and not the European Union?" critics asked. Some suggested that Russia used Armenia's dependence on its energy and security to influence the decision. Others raised questions about potential customs checkpoints being implemented at the Nagorno Karabakh Republic (NKR) border.

A Yerevan based analyst, the Founding Director of the Regional Studies Center, points out that EEU membership may have several negative impacts on the Armenian economy. *"Firstly, as a more open economy Armenia will have to adopt fresh*

years of negotiations with the European Union to sign the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement that was to have been initialed in Vilnius in November 2013. This decision completely derailed Armenia's foreign policy track, which many were hopeful would have elevated standards in the country and brought them into line with European norms and values.

¹⁰ The speech of the President of RA during the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly session in Yerevan, Armenia, 17 March 2015, at <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2015/03/17/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-National-Assembly-Euronest-Parliamentary-Assembly>.

¹¹ Statements and Interviews of RA President Serzh Sargsyan to the Media (various TV, radio channels and presidential press-releases) at <http://www.panorama.am/am/politics/2015/04/06/serzh-sargsyan-3>; <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2015/03/18/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-speech-Media-forum>; <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2014/12/05/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-Convention-Industrialists-and-Entrepreneurs>; <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2014/12/23/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-meeting-of-the-Supreme-Eurasian-Economic-Council>.

¹² R. Giragosian, Armenia and the Eurasian Economic Union: the view from Yerevan, European Council on Foreign Relations, 8 January 2015, http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_armenia_and_the_eurasian_economic_union_the_view_from_yerevan387, 2 March 2015.

protectionist policies, which could force up consumer prices. Secondly, Armenia will have to adjust away from its recent history of EU-focused trade in order to favour EEU counterparts¹³.

The Secretary of the opposition “Rule of Law” parliamentary faction noted that *“The Armenian accession to EEU has a political, economic and security importance. Our society has expectations from this process, but the majority of them have positive expectations. Therefore, Yerevan must use effectively the opportunities of this accession. I think that this is also a public demand”*¹⁴.

The leader of the oppositional “Heritage” party finds that *“the deplorable efforts of the republic’s regime to compel Armenia’s accession to the EEU, together with Serzh Sargsyan’s domestic and foreign policies that do not flow from Armenia’s national interests”*¹⁵. He claims that the President, who has usurped power through unjust elections, is not authorized to sign any agreement or undertake any obligation on behalf of the people of Armenia.

What are the circumstances of the process for making Armenian foreign policies? Geography is basically considered an obstacle for Armenian foreign policy. Though there are other small countries with strong foreign policy, Armenia has a more challenging geographical location than those countries. Many respondents mentioned the fact that being surrounded with two no-partners and being a land-locked country limits Armenia’s geostrategic potential. A MP¹⁶ from an opposition party stated, *“Armenia is land-locked country, which brings a global negative effect. It is not a gift from God to have such neighbours. Over the centuries we have suffered because of the neighbours. This region contains a great risk. Of course, nowadays it is not impossible to manoeuvre, but the opportunities are fewer. Moreover, every single opportunity has its negative effect.”*

Global developments also have their effects on Armenian foreign policy making. Today, countries are more connected to each other, so global developments cannot be ignored. According to a MP¹⁷ from the governing party, *“Armenian authorities should be able to react in time. One of the engines in making foreign policy is global development. If we cannot react in time, we’ll lose our chance to be in the right place. Modern global developments are the main guidelines of international relations and we should not ignore them”*.

In general, party leaders and policy analysts think that Armenia has had to change its foreign policy course rather frequently due to the geopolitical environ-

¹³ Ibid, p. 2.

¹⁴ From the interview with Heghine Bisharyan hold on 10.09.2014.

¹⁵ From the interview with Raffi Hovhannisyan hold on 24.09.2014.

¹⁶ From the interview with Mikayel Melkumyan hold on 6.03.2015.

¹⁷ From the interview with Khosrov Harutyunyan hold on 10.04.2015.

ment around the region. In this regard, one¹⁸ of the respondents from an opposition party stated that *"I agree that it (changing of foreign policy orientation) was unexpected for our partners from Europe, but I believe that this new market will be beneficial for us, too. The region and the conditions surrounding us make change our foreign policy direction, but I suppose that our partners from the EU can understand us: the example of the Ukraine is in front of their eyes."*

According to several current and former statesmen¹⁹, throughout history Armenian foreign policy targeted national rather than personal interests. Firstly, foreign policy has been determined by national security, secondly by economic interests, and thirdly by regional interests.

A representative of the party in power²⁰ mentioned that *"After the collapse of the Soviet Union the economic situation forced the authorities to start negotiations with Turkey. Several times I connected with the PM of Turkey and offered to start negotiations without preconditions. Today we are ready to restart negotiations with Turkey, but... There are no negotiations without two parts. The previous century is considered to have noticeable impact on our foreign policy thinking. Being a part of the former Soviet Union makes the Armenian society more inclined to cooperate with the Russian Federation. Economic, military, food and other forms of security as well."* Contrary to this, an expert²¹ stated that *"Today young generation has no stereotypes about the important relationship between Armenia and the Russian Federation. They (young people) are more inclined to cooperate with the EU or the USA. This generation can break all stereotypes in the future"*.

One question referred to the most beneficial foreign policy course so far. A general opinion about this question is what one²² of the respondents mentioned, *"Over these years different parties and different leaders declared different courses of foreign policy, but actually all of them were based on multidimensional policy (political dialogue, respect for mutual interests, cooperation with all power centers, etc.) Such a policy provided an environment from which we benefited most. We can't give us the luxury to cooperate with only one pole, so we need more partners around the world."*

As regards current trends in Armenian foreign policy, some respondents believe that membership in the newly-formed Eurasian Economic Union merely implies not only economic, but also political integration. One²³ of the respondents stated that *"Armenia has many ties to the Russian Federation, and the Armenian products and*

¹⁸ From the interview with Mikayel Melkumyan hold on 6.03.2015.

¹⁹ From the interviews with Arsen Avagyan and Arman Navasardyan hold on 10.03.2015 and 20.03.2015.

²⁰ From the interview with Khosrov Harutyunyan hold on 10.04.2015.

²¹ From the interview with Ashot Manucharyan hold on 4.05.2015.

²² From the interview with Vazgen Maukyan hold on 11.05.2015.

²³ From the interview with Mikayel Melkumyan hold on 6.03.2015.

goods are highly accepted in the Russian markets, so the EEU is a lesser evil for current regional situation and conditions.”

Though several respondents from oppositional parties did not support such policy, they mentioned that the authorities had no alternative. According to them, in this situation the society needs to find ways to make this new conditions serve our interests. A MP²⁴ from an oppositional party stated that *“Today’s elites have exhausted their limit, that’s why an alternative option was not available. The fact is that we have to find appropriate mechanisms to catch all possible and impossible benefits (I do not think that they are unlimited) from the worst forced decision in recent years.”*

Talking about the importance of relations between Armenia and world power centers, most of the party leaders stated that even though Armenian officials decided to continue their close relations with the EEU, not with the EU, there is no doubt that the country should continue to maintain good relations with European countries and especially with the EU. A MP²⁵ from the party of power stated that *“Armenia wants to have more partners from Europe. We are open to discuss with the EU any question what our partners want. I think that we still have a chance to stay in contact with the EU partners. The Ukrainian crisis has shown our European partners why we took such an orientation.”* Conversely, an MP²⁶ from an oppositional party noted that *“In my view, it is impossible to continue the development between the EU partners and Armenia. We have already made our decision. Actually, the authorities made that irreversible decision, not the public. Of course, the EEU has many supporters in Armenia, but we need European development, not the return of the Soviet times.”*

According to most of the respondents NATO and the USA are good partners for Armenia. One of the respondents²⁷ said *“USA officials want to see strong and prosperous Armenia. It is very important for us. Even though Armenian officials made a choice that the USA find unacceptable, the USA still wants to develop our country. Americans are a very important partner for us international area. We should not forget that in the USA we have a big Armenian community, either.”*

While MPs from the opposition and the party of power stated that the membership to the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is just a formal process, policy experts argued that it is very important for the country. One²⁸ of them said *“Of course, the membership to the CSTO is very important for us. The CSTO is very important and strategic partner for us. That’s the secret of why we attach great importance to our membership in the CSTO.”*

²⁴ From the interview with Aleksandr Arzumanyan hold on 5.09.2014.

²⁵ From the interview with Khosrov Harutyunyan hold on 10.04.2015.

²⁶ From the interview with Armen Martirosyan hold on 20.03.2015.

²⁷ From the interview with Aleksandr Arzumanyan hold on 5.09.2014.

²⁸ From the interview with Arsen Avagyan hold on 10.03.2015.

Russia is obviously considered a reliable partner. However, respondents state that there is a need to balance relations with RF towards a real strategic partnership. But respondents of RA National Assembly see Armenia's membership in the EEU on the one hand and the continuing partnership with the EU on the other are a good opportunity for the country to manoeuvre between the two cooperation formats, pursuing balanced policies.

*"Being an EEU member state, Armenia has to by all means undertake steps towards building active relations with EU institutions, preventing a possible provocation (which we have already eye-witnessed). I do accept the policy of maneuvers, and understandably, quite serious work is now underway with respect to the other states in the region,"*²⁹, stated the leader of the opposition "Heritage" faction in National Assembly.

According to an opposition MP from the Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashnaksutyun (ARF-D), Armenia pursues the right approach by not ruling out the future development of cooperation with the EU family. *"There is an understanding between the leading countries, so we should not succumb to the provocative statements attempting to derail the cooperation. [Such an intention] is clearly seen from pro-Turkish and pro-Azerbaijani statements,"*³⁰ he said.

Another radical oppositional MP who heads the Armenian National Congress (ANC) fraction, also emphasized the importance of balanced of a balanced cooperation. He said that their political force has always sought for effective relations with both the EU and the United States, and Russia and Iran. *"Instead of harmonizing the interests between the West and Russia, they entered into a game which became confrontational, Armenia [the dilemma of] 'either... or' imposing upon. We have to understand that the real key is the harmonization of interests of the EU, Russia and the US,"*³¹ he added.

In conclusion, most of Armenian parties, represented in the National Assembly, except the pro-western "Heritage" ("Republican Party of Armenia", "Prosperous Armenia party", "Armenian Revolutionary Federation"- Dashnaksutyun, "Rule of Law party", "Armenian National Congress party") agree with state's leadership foreign course regarding relations with international and regional power centers. They understand that Armenia's leadership "securitized" the decision of integration and Armenia's membership in the EEU takes into account security guarantees for both Armenia and NKR, although no proof of this has been offered.

²⁹ From the interview with Rouben Hakobyan hold on 21.02.2015.

³⁰ From the interview with Artsvik Minasyan hold on 16.01.2015.

³¹ From the interview with Levon Zurabyan hold on 27.03.2015.

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Abstract

On September 3, 2013, after Armenia completed nearly three years of negotiations with the European Union on the Association Agreement which included years of European-funded legislative reforms, President Serzh Sargsyan declared in Moscow that Yerevan wants to join the pre-formed Eurasian Customs Union (later it became Eurasian Economic Union). The President's announcement a few hours later caught many by surprise - even those in his inner circle. Brussels had made it clear that it was the Association Agreement, and specifically its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) component which was incompatible with membership in the Customs Union. The author, with his team, conducted qualitative surveys to represent the public opinion on foreign policy orientation. At least 40 in-depth interviews have been conducted and all 40 transcripts are complete. Each group of respondents (decision making centers, political party leadership, experts, and NGO sector representatives) answered both general and specific questions. In case of policy experts and party leaders questions were divided into several groups. The questionnaire consisted of six main parts regarding national security issues, national identity impact on foreign policy, the

bi-lateral and international relations building process of post-Soviet (independent) Armenia with neighbors, regional and global powers, the influence of Armenian Genocide on Armenian state policy and political decisions of the leadership, etc. As concerns the essence of security from the standpoints of the elites, political party leadership and the public, answers are quite different.

Keywords: Armenia, Foreign policy, EEU, EU, Political Elite

HAYRAPETYAN GRIGOR,
HAYRAPETYAN VIKTORIYA

Economic Relations between Armenia and the EU within the framework of Eastern Partnership

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) is a European Union foreign policy launched in 2009 and addressed to six partner countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Although the EaP involves both Eastern European and Southern-Caucasian countries, these countries are considered as one region on account of their common historical experiences, their economic ties and the similar economic problems facing them¹. The main goal of the EaP is to create the necessary conditions to accelerate political association and further economic integration between the European Union and interested partner countries².

The EaP supports and encourages reforms in the partner countries for the benefit of their citizens. The pace and scope of reforms depends primarily on the partner countries themselves. Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in 2014 concluded the Association Agreements/Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas that have brought the relations between them and the EU to a new level. The agreements cover trade in goods and services, and alignment of the regulations of the partner countries to the EU standards. Through these agreements partner countries have the possibility of economic integration with European market, to benefit fully from the influx of EU

¹ Eastern Partnership. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, at http://eastern-partnership.pl/pw_en/index.php, p. 5.

² Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit (Prague, 7 May 2009). European Union – EEAS (European External Action Service) at <http://eeas.europa.eu>.

investment and capital, as well as access to modern technology necessary for conducting modernization processes.³

Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus did not conclude these agreements; the reasons were different for each country. One of the conditions of participation in European economic integration is membership in the World Trade Organization, but Azerbaijan and Belarus haven't joined the WTO yet⁴. Now the EU is discussing a closer relationship with Azerbaijan, which reflects their respective interests and values. Belarus has been participating in the Eurasian integration processes since they came into existence. Today the EU is deepening, in carefully calibrated mutual steps, its critical engagement with Belarus.⁵

Armenia is a WTO member. The EU and Armenia have completed negotiations on an Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, but in 2013 during the third EaP Summit in Vilnius the EU and Armenia acknowledged that they would not proceed with its initialing due to Armenia's new international commitments: early in 2013 Armenian President announced Armenia's plans to join the Russian-led Customs Union, followed by succession into the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).⁶ Since January 2015 Armenia is a member of the EEU⁷.

In the "Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit" (Vilnius, 2013) it was declared that "the EU and Armenia have today reconfirmed their commitment to further develop and strengthen their cooperation in all areas of mutual interest within the EaP framework, stressing the importance of reviewing and updating the existing basis of their relations... the Summit participants reaffirm the sovereign right of each partner freely to choose the level of ambition and the goals to which it aspires in its relations with the EU"⁸.

During the next EaP Summit that took place in Riga in 2015 it was declared the "future agreement between the EU and Armenia aims at further developing and strengthening their comprehensive cooperation in all areas of mutual interest". Fu-

³ Eastern Partnership from Prague to Riga – leaflet. European Union – EEAS (European External Action Service), at <http://eeas.europa.eu>.

⁴ Understanding the WTO: the organization. Members and Observers, at https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/org6_e.htm.

⁵ Eastern Partnership from Prague to Riga – leaflet. European Union – EEAS (European External Action Service), at <http://eeas.europa.eu>, p. 2.

⁶ Armenia-EU Joint Statement at Eastern Partnership Summit. Independent Journalist's Network E-press.am, 29 November 2013, at <http://www.epress.am/en/2013/11/29/armenia-eu-joint-statement-at-eastern-partnership-summit.html>.

⁷ Armenia becomes full member of Eurasian Economic Union. NEWS.am, 2 January 2015, at <http://news.am/eng/news/246730.html>.

⁸ Eastern Partnership: the way ahead. Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit (Vilnius, 28-29 November 2013). European Union – EEAS (European External Action Service), at <http://eeas.europa.eu>.

ture contractual relations will take into account the other international commitments of Armenia, in particular its decision to join the EEU. On 19 May the European Commission adopted a proposal to the Council for a new mandate, paving the way for negotiation of a new agreement between the European Union and Armenia soon.⁹

Thus Armenia's membership in the EEU doesn't restrict the economic, political and cultural relations between Armenia and the EU. Analysis of economic perspectives for Armenia in the context of EaP is on the agenda today. Economic cooperation between Armenia and the EU cover both trade in goods and services and the influx of EU investment and capital. Taking into account all above-mentioned the aim of our paper is to reveal the base for further development of economic relations between the Republic of Armenia (RA) and the European Union in the context of Eastern Partnership by studying the present condition of the bilateral trade flows between the RA and the EU, and the flows of investments from the EU to the RA.

Trade Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union¹⁰

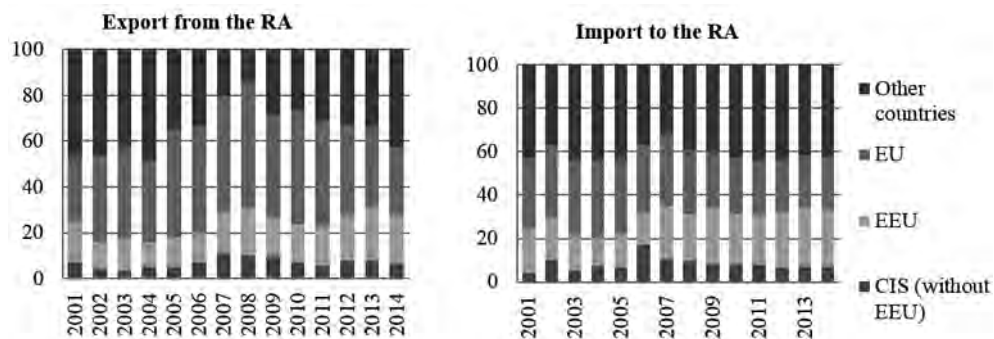
Armenia is a small, landlocked and economically blocked country. The main foreign trade problems that Armenia has been facing since its independence are the trade balance deficit and the raw materials export. Having insufficient national market in order to provide dynamic economic growth Armenia has to extend its trade flows in geographical and product directions.

Key trading partners of the RA are EU countries and EEU countries (Figure1). EEU countries covered about 22% of total Armenian export and 27% of Armenian import in 2014. But these trade flows are very concentrated: Russia is a leading partner of the RA in the EEU: 20% of Armenian export in 2014 went to Russia and about 26% of Armenian import came from Russia.

⁹ Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit (Riga, 21-22 May 2015). European Union – EEAS (European External Action Service), at <http://eeas.europa.eu>; Eastern Partnership: a policy that delivers. Brussels, 21 May 2015. European Union – EEAS (European External Action Service), at <http://eeas.europa.eu>; Eastern Partnership from Prague to Riga – leaflet. European Union – EEAS (European External Action Service), at <http://eeas.europa.eu>.

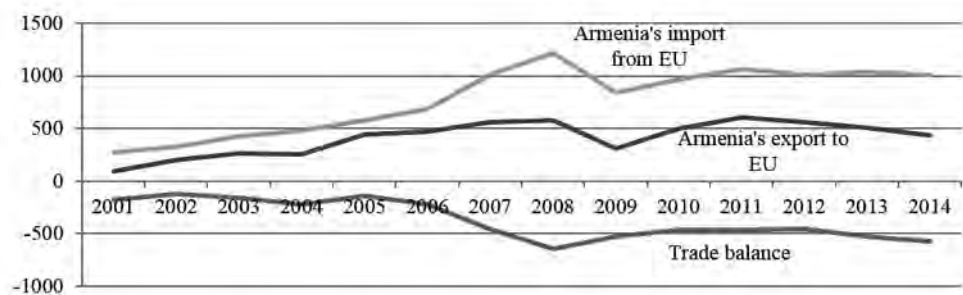
¹⁰ All trade data are taken from or calculated by the authors on the database of International Trade Center, at <http://www.trademap.org>.

Figure 1. Geographical Composition of Foreign Trade Flows of Armenia, as a share to total trade flow, %



The EU is one of the leading trading partners of Armenia among countries all over the world. For last 14 years EU countries have covered on the average above 40% of Armenia's export and above 30% of its import. But for a few years we have been able to observe the decreasing of the EU markets' share in Armenian export (from 55% in 2008 to 30% in 2014), as well the share of the EU products on Armenian market has also reduced from 33% in 2001 to 24% in 2014.

Figure 2. Trade Flows between Armenia and the EU, USD million



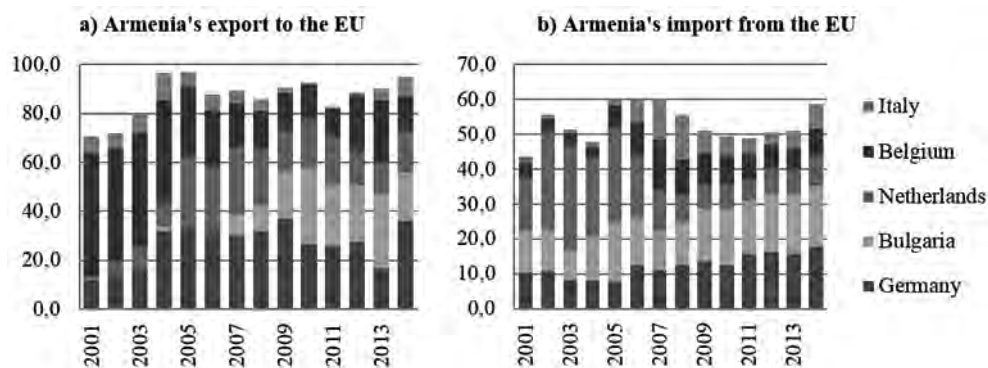
However, in the absolute values trade turnover between the RA and the EU increased above 3.9 times, from 0.4 USD billion in 2001 to 1.5 USD billion in 2014. The increasing has been observed on both export and import flows. Certainly, the latest economic crises negatively influenced the trade volumes (in 2009 Armenia's export fell on 45%, import – on 34%), but in 2010 the situation began to improve.

For the considered period the volumes of import from EU countries to Armenia significantly exceed the volumes of Armenia's export to the EU (Figure 2). In 2014 the trade balance deficit reached 0.6 USD billion.

Aiming to show the detailed picture of the trade between Armenia and the EU we'll consider the geographical (by-country) and product compositions of the bilateral trade flows. Five EU countries (Germany, Bulgaria, Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy) covered in 2014 above 95% of the total Armenia's export to the EU and 59% of Armenia's import from the EU (Figure 3). The leader is Germany: 36% of Armenian export to the EU and 18% of its import in 2014.

Taking into account that this tendency has been observed for the whole considered period, we'll study the product composition of Armenia-EU bilateral trade flows on the base of these five EU countries.

Figure 3. The Leading Trading Partners of Armenia in the European Union, *as a share to total trade flow between the RA and the EU, %*



The main characteristic of Armenia's export product composition is its high concentration (Table 1). Five product groups cover 95% of total flows from Armenia to Germany; 99% Armenian export to Bulgaria is presented by one product group; 98% of export flows to Netherlands is covered by two product groups; three product labels present 98% of export to Belgium; and 94% of flows to Italy is two product groups.

The second characteristic is its raw-materials export orientation. Almost 99% of Armenia's export to Bulgaria is only one product group: "Ores, slag and ash". 71% of Armenian trade flow to Germany is covered by two product groups: "Iron and steel" and "Copper and articles thereof". 83% of Armenian export to Netherlands is represented by one product label "Iron and steel". Above 30% of Armenia's export to Belgium falls on two groups "Ores, slag and ash" and "Copper and articles thereof". Here is one more product group "Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins, etc." that covers 68% of Armenian export to Belgium. However, we can see this product group both in export and import flows (Table 1 and Table 2). The case is that Armenia imports uncut materials from Belgium, then they are processed at Armenian enterprises and later they are exported to Belgium as a finished product. Armenian export to Italy

is in 92% represented by product group “Articles of apparel, accessories, not knit or crochet”.

Table 1. Product Composition of Armenia’s Export to some EU Markets, Value in 2014

Product Label	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%
	Germany		Bulgaria		Netherlands		Belgium		Italy	
Ores, slag and ash			84.6	98.8	11.1	14.9	11.5	18.4		
Articles of apparel, accessories, knit or crochet									0.9	2.6
Articles of apparel, accessories, not knit or crochet	11.8	7.4							31.7	91.7
Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins,							42.6	68.3		
Iron and steel	48.1	30.4			61.8	83.3				
Copper and articles thereof	64.8	40.9					6.9	11.1		
Aluminum and articles thereof	6.8	4.3								
Other base metals, cermets, art. thereof	19.0	12.0								
Mentioned articles	150.5	95.0	84.6	98.8	72.9	98.2	61.0	97.9	32.6	94.2
Total Armenia’s export to considered countries on mentioned product groups amounts 401.6 USD millions or 92% of the total Armenia’s export to the EU										

Table 2. Product Composition of Armenia’s Import from some EU Countries, Value in 2014

Product Label	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%
	Germany		Bulgaria		Netherlands		Belgium		Italy	
Mineral fuels, oils, distillation products, etc			5.2	20.3						
Inorganic chemicals, precious metal compound, isotopes			2.0	7.7						
Pharmaceutical products	18.0	10.3	1.5	5.8	5.2	11.1	5.1	5.7		

Product Label	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%	USD mln	%
	Germany		Bulgaria		Netherlands		Belgium		Italy	
Essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, toileteries	9.3	5.3	2.1	8.1						
Soaps, lubricants, waxes, candles, modelling pastes			4.1	15.9						
Manmade filaments									10.3	5.7
Manmade staple fibres	13.5	7.7								
Other made textile articles, sets, worn clothing etc					5.3	11.2				
Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins, etc							58.0	65.1		
Machinery, nuclear reactors, boilers, etc	31.6	18.0	2.0	8.0	4.2	9.0	7.0	7.8	47.9	26.8
Electrical, electronic equipment	9.5	5.4	1.3	5.0						
Vehicles other than railway, tramway	17.9	10.2								
Optical, photo, technical, medical, etc apparatus	13.0	7.4								
Furniture, lighting, signs, prefabricated buildings					8.4	18.0			7.7	4.3
Miscellaneous manufactured articles			1.4	5.5						
Mentioned articles	112.7	64.2	19.5	76.2	23.1	49.3	70.1	78.7	65.8	36.8
Total Armenia's import from considered countries on mentioned product groups amounts 291.2 USD million or 29% of total Armenia's import from the EU										

Resuming the analysis of export flows from Armenia to five EU countries, one can point out that Armenian export flows to Belgium and Italy differ from flows to Germany, Bulgaria, and Netherlands and positively influence the development of Armenian economy as the more added value in these cases is generated; consequently more profit remains at Armenian enterprises.

Looking through the product composition of Armenia's import from the above mentioned five EU countries (that are as well the leading supplying markets from the EU for a product imported by Armenia) it should be noted that Armenia imports "everything" (Table 2). 22% of import flows from Germany, Bulgaria, Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy are presented by product group "Machinery, nuclear reactors, boilers, etc". 9% of import flows from Germany, Bulgaria, Netherlands, and Belgium are covered by "Pharmaceutical products". Armenia also imports from Germany "Vehicles other than railway, tramway" (10% of total import from Germany); from Bulgaria "Mineral fuels, oils, distillation products, etc." (20% of import) and "Soaps, lubricants, waxes, candles, modeling pastes" (16%); from Netherlands "Furniture, lighting, signs, prefabricated buildings" (18%). Product group "Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins, etc." covers 65% of Armenia's import from Belgium.

A few years ago we completed the research aiming to estimate the trade potential for Armenia by product groups in regional and international directions using gravity approach. We applied the gravity model to estimate trade flows between 139 countries all over the world for the years 2003-2007 and then used the obtained coefficients to estimate trade potential for Armenia. The trade flows data was disaggregated into seven groups according to Broad Economic Categories' 1-digit classification that allowed predicting changes in geographical and product compositions of foreign trade flows.

Our results showed that the export potentials for Armenia with four of considered in this paper countries are practically exhausted (Belgium – (-102.12 USD million), Netherlands – (-74.22 USD million), Germany – (-70.86 USD million), and Bulgaria – (-8.42 USD million). Analyzing the trends of Armenian export potentials to these countries for the years 2003-2007 we observed that exceeding of Armenian export potentials was decreasing with Belgium, with the other the mentioned countries it was increasing.

Studying Armenia's export potentials in other product groups we observed that exports of "Food and beverages" and "Consumer goods" had potentials to increase, at that the goods from these product groups provided a significant added value into national economy. The total Armenian export potential of "Food and beverages" to Belgium, Netherlands, and Germany amounted to 6.87 USD millions, the export potential of "Consumer goods" to Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, and Bulgaria was about 6.06 USD million. Looking through the countries with maximal potential to expand Armenian export one could see France (whose export potential was 24.13 USD million), the UK (22.48 USD million), Spain (16.10 USD million), Italy (15.94 USD million), Sweden (11.24 USD million), Poland (7.96 USD million), and Greece (7.33 USD million). In general, according to our results the product group with maximal export potential to these countries was "industrial supplies".

According to our results the EU countries having the potential shown above presented the possibility to increase Armenian export by 161.36 USD million. But accounting for the fact that Armenia has exceeded its trade potential with Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, and Bulgaria by 255.62 USD million one could see that on the whole, the level of Armenian export to the EU countries was exceeded.

In general, the results of our previous research showed that Armenia over-exported to EU countries, especially raw materials. Seven years passed after the completion of our research, but in the product and by-country compositions of bilateral trade flows between Armenia and the EU nothing has changed so far. 73% of trade flows from Armenia to the EU in 2014 was the export of raw materials. Two perspective directions that provide more significant added value and positively affect the domestic production's development cover 16.9% of Armenian export to the EU: Armenia's export to Italy in 2014 ("Articles of apparel, accessories, not knit or crochet") amounts to 7.2% of the total export from the RA to the EU, and to Belgium ("Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins, etc.") – 9.7%.

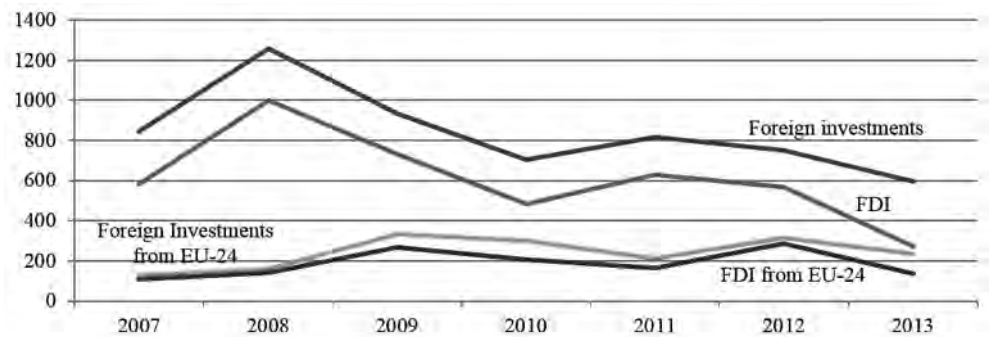
Flows of Investments from the European Union to the Republic of Armenia¹¹

Stable investment flows evidence long-term economic relations between countries and form the base for further economic cooperation. The value of gross foreign investments into the RA's economy in 2013 reached 8.5 USD billion, including the value of foreign direct investments (FDI) – 6.2 USD billion. The main investors are Russian Federation, the EU and the USA. Russian gross investments in 2013 amounted 40% of total gross foreign investments and 41% of total gross FDI; USA's investments amounted 5% of total gross foreign investments and 4% of total gross FDI. The 24 EU's countries have invested into Armenian economy since its independence. The value of gross foreign investment inflow from these countries into the RA in 2013 reached 2.8 USD million (that covers 32% of total investment inflow all over the world), foreign direct investments (FDI) amounted about 2.2 USD million (35% of total FDI). For the period 2007-2013 European investors contributed to the RA's economy about 1.7 USD billion as foreign investments, including 1.3 USD billion as FDI (Figure 4).

¹¹ All data for investment flows are taken from or calculated by the authors on the database of the National Statistical Service of the RA, at <http://www.armstat.am>.

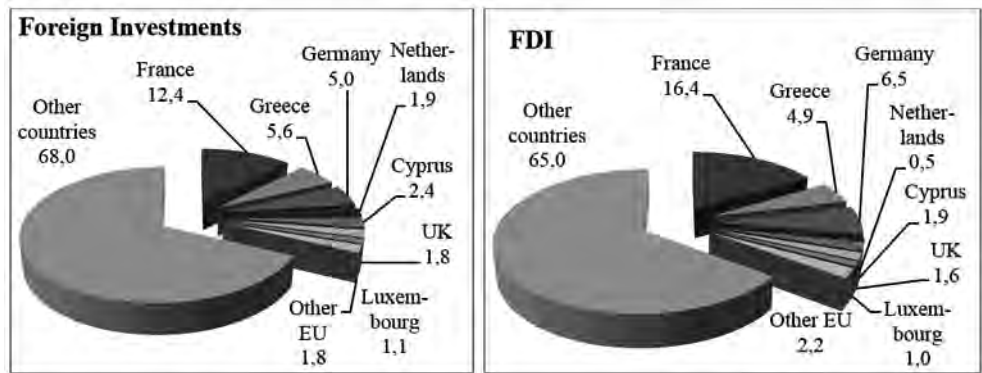
The geographical (by-country) composition of European investments into the RA is rather inhomogeneous: in 2013 the 7 EU’s countries covered 94% of gross inflow of foreign investments and 94% of gross inflow of FDI from EU-24 into the RA (Figure 5). There are France (12.4% of gross foreign investments and 16.4% of gross FDI), Germany (5.0% and 6.5% accordingly), Greece (6.5% and 4.9%), UK (1.8% and 1.6%), Cyprus (2.4% and 1.9%), Luxembourg (1.1% and 1%), and Netherlands (1.9% and 0.5%).

Figure 4. Inflows of Foreign Investments into Armenian Economy, USD million



Looking through the yearly data on investments flows from the EU into the RA one should note one characteristic: since 1988 till now the set of the EU’s countries investing into Armenian economy has been changing – some countries left Armenian market; some countries appeared or strengthened their positions.

Figure 5. Share of some EU’s Countries in Gross Inflows of Foreign Investments into the RA in 2013, %



For example, Greece invested in the RA only for the period 1988-2006, these were mainly investments into the sphere of communications as a Greek company was taking the monopolistic position at Armenian market (in 2006 gross investments amounted 478 USD million of investments, including 302 USD million of FDI). Since the year 2007 no “investing” dollars came to Armenia from Greece. Finnish investments into Armenia were observed since 2006 and in 2013 their gross value amounted to about 58 USD million, including 23.5 USD million of FDI (favorite sector “Electricity, gas, steam and conditioning supply”) (Table 3). Among the EU’s countries that stably invested into Armenian economy since its independence we can mark out Belgium: its gross investments in 2013 amounted 28 USD million (for the period 2007-103 about 11 USD million were invested into the sector “Other manufacturing”); and Ireland: gross investments in 2012 – 17 USD million (for the period 2007-103 the sectors “Computer programming, consultancy and related activities” – about 10 USD million, “Other professional, scientific and technical activities” – about 2 USD million, and “Information service activities”).

France is a leading investor into Armenian economy from the EU: the value of its gross foreign investments in 2013 reached 1.05 USD billion (38% of total investments from the EU), including 1.01 USD billion of FDI. The most attractive sectors in the RA for French investors turned to be “Telecommunications” (for the period 2007-2013 investments amounted 0.7 billion USD), “Manufacture of beverages” (0.16 billion USD), and “Water collection, treatment and supply”.

Table 3. Inflows of Foreign Investments in the RA from some EU’s countries, 2007-2013

Sector	Country	USD million	Sector	Country	USD million
mining of metal ores	Cyprus	71.9	wholesale, trade, except of motor vehicles and motor-cycles	Cyprus	11.7
other mining and quarrying	Cyprus	22.8	retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Italy	2.0
	Germany	211.1		Cyprus	6.0
mining support service activities	UK	9.8	air transport	UK	17.7
manufacture of beverages	France	159.0	accommodation	Cyprus	23.6
	Luxembourg	54.3	telecommunications	France	718.0
manufacture of wearing apparel	Germany	0.6	computer programming, consultancy and related activities	Ireland	9.7
printing and reproduction of recorded media	UK	2.6			

Sector	Country	USD million	Sector	Country	USD million
manufacture of chemicals and chemical products	Italy	4.6	financial service activities, except insurance and pension funding	Cyprus	7.4
manufacture of basic pharmaceutical products and preparations	UK	0.1	real estate activities	Italy	36.5
manufacture of rubber and plastic products	UK	1.4	activities of head offices: management consultancy activities	Slovenia	0.8
manufacture of computer, electronic and optical products	UK	2.6	architectural and engineering activities: technical testing and analysis	UK	4.7
manufacture of electrical equipment	Germany	26.7	advertising and market research	Netherlands	17.1
other manufacturing	Belgium	10.2	other professional, scientific and technical activities	Ireland	2.0
electricity, gas, steam and conditioning supply	Netherlands	133.0	rental and leasing activities	Cyprus	0.8
water collection, treatment and supply	France	6.7	sports activities and amusement and recreation activities	UK	2.2
construction of buildings	Cyprus	4.5			

As mentioned above, Greek investments were interrupted in 2007. However, Greece takes the second place: about 0.48 USD billion were invested (17.5% of total investments from the EU).

The third place belongs to Germany: gross investments reached in 2013 about 0.43 USD billion (16% of total investments from the EU). German investors preferred the sectors “Other mining and quarrying” (in 2007-2013 investments amounted 0.2 USD billion), “Manufacture of wearing apparel”, and “Manufacture of electrical equipment” (27 USD million).

Cyprus has stably invested into Armenian economy since the year 1988 till now: the gross value of the investment in 2013 reached 0.2 billion USD. Cypriot investors chose the sectors “Mining of metal ores” (for the period 2007-2013 – 0.08 USD billion), “Other mining and quarrying” (0.02 USD billion), “Accommodation” (0.02 USD billion), and “Wholesale, trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles”

(0.01 USD billion). As we see Cypriot investments are more diversified in comparison with other countries' investments. We can assume that this fact is stipulated that Cypriot capital coming to the RA has Armenian origin.

UK enterprises invested into Armenian economy till 2013 with about 0.12 USD billion. The most attractive sectors turned to be "Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles" (in 2007-2013 – 18 USD million), and "Air transport" (32 USD million).

The Netherlands invested about 0.17 USD billion into Armenia. Dutch investors preferred the sectors "Electricity, gas, steam and conditioning supply" (in 2007-2013 were about 0.13 USD billion) and "Advertising and market research" (17 USD million).

Italy is also worth noticing with its gross investments in 2013 which amounted to about 57 million USD, for the period between 2007-2013 Italian investors contributed about 37 USD million in the sector "Real estate activities".

Concluding, one should note that the main characteristic of the EU's investments into Armenia is their concentration: 5 EU countries (France, Germany, Cyprus, UK, and Netherlands) for the period 2007-2013 invested about 1.4 USD billion that amounted to 82% of total investments from the EU.

Conclusions

Our analysis showed that the main economic partners of Armenia in the EU are: in trade – Germany, Bulgaria, Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy – together they covered in 2014 above 95% of the total Armenia's export to the EU and 59% of Armenia's import from the EU; in investment – France, Germany, Greece, UK, Cyprus, Luxembourg, and Netherlands – together they covered in 2013 about 94% of gross inflow of foreign investments and 94% of gross inflow of FDI from the EU into the RA.

Germany is the main European economic partner of the RA, responsible for 11% of Armenian export, 4% of Armenian import, 5% of foreign investment, and 7% of FDI into the RA. Raw materials covered 88% of Armenian export to Germany (iron, steel, copper, aluminium, and other base metals). German import to the RA is rather diversified and consists of manufactured goods (pharmaceutics, machinery, electrical and electronic equipment, vehicles, technical and medical apparatus). German enterprises invested mainly in the sector "Other mining and quarrying" (0.2 USD billion for the period 2007-2013). A parallel between export and investment flows may be drawn here: German investors develop Armenian mining industry and then import its production. So, from economic point of view, Germany considers Armenia only a provider of raw materials.

France is a main EU investor in the RA, but as a trade agent it takes only 6th place among EU countries. French enterprises, as opposed to German ones, have invested into manufacturing industry (“Manufacture of beverages” – for the period 2007-2013 – 0.16 USD billion) and service industry (“Telecommunications” – 0.7 USD billion). Armenia’s export to France amounted about 5 USD million (value in 2014) that is equal to 0.3% of total RA’s export, besides 71% of this trade flow present only two product groups: “Articles of apparel, accessories, not knit or crochet” and “Articles of leather, animal gut, harness, travel goods”. As a rule investing is a more risky sphere comparing to trading. French enterprises are ready to invest into Armenian economy. In this case, why is RA’s export to France so small? We assume that situation can be improved by some special measures from side of Armenian government directed to widening the information about Armenian products at French market.

Armenian enterprises’ export to Dutch market amounted about 74 USD million in 2014, but mainly raw materials are exported: “Ores, slag and ash” and “Iron and steel”. Dutch investments are mainly focused on the sector “Electricity, gas, steam and conditioning supply”. So, Armenia’s economic cooperation with Netherlands is rather limited by its product composition.

Investments of United Kingdom’s enterprises into Armenian economy in comparison with other EU countries’ ones are rather diversified. The most significant part of them is directed to sector “Air transport” (23.7 USD million in 2011 and 8.7 USD million in 2012) and “Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles” (in 2007-2013 – 18 USD million). Armenian export to UK rapidly grew from 0.9 USD million in 2012 till 16.3 USD million in 2013 (of which 15.4 USD million was export of product group “Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof”; in 2014 export on this product group was about 1 USD thous.). RA’s export to the UK in 2014 was about 0.4 USD million. In UK’s investments in Armenia there are some sectors with small financing: “Mining support service activities” (9.8 USD million for the period 2007-2013), “Architectural and engineering activities: technical testing and analysis” (4.7 USD million), “Printing and reproduction of recorded media” (2.6 USD million), “Manufacture of computers, electronic and optical products” (2.6 USD million), “Manufacture of rubber and plastic products” (1.4 USD million), “Other mining and quarrying” (1.2 USD million). Thus the composition of UK’s investments in Armenia allows calling them diversified. However, taking into account that the UK is one of the most attractive countries for foreign investments all over the world, one may assume that these investments may have Armenian origin as in case of Cyprus (as it was mentioned in the previous part of paper).

Bulgaria takes one of the leading positions in Armenian export. In 2001 Armenia’s export to Bulgaria amounted to about 0.3 USD million; in 2013 it grew to 152 USD million, and in 2014 decreased to 86 USD million. But 99% of these export flows were represented by one product group – “Ores, slag and ash”. Again one may

observe export of raw materials. Gross inflows of investments from Bulgaria to the RA reached about 2.8 USD million in 2013.

The volumes of Armenian export to Belgium have been growing as well: in 2001 it was about 47 USD million, and in 2013 it grew to 130 USD million, and in 2014 it decreased to 62 USD million. Looking through the product composition of Armenian export to Belgium one should note that the share of the group “Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins, etc.” (manufactured products with high added value) decreased since 98% in 2001 till 68% in 2014, and groups of raw materials appeared (“Ores, slag and ash” and “Copper and articles thereof”). All Belgian investments in the RA were directed to the sector “Other manufacturing”.

All in all, one may notice that main characteristic of economic relations between the RA and the EU is their raw-materials-orientation. Just a few EU countries have invested into manufacturing industries and import manufactured products. Taking into account that in the nearest future a new agreement between the European Union and Armenia will be concluded it may be assumed that Armenian government should make efforts in the line of reimagining Armenia for European business: Armenia is able to provide manufactured goods to foreign markets and is open for foreign investments into manufacturing industries.

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Abstract

In the nearest future a new agreement will be concluded between the EU and Armenia that aims at further developing and strengthening their comprehensive cooperation in all areas of mutual interest, taking into account the other international commitments of Armenia, in particular its decision to join the EEU. In our paper we analyze the present conditions of the bilateral trade flows between the RA and the EU, and the flows of investments from the EU to the RA, aiming to reveal the base for further development of economic relations between the RA and the EU. The EU has always been one of the leading economic partners of Armenia since its independence. We found that the main characteristics of the RA-EU economic relations are 1) geographical (by-country) concentration – 5 European countries covered in 2014 above 95% of the total Armenia's export to the EU; and 7 EU countries covered in 2013 about 94% of gross inflow of foreign investments from the EU into the RA; 2) raw-material orientation of both export flows from Armenia to the EU and investments from the EU into the Armenian economy. Thus, Armenian government should make efforts in the line of reimagining of Armenia for European business from raw-materials base to provider of manufactured products.

Keywords: Eastern Partnership, trade flows, investment.

ARAM TERZIAN

Armenia's foreign policy between European identity and Eurasian integration

On September 3, 2013, the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan, announced Armenia's decision to join the Russian-led Customs Union and contribute to the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). Subsequent ratification of the treaty on joining the EEU by Armenian Parliament (signed in Minsk on October 10, 2014), irreversibly determined "Eurasian" constraints of Armenia's foreign policy. The President invariably hailed the decision as a rational one emphasizing its security implications as well as economic incentives for Armenia.¹ Needless to say, this step inexorably rendered Armenia's long-desired foreign policy agenda for further promotion of the Association Agreement with the EU unfeasible.

Evidence indicates that the question as to whether the Eurasian path was predetermined or there was a margin of possibility for Armenia to opt for the Association Agreement was placed at the core of increasingly intensifying debates. It is worth noting that prior to the decision Armenia's political elite was persistently questioning the insightfulness of country's membership into the Customs Union given a handful of obstacles ranging from lack of common border to country's tangible progress under the tutelage of the Eastern Partnership.

On various occasions both the President and Prime Minister along with other leading officials invariably stressed that lack of common border with the Customs

¹ President Serzh Sargsyan at the Plenary Session of the PACE Responded to the Questions Raised by the Members of the Parliament, 02 October 2013, at <http://www.president.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2013/10/02/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-answered-the-questions-of-PACE-members>, 10 June 2015.

Union poses insurmountable obstacles to Armenia's participation in it.² Namely, Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan explicitly pointed out that there was no precedent of entering the Union with no common borders.³

Discourse analysis of Armenian Presidents' foreign policy speeches convincingly illustrates the very high emphasis placed on European integration which was associated with prosperous, peaceful, free and democratic path of development. Importantly, the European integration was invariably referred to as Armenia's civilizational choice which catalyzes the homecoming to the European civilization and its cultural realm. Upon joining the European Neighborhood Policy President Kocharyan expressed confidence that the initiative brings Armenia back home – to the European family, stressing that Armenia irrefutably seeks full-scale European integration.⁴

His successor Serzh Sargsyan in his 2012 speech at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation affirmed: *“For us, Armenians the European system of values is intimately close... Since the reestablishment of our independence in 1991, we had not only reasserted our sovereignty but also obtained historic opportunity to rediscover Armenia's European road of development.”*⁵

The President tended to attach particular significance to the Eastern Partnership as a new impetus and new quality to the reforms for creating a more harmonious and prosperous European realm without dividing lines. He expressed confidence that intensifying cooperation with the European Union, and implementation of ambitious programs in the framework of the Eastern Partnership would serve as an ardent catalyst for democracy promotion and regional cooperation in the South Caucasus.⁶

In essence, the promotion of the Russian-led Customs Union has a great deal to do with the upgraded wave of EU-Russia competition and the latter's desire to further thwart European integration in the sphere of its privileged interests. Moscow's permanent calls on the EU to stay away from its “near abroad” were reinforced by fierce counter-efforts in the wake of the remarkable promotion of Association Agreements. Fairly, Armenia's abrupt move away from the EU and towards Russian-led Customs

² President Serzh Sargsyan Met With the Representatives of the Mass Media, 18 March 2013, at <http://www.president.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2013/03/18/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-press-conference>, 2 April 2015.

³ Customs Union not necessary for Armenia – PM, 4 April 2012, at <http://news.am/eng/news/99883.html>, 10 May 2015.

⁴ Armenia to Deepen Cooperation With EU Within Neighborhood Policy, 16 May 2005, at <http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/politics/news/13311>, 27 April 2015.

⁵ Speech by President Serzh Sargsyan at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 07 March 2012, at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2012/03/07/news-124>, 25 February 2015.

⁶ Statement by President Serzh Sargsyan at the EU Eastern Partnership Second Summit, 30 September 2011, at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2011/09/30/news-111>, 22 February 2015.

Union was indicative of further escalation of EU-Russia relations. Nevertheless, putting aside this broader geopolitical context, a question arises as to whether when faced with the dilemma of European and Eurasian paths a small state like Armenia has a margin for manoeuvre.

It should be emphasized that the decision was hailed as rational and absolutely essential across Armenia's political leadership pointing to its positive implications for Armenia's military and energy security, long-term economic incentives coupled with hypothetical benefits in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolution⁷.

Research convincingly illustrates that one of the core driving forces behind the September 3rd decision emanates from traditional security challenges and volatile regional environment. Armenia remains subject to blockade by Turkey and Azerbaijan coupled with the latter's intensified efforts at expanding its military spending on the basis of its oil and gas revenues to get the settlement it wants over Nagorno-Karabakh. In this hostile environment Russia is unequivocally perceived as an indispensable strategic ally and a security guarantor in Armenia's political thinking and public consciousness given Russian-Armenian security relations. Unsurprisingly, there was no marked opposition to Armenia's membership into the Customs Union from the Armenian society, most other political parties and the government. Remarkably, the latter tended to consistently emphasize the security implications of the decision for Armenia claiming that the country irrefutably needs to further deepen strategic partnership with security provider Russia in all possible spheres.⁸

It is worth noting that the perception of Russia and Armenian-Russian partnership has experienced drastic ups and downs since the collapse of Soviet Union. Russia's deep-rooted portrayal as Armenia's "savior" was profoundly challenged in Armenian strategic thinking in the wake of Soviet Union's gradual dissolution. The latter marked a major shift away from "imperial" Russia and a move towards the notion of independent statehood. This gradually gathered speed in the later stages of the Nagorno-Karabakh movement. Interestingly, Armenia's traditional pro-Russian orientation received its share of condemnation by the first President of Armenia Levon Ter-Petrosyan along with other prominent public figures and politicians urging to give up on delusional and self-destructive reliance on Russia and re-nationalize Armenia.⁹ In essence, in the early stages of the national movement its leaders targeted

⁷ Edward Nalbandyan: Armenia's EEU Membership is of Strategic Importance to the RA, 14 March 2015, at <http://www.arminfo.am/index.cfm?objectid=716D3A30-CA47-11E4-99FD0EB7C0D21663>, 20 April 2015.

⁸ Ruling party says Customs Union decision meets Armenia's national interests, 6 March 2013, at http://www.armenianow.com/news/48249/armenia_ruling_party_customs_union_russia, 14 March 2015.

⁹ A. Mirzoyan, *Armenia, the Regional Powers, and the West: Between History and Geopolitics*, New York 2010, p. 28.

“imperial” Russia as the core impediment to Armenian independent statehood seeking to give rise to nationalist sentiments.

Nevertheless, facing a bunch of ordeals unleashed by the devastating war against Azerbaijan and severe hardships of transition, Armenian political elite was forced to further rely on Russia as a recipe for addressing security threats mostly posed by Azerbaijan and Turkey. It is worth noting that initial outright anti-Russian propaganda started to diminish shortly afterwards the restoration of Armenian independent statehood. Unsurprisingly, along with Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan as one of the original signatories of the 1994 Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Armenia clearly determined Russian-led security policy constraints. The set-up of the 102nd Russian Military Base with its around 4,300 troops, 80 tanks, and over 100 pieces of artillery in the second largest city of Armenia Gyumri in 1996 marked a substantial shift in Russia-Armenia security relations. In fact it inexorably predetermined “Russia-first” choices in Armenia’s foreign policy given the high emphasis placed on Armenia-Russia military cooperation both within the CSTO and bilateral partnership as a silver bullet to military threats stemming from Turkey and Azerbaijan. The military pact signed between Armenia and Russia in August 2010 extended lease on military base until 2044.¹⁰

President Sargsyan has invariably emphasized the vital role of Armenian-Russian partnership as the most important and indispensable factor for stability and security in the South Caucasus: *“The Armenian-Russian strategic partnership will remain the pivot of Armenia’s security, which through the twenty years of independence has proved its vitality. Within this context, we attach utmost importance to our membership to the Collective Security Treaty Organization.”*¹¹

Evidence indicates that Vladimir Putin’s visit to Baku in August 2013, which resulted in contracts for the supply of Russian military hardware to Azerbaijan, amounting to \$4 billion¹², significantly reinforced fears in Armenia over rapprochement between Russia and Azerbaijan. Therefore, traditional security concerns were instrumental in Armenia’s decision to join the Customs Union.

It is worth noting that unlike the Russian Federation, the European Union with its soft power is far from being perceived as a security guarantor in Armenian political thinking. In essence, when it comes to the South Caucasus there seems to be an

¹⁰ I. J. McGinnity, *Selling its Future Short: Armenia’s Economic and Security Relations with Russia*, Claremont McKenna College 2010, pp. 22-29, at http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1059&context=cmc_theses, 25 June 2015.

¹¹ Statement by President Serzh Sargsyan at the Extended Meeting Held at the RA Ministry of Defense, 15 January 2013, at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2013/01/15/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-speech-session-Ministry-of-Defense>, 1 June 2015.

¹² In Baku, Putin Brings Gunboats Along With Diplomacy, 14 August 2013, at <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/67392>, 15 March 2015.

underlying tension between the EU's soft tools and geopolitical realities of the region characterized by domination of hard power politics.

Moreover, the credibility in the EU's transformative power was further challenged by the substantial shift in energy-related projects in EU-Azerbaijan partnership which have visibly widened the gap between the EU's energy and broader regional policy objectives, as well as in democracy promotion and conflict settlement. The EU's tolerance towards permanent violations of Azerbaijan's commitments makes clear that pragmatic energy interests dominate over normative goals, thus engendering more scepticism over Brussels's positive engagement in the region. This has led President Sargsyan to explicitly question the effectiveness of the Eastern Partnership pointing to its three core shortcomings - namely, the unclear criterion of grouping partners, lack of powerful incentives for Azerbaijan to move beyond energy partnership and comply with the EU policies as well as its irrelevance to Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement. The President particularly stressed: *"The countries differed in their approaches, their goals and I think that this is the reason that at least of the Eastern Partnership's components – the regional cooperation component – was doomed to failure. I still do not understand the criterion of grouping Armenia and Azerbaijan into one partnership – different opportunities, different approaches, different goals – and this is the reason that component did not work."*¹³

Sargsyan has consistently pointed to the shortcomings of Europeanization in the region that stem from misperceptions of European values across Armenia's immediate neighbors: *"Evidently, for some countries advancement toward Eurointegration doesn't necessarily signify a peaceful, prosperous, free and secure development. One of our immediate neighbors has misapprehensions regarding the European way, perceiving the European realm exclusively as a convenient market for selling oil and gas... Another neighbor of ours, Turkey, which also aspires to become part of Europe, will not open its borders with Armenia despite its international obligations. One may wonder if our neighbors are aware that free movement is a pivot of the European system of values."*¹⁴

In a way this rhetoric reflects Sargsyan's take on limitations of European integration in the region, given the fact that the process itself is doomed to a negligible success because of Armenia's unlawful blockade imposed on the country by its two neighbors. Hence, at times President has abstained from pinning high hopes on the path of European integration as a silver bullet to regional security, given the fact that

¹³ Statement by the President of the Republic of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan at the High-Level Meeting on the 5th Anniversary of the Eastern Partnership, 25 April 2014, at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2014/04/25/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-speech-Eastern-Partnership-Prague/>, 14 December 2014.

¹⁴ Remarks of the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan at the Joint Press Conference with the President of Slovenia Danilo Turk, 13 April 2011, at <http://www.president.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2011/04/13/news-65/>, 18 January 2015.

the EU's strategic energy partner Azerbaijan lacks powerful incentives to pursue deep and comprehensive Eurointegration. Armenia remains subject to blockade by its another neighbor Turkey, which tremendously hinders the effectiveness of European integration. Remarkably, Yerevan has tended to regard Turkey's belligerent policy towards Armenia as a major obstacle to country's swift and smooth integration into European organizations. In this regard President Sargsyan pointed out: "*Armenia is interested in the further development of the Eastern Partnership format. It should continue to serve its major objective – united Europe that is free of dividing lines, stable and prosperous. It is important for the Eastern Partnership to be responsive to the vital interests of all the participating states. For Armenia it is first of all the unblocking of the closed border with Turkey.*"¹⁵

It should be emphasized that Russia's increasing assertiveness towards the EU in the wake of Vilnius summit (November 2013) significantly affected Armenia's perception of the EU association perspective. Evidence indicates that Armenia's European foreign policy agenda plays out insofar as it is not perceived as detrimental to Russia's strategic interests. Unsurprisingly, Russia's increasingly confrontational position towards the EU found its vivid expression in Armenia - EU relations. When providing explanations on the decision pertaining to Armenia's membership into Russian-led Customs Union, President placed a special emphasis on security-related determinants of the choice¹⁶. Thus, civilizational dimension proved to be overly dominated by "security-first" approach revealing the root shortcomings of identity-based foreign policy making.

In elaborating on driving forces behind Armenia's membership into the Customs Union the President implicitly pointed at undesirability of Ukrainian scenario application in Armenia. He particularly mentioned: "*The Ukrainian crisis has demonstrated that lack of understanding of the root causes of the current situation can call further proceeding of the Eastern Partnership into question. Armenia joined the Eastern Partnership with a deep conviction that it is not directed against any third country... It is necessary to find solutions by means of a dialogue that take into account interests of all regional beneficiaries*"¹⁷.

¹⁵ Statement by the President of the Republic of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan at the High-Level Meeting on the 5th Anniversary of the Eastern Partnership, 25 April 2014, at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2014/04/25/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-speech-Eastern-Partnership-Prague/>, 18 May 2015.

¹⁶ President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin signed Joint Statements, 3 September 2013, at <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2013/09/03/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-and-President-Vladimir-Putin-joint-statement/>, 20 December 2014.

¹⁷ Statement by the President of the Republic of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan at the High-Level Meeting on the 5th Anniversary Of The Eastern Partnership, 25 April 2014, at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2014/04/25/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-speech-Eastern-Partnership-Prague/>.

Energy security concerns and particularly Armenia's heavy dependence on Russian energy supply provide further explanation for Armenia's Russian led choice.

The Russian economic diplomacy devised under Putin's tenure has achieved remarkable accomplishments in Armenia. It commits Russia to take up another country's debts in exchange for taking over its strategic assets by Russia. Moscow's calls on Armenia to repay its debt (roughly amounting around 93 million dollars), which intensified in 2003, prompted Armenian authorities to hand over countries five major strategic assets to Russia. "Equity-for-Debt" deal included Armenia's core energy, research and development and manufacturing facilities. Namely, Russia took over the ownership of the Metamor nuclear power plant, satisfying nearly 40 per cent of Armenia's domestic energy demand. Besides, the Russian state-owned Unified Energy System (RAO UES) received control of Armenia's major hydroelectric facilities which provide around 30 per cent of overall energy production in the country. Moreover, Russia's energy diplomacy targeted and successfully "absorbed" the major source of thermoelectric energy in Armenia - Hrazdan thermoelectric plant. Along with energy assets, Russia took over Mars electronic and robotics plant in Yerevan coupled with the largest cement factory in the region Hrazdan. Overall, Russia gained the control of around 90 per cent of Armenia's energy sector.¹⁸ Furthermore, in 2013, the governments of Armenia and Russia signed an agreement which granted Gazprom exclusive rights for gas supply and distribution in Armenia until 2044, rendering it 100% shareholder of country's gas industry.¹⁹

In order to withstand hypothetical challenges of its considerably growing influence in Armenia and particularly in energy sector Russia went so far as to knock possible alternatives on the head. This particularly applies to Iran-Armenia pipeline designed to supply Iranian natural gas to Armenia in exchange for Armenian electricity export to Iran. Perceiving the project as detrimental to its interests, Moscow outright resorted to blackmailing Armenia by threatening to review the gas prices. Interestingly, to avoid this deeply unwelcome scenario the Armenian government gave in to Russia's aspirations and consented to have the final power block of the Hrazdon power plant taken over by Russian state-owned company Gazprom. Moreover, Moscow's unrelenting pressure and Yerevan's concessions extended to the first section of the Iran-Armenia pipeline, enabling Gazprom to handle Armenia's access to Iranian gas.²⁰

president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2014/04/25/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-speech-Eastern-Partnership-Prague/, 30 May 2015.

¹⁸ I. J. McGinnity, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-15.

¹⁹ Armenian Lawmakers Ratify Controversial Russian Gas Deal Amid Protests, 23 December 2013, at <http://www.rferl.org/content/armenia-russia-gas-deal/25209474.html>, 10 April 2015.

²⁰ E. Danielyan, *Russia Tightens Control over the Armenian Energy Sector*, 16 October 2006, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav101706.shtml>, 10 March 2015.

It is worth noting that prior to Armenia's move towards the Customs Union Russia played its energy card by increasing gas prices for Armenia and thus indicating the economic consequences of alternative foreign policy choices.

Remarkably, having witnessed the politicization of Russian energy supplies in both Ukraine and Moldova, Armenian political leadership spared no effort to avoid similar hardships caused by energy supply cut offs. In this regard President Sargsyan particularly pointed out: *"Our choice is not civilizational. It corresponds to the economic interests of our nation. We cannot sign the Free Trade Agreement and increase the gas price and the electricity fee three-fold."*²¹

Another factor explaining Armenia's decision is the question of economic security and the dominant role of Russia in Armenia's trade. As a single country, Russia is the main external trade partner of Armenia which is the destination for 20 per cent of Armenian exports and source of 70 per cent of remittances.²² Russia also maintains lead in the realm of foreign investments in Armenia. According to official information, there are about 1,300 enterprises with Russian capital, which is over one fourth of all economic entities with involvement of foreign capital.²³

Evidence suggests that permanent flows of Armenian migrant workers to Russia in recent years have catalyzed substantial increase in cash transfers from there making up around 9.1 % of Armenia's GDP. In 2013, non-commercial money transfers of individuals from Russia to Armenia via banking system amounted around \$ 1.6 bln. while Armenia's budget for 2013 was set \$ 2.8 bln on expenditures and \$ 2.7 bln on revenues.²⁴ Clearly, Armenian economy has rendered increasingly dependent on remittances coming mostly from Russia.

Therefore, the expected annual increase in remittances contingent upon Armenia's integration into the Customs Union's single labour and capital market is unequivocally deemed to be one of the core benefits of Armenia's membership into the CU.

Importantly, the core explanations offered by President Sargsyan pertaining to Armenia's "Russia first" choice along with security and economic issues were inextricably linked to large Armenian diaspora in Russia.

²¹ Առավոտ, «Օրագիր իմ եւ բոլորի համար». «Հետաքրքիր մարդ եք, եկել եք էստեղ, ուզում եք Հայաստանի բախտը վճռել ք», 23 September 2014, (Aravot Daily, "Diary for me and for everyone". "You are interesting people, you came here and want to determine the destiny of Armenia?") 28 September 2014, <http://www.aravot.am/2014/09/24/499600/>, 7 May 2015.

²² Armenia Monthly Economic Update, World Bank Group (March, 2015), at <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/eca/armenia/armenia-economic-update.pdf>, 5 May 2015.

²³ Russian investments in Armenia's real economy fell to \$86.25mln last year, 8 April 2014, at <http://www.armbanks.am/en/2014/04/08/74187/>, 12 April 2015.

²⁴ V. Ter-Matevosyan, "Integration Vs. Security: Or What Is to Be Learnt from Armenia's Decision to Join The Eurasian Economic Union (Customs Union)?", Policy brief, at <https://tcpa.blog.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/brief.pdf>, 12 June 2015.

Today, the Armenian population of Russia estimates 2.5 million according to various surveys.²⁵ Concurrently, Russia ranks as the first country in terms of labour migration from Armenia.

During the period of very tense Russian-Georgian relations before their 2008 war, discriminatory measures were employed by the Russian police against Georgians in Russia. Therefore, Armenia is concerned with keeping its people from similar hardships in Russia.

Armenia's membership in the Customs Union is largely believed to facilitate the life of Armenian migrants in Russia by eliminating visa-related barriers along with upgraded free movement of labor and goods. Thus the Customs Union is largely perceived as one-size-fits-all solution to sensitive issues facing Armenia.

All the arguments mentioned above lead to conclude that Armenia's membership in the Customs Union was a "no choice" option since the complementary foreign policy of a small state may play out under local and regional constraints insofar as it is not faced with menacing dilemmas. Thus, when identity-based foreign policy assuming profound advancement towards European integration encounters traditional security challenges it, inexorably predetermines "Russia first" foreign policy choices due to a whole bunch factors and circumstances considered.

As regards the likely scenarios of Armenia-EU further partnership, it is worth noting that subsequent to his famous decision President Sargsyan has numerous expressed confidence that the Eurasian integration is not incompatible with the European one and Armenia seeks to provide balance between these two core dimensions. At the fourth Eastern Partnership Summit on May 22, 2015 President affirmed: *"Armenia is committed to take steps jointly with its EU partners to design a new legal foundations for our relations, which will reflect, on one hand, the content of the preceding negotiations Armenia conducted with the EU and, on the other, will be compatible with the other integration processes, in particular, with the commitments stemming from our accession to the Eurasian Economic Union. Armenia, meanwhile, highly values application of differentiated and tailor-made approaches to every individual country, which shall be designed around the progress made in the implementation of reforms, and reiteration of the principle "more for more." We strongly believe that all partners shall adhere to shared values and ensure peace and stability of the region. The Republic of Armenia will continue working exactly in this direction."*²⁶

²⁵ From Moscow With Love: Armenian reporter finds neo-Soviet Russia on "pro-Eurasian" tour, by G. Mkrtchyan, 14 October 2014, at http://www.armenianow.com/society/features/57604/armenia_moscow_visit_russia_eurasian_union, 17 May 2015.

²⁶ Statement by the President of the Republic of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan at the Fourth Eastern Partnership Summit, 22 May 2015, at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2015/05/22/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-Eastern-Partnership-Latvia-speech/>, 8 June 2015.

Clearly, the feasibility of further European integration is considerably contingent on Armenia's ability at skilful balancing of European and Eurasian paths which might significantly suffer from the escalation of EU-Russia relations as well as the EU's ability at identifying ingenious initiatives of further partnership. Yet, it is premature to jump to far-reaching conclusions and claim that Armenia's further European integration has reached an impasse.

Conclusions

Armenia's abrupt move away from the Association Agreement and the substantial shift in Eurasian integration has brought into the spotlight the core challenges and constraints of identity-based foreign policy making. Notwithstanding its overly European foreign policy identity Armenia opted for Russian-led Customs Union due to the following paramount reasons: firstly, Armenia's key economic and security ally Russia's increasing assertiveness towards the EU which found its vivid expression in the Armenia-EU relations; secondly, traditional security challenges which sent new ripples of apprehension to Armenia afterwards a major shift in Russian military hardware supply to Azerbaijan; thirdly, energy security concerns and namely Armenia's heavy dependence on Russian energy supply, which was skilfully used by Russia; fourthly Russia's dominant role in Armenian economy both in terms of external investments and the share of trade; last but not least - large Armenian diaspora in Russia, which might considerably suffer from the shortcomings of Yerevan's alternative foreign policy choices.

All the arguments mentioned above lead to the conclusion that Armenia's membership in the Customs Union was "no choice" option. In fact there was no room for manoeuvre and particularly for the further promotion of the Association Agreement with the EU.

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Abstract

The dichotomy of European and Eurasian paths to integration revolving around foreign policy of Armenia ended up with its membership into the Russian-led Customs Union (CU). The decision sparked vigorous debates in Armenia, particularly pertaining to challenges and constraints of identity-based foreign policy making. The article examines the driving forces behind Armenia’s membership into the Customs Union with a special emphasis on the core obstacles that rendered its long-desired EU Association perspective unfeasible. Armenia’s abrupt move away from the European Union (EU) and a shift in Eurasian integration clearly indicated that its identity-based foreign policy agenda is overly hindered by constraints stemming from heavy economic and political dependence on Russia.

Keywords: Armenia, foreign policy, European identity, Eurasian integration.

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Index

- Ackerman Peter 105
Adamczyk Natalia 265
Adenauer Konrad 99, 248
Alden Chris 222
Alexandrova-Arbatova Nadia 176
Allworth Edward 74
Anastasov Siergiei 165
Applebaum Ann 86
Arendt Hanna 108
Armas Iurie 167
Arnold Hans 93
Arutyunyan G. 215, 217
Arzumanyan Aleksandr 226
Ashton Catherine 197
Atilgan Canan 198, 201
Avagyan Arsen 225-226
Avakov Arsen 107
Avineri Shlomo 133, 140
Azarov Mikola 106
- Babych Dmitry 107
Bajor Piotr 8, 29, 36-37, 265
Bandera Stepan 12
Barabasz Adam 46-47
Baring Arnulf 93
Belcher Jason S. 90
Bennett Philip 166
Berdahl Daphne 15
- Berger Michael A. 107
Betlii Olena 65
Bildt Carl 72
Bilenky Sherhiy 77
Bingen Dieter 135
Bisharyan Heghine 224
Bismarck Otto von 95-96
Bittner Jochan 21
Blaney John W. 74
Blank Stephen 33-34
Bodio Tadeusz 158-159
Bohr Annette 74
Bordilovska Olena 265
Borucińska-Dereszkiewicz Izabela 42, 44, 46, 51, 57-58
Börzel Tanja A. 144, 179
Bosch Robert 7, 261
Bredow Wilfried von 93
Bregutse Aurelia 169
Brok Elmar 136
Brzezinsky Zbigniew 67
Bu Shao-Hua 122
Burns James M. 159
Burton Michael G. 105, 222
Bush George W. 65
- Calmic Octavian 167
Całus Kamil 157, 159, 161, 164, 167

- Campos Nauro F. 104
 Candu Adrian 164-165
 Caprivi Leo von 96
 Cartwright Dorwin 221
 Casper Gretchen 105
 Castles Stephen 136
 Cheng Zhi-Jie 125
 Cheterian Vicken 108
 Chirtoaca Dorin 157, 164-165
 Chizhova Rosioru Tatiana 166
 Coalson Robert 146
 Corman Igor 162
 Czempiel Ernst-Otto 180
 Cziomer Erhard 43
 Czornik Katarzyna 54

 D'Anieri Paul 74
 Danielyan Emil 253
 Dathe Claudia 136
 De Waal Tom 205
 Delcour Laure 72, 144, 147, 151, 205
 Deutsch Karl W. 91
 Devyatkov Andrey 203
 Dimitrova Antoaneta 145, 152
 Ding Y.-F. 126
 Dodon Igor 146, 159-164, 168
 Domaradzki Spasimir 54
 Doroshko Mykola 265
 Dragneva Rilka 145, 152
 Dragutanu Dorin 169
 Druc Mircea 160
 Druker Jeremy 201
 Dugin Oleksandr 68

 Eberhardt Adam 78-79
 Ehrlich Andrzej 72
 El Myurid A. 108
 Emerson Michael 149
 Esken Moritz 197, 199-200, 203, 265
 Feng Sh.-L. 118
 Ferguson Yale H. 10-11
 Figes Orlando 66-67
 Filat Vlad 146, 149, 159-162, 164, 166, 168
 Fomina Joanna 9, 12, 265
 Fournier Eric 31
 Frichova Grono M. 204

 Frie Ewald 96
 Frybes Marcin 134

 Gaburici Chiril 160, 164-165
 Galstyan Narek S. 266
 Gang Qin 113
 Garibashvili Irakli 149, 150
 Gaskarth Jamie 10
 Gasparyan Abraham 266
 Gherman Natalia 164-166
 Ghimpu Mihai 160-161, 164, 168-169
 Gil Andrzej 75-77
 Giragosian Richard 204, 206, 223
 Gniazdowski Mateusz 43, 46
 Goebbels Joseph 97
 Gorbachev Mikhail 175
 Greceanii Zinaida 160, 164
 Gu Zhihong 112
 Gurin Corneliu 169

 Habdank-Kończakowska Sylvana 48
 Hakobyan Rouben 227
 Harding Luke 109
 Harutyunyan Khosrov 224-226
 Haukkala Hiski 72
 Hayrapetyan Grigor 266
 Hayrapetyan Viktoriya 266
 Hazelzet Hadewych 180
 Hegel Georg Wilhelm Friedrich 90
 Heinelt Hubert 176
 Herzig Edmund 84
 Higley John 105, 222
 Hillis Faith 75
 Hitler Adolf 95-96, 107
 Hmelnitsky Bohdan 64
 Hovhannisyan Raffi 224
 Huang P. 118, 121
 Huntington Samuel 97

 Iohannis Klaus 168
 Iskandaryan Alexander 199
 Ivanishvili Bidzina 148
 Izotov Alexander 205

 Jäger Thomas 93
 Janning Josef 207

- Jinping Xi 125-126
 Juncker Jean-Claude 137
 Jünemann Annette 176

 Kanet Roger E. 176
 Karatnycky Adrian 105
 Karimov Islom 87
 Karwat Mirosław 158
 Katherine the Second 65
 Kequiang Li 112
 Khumaryan Vahe 266
 Kissinger Henry 66, 75, 92
 Klatt Małgorzata 76
 Klichko Vitaly 107
 Knodt Michèle 176, 183, 266
 Kocharyan Robert 205, 248
 Kopacz Ewa 13
 Kopczyński Michał 73, 75
 Kosienkowski Marcin 158
 Kotzian Peter 176
 Krastev Ivan 79
 Krickovic Andrej 80
 Kryvonos Roman 266
 Kucharczyk Jacek 10
 Kulyk Wołodymyr 73-74
 Kuusinen Otto 95
 Kuzio Taras 74-75

 Lakomy Miron 54
 Lamentowicz Wojtek 133
 Lang Kai-Olaf 137
 Langbein Julia 144-145, 151-152
 LaRouche Lyndon 89
 Larson Deborah W. 176
 Lasoń Marcin 43
 Lavenex Sandra 176
 Lavrov Sergey 201
 Law Vivien 74
 Leancă Iurie 160-161, 164-165
 Lebed Oleksandr 85
 Ledeneva Alena D. 104
 Lehmann Hans Hermann 132
 Lenin Vladimir 78
 Leonard Mark 125
 Lewin Kurt 221
 Li Xue.-Gang 118, 124

 Lickiewicz Paweł 49
 Liik Kadri 76
 Lilei Song 266
 Linz Juan J. 222
 Lippert Barbara 137
 Lomagin Nikita A. 176
 Longhurst Kerry 43
 Lucas Edward 69
 Lucinschi Petru 157-158
 Luft Bogumił 161
 Lukashenko Alexander 87
 Lupu Marian 161-162, 168
 Luttwak Edward N. 106-107
 Luxmoore Matthew 79
 Lynch Dov 84

 Magocsi Paul Robert 74
 Makarychev Andrey 203
 Manucharyan Ashot 225
 Manukyan S. 215, 217
 Marciniak Włodzimierz 76
 Marson James 66
 Martirosyanhold Armen 226
 Maukyan Vazgen 225
 May Marie-Lena 200
 Mazepa Ivan 64-65
 Mazurek Kamila 139
 McDermott Roger 33
 McGinnity Ian J. 250, 253
 Mearsheimer John 19
 Medvedev Dimitry 201
 Meister Stefan 200, 205
 Melkumyan Mikayel 224-225
 Menkiszak Marek 76
 Merkel Angela 16, 21
 Michel Patrick 134
 Michels Robert 222
 Miller Alexei 76
 Minasyan Artsvik 227
 Mirzoyan Alla 249
 Mkrtchyan Gayane 255
 Morgenthau Hans J. 94
 Mosca Gaetano 222
 Mubarak Hosni 107
 Munteanu Igor 158-159
 Muravschi Valeriu 160

- Nalbandyan Edward 249
 Navasardyan Arman 225
 Nazarbayev Narsultan 87
 Negruta Veaceslav 170
 Nemtsov Boris 94
 Nikžentaitis Alyvydas 73, 75
 Nowak Andrzej 76
 Nygren Bertil 176

 O'Donnell Guillermo 105
 Ochmann Cornelius 12
 Olchawa Maciej 68
 Oleksy Piotr 157-159, 166

 Pamuk Yasemin 144
 Pareto Vilfredo 222
 Pełczyńska-Nałęcz Katarzyna 46-47, 53-54, 57-58
 Perepelytsia H. 87
 Peter the First 65
 Piechocki Marcin 46-47
 Piet Rémi 176
 Pilsudski Jozef 12
 Piskorska Beata 43, 47, 51, 55
 Plahotniuc Vladimir 146-147, 159, 161-162, 166, 169
 Plaze Olga 139
 Plokhyy Serhii 75
 Pop Valentina 201
 Popescu Nicu 149
 Poroshenko Petro 113, 121-122
 Portnow Andrij 75
 Pradetto August 135
 Putin Vladimir 9-10, 17, 30, 32-33, 35-37, 40, 65-66, 68, 73, 76, 78, 85, 87, 89-90, 94-96, 106, 146, 197-199, 201, 222, 250, 252-253

 Rácz András 76
 Resis Albert 95
 Riabczuk Mykoła 75
 Richelieu Armand Jean du Plessis de 97
 Risse Thomas 179
 Rogozin Dmitry 36, 38
 Rosioru Igor 166
 Rostek Andreas 136

 Rotfeld Adam D. 76
 Rusu Ion 166
 Rusu Vladimir 166
 Rutland Peter 72
 Ryabchuk Anastasiya 105
 Rybińska Aleksandra 55
 Rywkin Michael 74

 Saakashvili Micheil 148-149, 151
 Sadowski Rafał 45, 48, 52, 54, 57
 Sadykow Sewer 138
 Safaryan A. 215, 217
 Sagaydachnyi Petro 64
 Sakwa Richard 71-72
 Sandu Maia 168-169
 Sang Ren 266
 Sapper Manfred 131
 Sargsyan Serzh 197-199, 205-206, 208, 222-224, 228, 247-248, 250-252, 254-255
 Sargsyan Tigran 248
 Sasse Gwendolyn 149, 176
 Schevchuk Yevgeny 149
 Schimmelfennig Frank 176
 Schlögel Karl 10
 Schmidt Helmut 10
 Schmitter Philippe C. 105
 Schöll-Mazurek Kamila 8, 266
 Schroeder Gerhard 10
 Schulze Peter W. 202
 Schumpeter Joseph 222
 Sherr James 68-69, 76
 Shevchenko Alexei 176
 Shevtsova Lilia 72-73
 Shor Ilan 165-166, 171
 Sierra Óscar B. Pardo 144
 Sikora-Gaca Małgorzata 266
 Sikorski Radosław 31
 Singer J. David 222
 Smith Graham 74
 Snegur Mircea 164
 Snyder Timothy David 11
 Socor Vadimir 146
 Soroka George 79-80
 Stalin Józef 86, 93
 Stankiewicz Zigmund 76
 Steenbergen Marco R. 26

- Stępniewski Tomasz 75-77, 267
 Stewart Susan 202
 Stolarczyk Mieczysław 54
 Streleț Valeriu 160, 169-171
 Sturza Ion 160
 Subtelny Orest 74
 Szabaciuk Andrzej 76
 Szporluk Roman 79
 Szydłowska Aleksandra 44

 Tayler Jeffrey 89
 Taylor Michelle M. 105
 Techau Jan 207
 Ter-Matevosyan Vahram 254
 Ter-Petrosyan Levon 249
 Terzyan Aram 267
 Thompson Kenneth W. 94
 Timofiti Nicolae 160-161, 169
 Timoshenko Yulia 107
 Topadze Gogi 148
 Torsvik Per 91
 Trenin Dmitri 76
 Tsygankov Andrei 72, 73, 77
 Turchinov Alexander 107
 Turk Danilo 251
 Tusk Donald 56
 Tyagnibok Oleg 107

 Urdze Sigita 176, 180, 183, 267
 Ursu Valentina 146
 Usatii Renat 145, 159-160, 162, 164-165, 169

 Varfolomeyev Oleg 31
 Varol Ozan O. 107-108
 Veronin Vladimir 146-147
 Voronin Vlad 157-159, 164

 Walter 65
 Walter-Steinmeier Frank 31
 Wang Xian-Ju 121
 Wehner Markus 10
 Weidenfeld Werner 133, 140
 Wettig Gerhard 200
 Wężyk Katarzyna 80
 Whitehead Laurence 105
 Whitman Richard G. 149

 Wilson Andrew 74, 90
 Wittkowsky Andreas 135
 Wojna Beata 43, 46
 Wolczuk Kataryna 72, 152, 205
 Wolff Stefan 149
 Wóycicki Kazimierz 135

 Xue Wei 118, 124

 Yacenyuk Aresniy 107
 Yakunin Vladimir 146
 Yan Xue-Tong 125
 Yanukovych Viktor Fedorovich 31, 45, 77,
 83, 98, 103-104-106, 109
 Yarosh Dimitriy 107
 Yeltsin Boris 72, 200
 Youngs Richard 176, 179, 206-207
 Yue X.-K. 119
 Yushchenko Viktor 75, 103

 Zald Mayer N. 107
 Zdaniuk Bartłomiej 158
 Zevelev Igor 72
 Zhang Wen-Mu 123
 Zhang Wen-Zong 118, 124
 Zhao Shengnan 113
 Zhu X.-Z. 124
 Zurabyan Levon 227

 Арбатова Г. А. 92
 Ведернікова Інна 99
 Велимеев Тахир 97
 Воронов Владимир 89
 Гегель Георг Вильгельм Фридрих 90
 Городецкая Наталья 37
 Горяшко Сергей 37-38
 Душенов Константин 89
 Здравомыслов Андрей Григорьевич 84
 Исаев Андрей 90
 Киссинджер Генри 92
 Кравчук Леонид 89
 Левыкин Юрий 89
 Львова В. В. 92
 Мальський Маркіян З. 91, 94
 Мацях Михайло М. 91, 94
 Мельников Кирилл 37

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Мельтюхов М. И. 95 | Роик Михаэль 90 |
| Морозов Александр 90 | Рябчук Микола 99 |
| Мостова Юлія 99 | Сафронов Иван 37-38 |
| Новиков Юрий 97 | Субботін А. А. 92 |
| Панарин Сергей Алексеевич 84 | Хантингтон Самюэл 97 |
| Перепелиця Григорій Миколайович 84 | Шелест Г.В. 84 |
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