

## EUROPEANIZATION OF ROMANIAN FOREIGN POLICY

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**Abstract:** *The paper discusses various aspects of the Europeanization of Romanian foreign policy: elite socialization, bureaucratic reorganization, institutional and policy adaptation to the requirements and exigencies of EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), projection of national interests onto CFSP agenda and decisions. There is very little written in the literature on the subject of Romanian foreign policy Europeanization. From this standpoint this article fills a gap and indicates an area of research in need to be explored. The paper is using a series of Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) documents related to its organizational changes as well as a number of interviews with diplomats. It is trying to test in the case of Romania a few relevant theses written by significant authors with reference to the Europeanization of other Member States. It draws a number of conclusions – most of them confirming important theses on Europeanization. It ends by remarking the uneven character and the short length of the Romanian foreign policy Europeanization.*

**Keywords:** *Europeanization, foreign policy, Romania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, national adaptation to EU, projection of national interests, Republic of Moldova*

The theme of 'Europeanization' is increasingly discussed in the literature dedicated to European studies. More and more conferences are dedicated to the subject and debates are developed around it. But what is 'Europeanization' and what is the relevance of using the concept? Can it be applied to foreign policy? If so, what can we meaningfully say about the Europeanization of the Romanian foreign policy? These are the major questions this paper is going to address, with a particular focus on the last question.

The added value of this article resides in the qualitative analysis of significant empirical data: interpretation of foreign affairs ministers' interviews on Romania's foreign policy change, evaluations of the Romanian foreign policy actions meant to promote the

national interest at the EU level, successive organizational schemes of the Romanian MFA, interpretation of interview answers of MFA officials (director and director general levels) with significant experience in working in Romanian diplomacy on EU affairs.

### I. What is 'Europeanization'?

Johan Olsen remarks the ambiguity of 'Europeanization', identifying five possible meanings: changes in external boundaries (enlargement), developing institutions at the European level, central penetration of national systems of governance, exporting forms of political organization, a political unification project (Olsen, 2002: 923-924). Starting from this multiplicity of use, the term 'Europeanization' seems to be close to

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important aspects of European integration, to the point of raising the question whether the concept is useful at all and whether it cannot successfully be replaced by 'European integration'. Olsen himself is questioning the usefulness of the concept, given its resemblance to various aspects of European integration.

Beyond the multiplicity of meanings identified by Olsen, in the literature on Europeanization, one can distinguish, however, a "mainstream meaning" of Europeanization, which is a composite concept. In this sense, 'Europeanization' seems to be a concept that covers a suite of phenomena describing a distinct process, being defined by the following four dimensions (Strang, 2007: 11):

- **adaptation of national policies to EU requirements and policies (downloading);**
- **national projection of Member States' interests**, or the attempt of Member States to promote their interests onto the agenda and policies of the EU (uploading);
- **elite socialization;**
- **bureaucratic re-organization.**

However, there is no consensus among authors not even with respect to these features. Some authors discuss it in terms of two complementary processes: adaptation of national policies to EU policies and national projection of interests at the EU level (Börzel, 2002, for example). Michael Smith claims that (1) elite socialization and (2) bureaucratic reorganization are two indicators of national adaptation, besides (3) constitutional change, and (4) increase in public support for European political co-operation (Smith, 2000: 617). Featherstone (2003) proposes as well to use elite socialization and bureaucratic reorganization as indicators of national adaptation. Certainly, this indicates a certain overlap of the dimensions

identified of Europeanization. A series of methodological problems have been identified by other authors, including the difficulty to measure 'national adaptation' or the difficulty to separate other factors from the EU factor in impacting upon national foreign policy (Saurugger, 2005).

A number of authors focus either mainly or exclusively on the adaptation of national policies, or downloading, dimension. In this sense, Europeanization was defined as "the reform of domestic structures, institutions and policies in order to meet the requirements of the systematic logic, political dynamics and administrative mechanisms of European integration" (Joseph S., 2006 apud Moga, 2009). In his case study of the Europeanization of Greek foreign policy, Spyros Economides (2005) tends to disregard the downloading dimension, focusing almost exclusively on the national projection approach. He writes: "[t]he real Europeanization of Greek foreign policy has occurred in the domain of the translocation of Greek foreign policy preferences and interests in at least two key issue areas, Turkey and Cyprus, onto the EU agenda" (Economides, 2005: 472). Joanna Kaminska, writing about the Europeanization of Polish foreign policy, is also focusing on the uploading dimension, despite the fact that she defines Europeanization by both "top-down" and "bottom-up" processes (Kaminska, 2007: 5).

Some authors explicitly reject the uploading dimension because they believe that the process of projecting the national interest onto the EU agenda reflects strictly an intergovernmental approach of states towards EU and CFSP.<sup>1</sup> Denca's comparative study on Hungary, Romania and Slovakia (2009) is a good example in this sense. He focuses, like Joseph, on the downloading dimension.

<sup>1</sup> Common Foreign and Security Policy.

## II. Can we talk about the Europeanization of national foreign policy?

The fact that the European foreign policy is largely an intergovernmental sector makes us wonder whether we can talk at all about the Europeanization of the Member States' foreign policy. Member States supposedly defend and protect this key domain of sovereignty (Wong, 2005). CFSP is essentially an intergovernmental activity and the fact that the ministries of foreign affairs of Member States are well represented in the Permanent Representation (PermReps) offices in Brussels is proof of that. A wide range of ministries and governmental departments are also represented within the PermReps. However, they are mainly dealing with Council issues – major intergovernmental institution of the EU. The *acquis communautaire* has been minimal in the area of foreign policy; the chapter on foreign affairs was one of the quickest chapters to be closed during the negotiations of many present Member States with EU, including Romania. Still, there are aspects related to foreign policy which are undergoing changes under the four dimensions of Europeanization, and these are going to be discussed further down.

The creation of the CFSP is a process, still in its very beginning despite the fact that the European Political Cooperation started in 1970. Some authors tend to downplay it; others tend to value the progress achieved. Being a process and not a simple result, to be measured in a number of common declarations, positions, actions and strategies, it should be approached as such: as a process. Europeanization of national foreign policy does not presuppose a perfect record of common agreement in foreign affairs between Member States. CFSP does not mean that all EU are required to speak and act the same in foreign affairs matters. However, CFSP involves an increasing coordination

and construction of common values and norms (like communication, consultation, confidentiality, consensus (Smith, 2000)), ways of approaching international issues, concerted actions in view of a possible future unified European foreign policy. The Lisbon Treaty emphasizes “the development of mutual political solidarity among Member States” (Art 24.2), ‘loyalty’ and “the need to work together” (Art.24.3). In the light of these ideas, it is legitimate to talk about the Europeanization of Member States' foreign policy.

If we turn our attention to the Europeanization of Romanian foreign policy we might notice the scarcity of studies and research in this area. One notable exception is represented by the study of the Europeanization of Romanian foreign policy in comparative perspective, written by Sorin Denca (2009). His study conceptually refuses to deal with the dimension of uploading, as mentioned earlier. However, his study is rich in discussing the bureaucratic reorganization as well as the socialization and the national adaptation dimensions. Other studies on Romania's Europeanization draw on regionalism (Dobre, 2009), gender equality (Chiva, 2009), minority issues (Dobre, 2003), on conditionality and its role in Europeanization (Papadimitriou, Phinnemore, 2004), on Romania's entry into the EU in comparative perspective (Papadimitriou, Gateva, 2009).

## III. The Europeanization of foreign policy

Most authors consider the European Political Cooperation (EPC) as the starting point of the process of Europeanization of foreign policy. Established in 1970, EPC represented the beginning of the cooperation and coordination between Member States in the area of foreign policy. It was also the beginning of a long process of learning

to work together, as well as of the process of **adaptation of Member States to the common foreign policy** (the downloading dimension of Europeanization).

The issue of Member States' adaptation to EU requirements is at least bi-dimensional, presupposing changes at the institutional level and at the policy level, regardless of the area of adaptation. In the area of foreign policy, Europeanization presupposes changes at the level of the institutions involved in the process of creating foreign policy (ministries, Permanent Representations etc, but also norms, procedures etc) and at the level of the policy itself (content, orientation, values, standpoints).

One way of defining 'national adaptation' is: "the ability of a political actor to change its behaviour so as to meet challenges in the form of new demands by altering the means of action" (Manners, Whitman, 2000, apud Strang, 2007). Michael Smith (2000) discusses this dimension of Europeanization in terms of "impact on national foreign policy both in style and substance." Every Member State went through a process of adaptation in the process of becoming EU member. Every Member State is undergoing a process of continuous adaptation of its institutions and policy in order to facilitate its participation in EU affairs and policies. This is valid in the case of CFSP. In this sense, "there is no template for policy adaptation within the EU" (Longhurst and Miskimmon, 2007)

The EU imposed conditionality has been the main driving force behind the Europeanization in the case of the latest waves of enlargement (2004, 2007) (Moga, 2009; Chiva, 2009). The issue of conditionality as motivating power behind the Europeanization of national foreign policy has been extensively analyzed in the case of Greece (Economides, 2005, for example), an older Member State. But it has also been analyzed in the case of a non-EU

country like Turkey (Moga, 2009; Meltem Muftuler-Bac, Yaprak Gursoy, 2009). Meltem Muftuler-Bac and Yaprak Gursoy show how Turkish foreign policy changed in content (towards Iraq, and in a series of other areas). EU conditionality in the area of foreign affairs has proven to have a pacific effect on countries having a record of conflicts and tensed relationships. In the case of Romania, the closure of Chapter 27 of negotiations, started in 2000, meant that Romania had to align to the foreign policy declarations of EU, without having any veto right (right acquired after gaining membership status in 2007).

Various studies reflect the ways in which Member States act in order to have their **foreign policy national interests projected onto the EU agenda**. Kaminska is writing about Poland's successes in promoting its foreign policy agenda related to Ukraine and Belarus, focusing thus on achievements of Polish diplomacy in projecting the national interest onto CFSP. Jose Torreblanca is writing about Spain's successes in promoting its Mediterranean and Latin American agendas. He shows that in the case of Spain, EU turned into an extremely forceful amplifier of national interests (Torreblanca, 2001). "[T]he EU has provided an excellent opportunity to enhance the foreign policy capacity and the national goals of a country which had a large and problematic foreign policy agenda, scant economic resources to match ambitions with policies..." (Torreblanca, 2001: 5). The examples of analysis may go on with the cases of UK (Bulmer and Burch, 2005), Germany (Longhurst and Miskimmon, 2007), France (Wong, 2006), and many more.

Each EU Member State has to gain as a result of its very EU membership. First, being one of the most powerful economic actors in the world and the first worldwide contributor to the development of less developed countries, EU provides to its

members prestige, high regard and attention from countries outside the EU. Second, the nature of the CFSP decision-making process guarantees the fact that each Member State has a voice, is listened to and its interests are taken into account. The veto power of every Member State guarantees precisely that.

The projection of national interests onto the EU agenda depends to a certain extent on the capacity of the elite to deal with their counterparts in Member States, on their capacity to know the interests of others as well as to communicate appropriately their interest and with the right means. Socialization presupposes social learning, a “mechanism whereby national policy-makers learn the norms and rules characterizing the EU foreign policy culture ... In other words, their preferences and behaviour are being Europeanized.” (Denca, 2009).

Thus, *‘elite socialization’* represents an essential dimension of Europeanization, including in the field of foreign policy. Scholars of Europeanization are discussing about ‘norms entrepreneurs’ (Börzel and Risse 2003: 58-59; Sedelmeier 2006), who are those policy-makers directly involved and most exposed to EU norms and rules, such as experts and diplomats from PermReps in Brussels, diplomats from relevant European departments in the MFA. In some interpretations, the success of EPC came through socialization, through the “club atmosphere” of talks within EPC, through the contacts and networking at the civil servant levels (who have permanent positions, unlike political appointees) (Nuttall, 1997, apud Smith, 2000). The evolution of the EPC towards CFSP led to the development of a specific culture and specific procedures of Member States’ representatives in the area of foreign policy. These representatives share a culture, procedures, and norms which differ fundamentally from the culture, procedures,

and norms of a bargaining process (that defines an intergovernmental type of relations). “They are “problem solving” norms and procedures: communication and consultation prior to common decision-making, development of a *communauté de vue* on what constitutes ‘European interests’, confidentiality among members, consensus.” (Smith, 2000: 615-616).

Smith (2004) rejects the intergovernmentalist position according to which CFSP decisions are taken on the basis of the lowest denominator. Decisions are not taken in this manner, rather the representatives of Member States are consulting each other, are learning very well the positions of others, they realize the importance of reaching a common position, they are building consensus, they tend to compromise and reach a median position.

One of the effects of becoming EU member and of the need to adapt to European structures is the *bureaucratic reorganization* – important dimension of Europeanization. Political cooperation priorities become national priorities. As Smith (2000) puts it, political cooperation: 1. requires the establishment of new national officials to serve it; 2. encourages the expansion of most national diplomatic services; 3. leads to a clear reorientation of national foreign ministries toward ‘Europe’ in order to improve their handling of European affairs. In turn, bureaucratic change leads to the reinforcement of cooperation norms.

The process of implementing the *acquis communautaire* requires a significant increase in the bureaucracy needed to implement the *acquis* at national level. However, in the case of foreign policy, it was not the *acquis* that determined the increase of bureaucracy in number and complexity, but the need to adapt to the whole coordination process and to the entire complex infrastructure needed to



support the decision-making bodies in foreign policy (Council of EU, COREPER I, COREPER II, COPS, working groups and committees behind them). That requires an increase in number of diplomats at the level of the national MFA and in the Permanent Representation in Brussels. These two elements are to be verified with respect to the Romanian case further down. Another hypothesis to be tested in the Romanian case is this: policies are Europeanized at a faster pace than the governmental structures, the bureaucracy, the organizational infrastructure (Bulmer, Burch, 1998).

#### IV. What are the dimensions of the Europeanization of the Romanian foreign policy?

The studies dedicated to the Europeanization of Romanian policies and institutions are scarce. However, a number of features may be described and a series of hypothesis might be verified with reference to the Romanian case. The scarcity of studies on Europeanization is maximal in the case of foreign policy. One significant article writes, in a comparative perspective, about the Europeanization of Romanian foreign policy (Denca, 2009). Denca enumerates the areas in which Romania, like other former socialist countries who became EU members (2004/2007) had to make changes. Romania: had to adopt the existing *acquis* and institutions in the field of CFSP, without having the option to project their own preferences; had to align her national positions to the EU common positions, common strategies, joint actions, and political declarations; had to refashion the administrative structure needed for taking part in the political and technical committees and working parties of the Council of Ministers; had to set up new political-expert positions and new communication

infrastructure for sending and receiving confidential information had to be created; had to change embassies into 'permanent representations' (PermRep) to execute a wider and more complex range of functions.

All these elements are part of a complex process of ***national adaptation*** of Romania's policy to the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Romania had little to adapt in terms of *acquis*. However, Romania's representatives had a lot to learn in terms of practices, of style, of ways of conducting relations with European partners in the period of accession negotiations (2000-2004). The alignment to the common declarations of the EU was featuring among the obligations deriving from this chapter. This obligation was fulfilled very soon by Romania, after the closure of the chapter. "The period of time between signing the Treaty of Accession of Romania and Bulgaria (2005) and the actual accession (more than one year and a half) was spent by Romania's diplomats and representative observing the whole process of preparing decisions on foreign policy – at various levels" (Comanescu (1), 2008).

The involvement of the Romanian political elite in the process of European ***elite socialization*** into the main norms of the process of building the Common Foreign and Security Policy started in the early 2000, after the closure of chapter 27 of negotiations on CFSP. However, only after 2005, were Romanian representatives able to observe the process of negotiations within CFSP. Since 2005, Romanian delegates had the right to observe the process of preparation of positions, decisions etc within CFSP and this was a further step in learning the „cuisine process" of CFSP, how the consensus is built in this process, says a director in the Romanian MFA who worked in the PermRep Brussels in top positions. The involvement in and the accumulation of practice in the area of building consensus within the CFSP

Council working groups and committees is a very recent phenomenon: beginning in 2007, when Romania became EU member.

The projection of national interests onto the EU agenda depends to a certain extent on the capacity of the elite to deal with their counterparts in Member States. In a way, smaller countries are disadvantaged within the mechanism of building consensus in the CFSP, even though they have the same right of veto. For representatives of more powerful states within EU it is easier to rally other states to pursue your interests, as one MFA director was asserting. "Europeanization as socialization depends to an important extent on the way in which foreign policy elite perceives the distribution of power within the EU" (Denca, 2009). If we look at the process of elite socialization from this viewpoint, Romanian foreign policy entrepreneurs are disadvantaged, so far. Romania's record of integration in the EU after 2007 is far from being excellent. The Mechanism of Cooperation and Verification has been extended in the area of justice, Romanian policy makers did not perform well when faced with the crisis etc. G. Pridham exquisitely showed in his paper presented at a conference on Europeanization in Bucharest (June 2010).

In terms of socialization, of learning the norms and rules of EU foreign policy culture, the newer to the club the least socialized in these areas. Romania, like other countries of the former Soviet Bloc, was less socialized into European values and had a pretty 'illiterate' political elite from the viewpoint of European values. Perhaps it is worthwhile noting that the culture of foreign policy elite, of the diplomats included, was characterized by duplicity (fed by the simultaneous dissidence of Romania within the Soviet Block and at

the same time functioning within this Block, Warsaw Treaty, Comecon) and by a historic aversion towards the Big Brother (USSR). Romania's ambition, pursued efficiently by the diplomatic elite over the last 15 years, to become NATO and EU member, led to a situation in which Romania had to make decisive steps to overcome this duplicity. The statements of former Minister of foreign affairs Andrei Plesu's on this issue are exquisite.<sup>2</sup> Romanian political elite was faced in the late 1990s with the situation in which it had to prove its commitment to democratic values and to the Allied position (NATO's need to be supported in bombing Belgrade, 1999). CDR, the coalition in power at the time (1996-2000), proved to have decision-makers (elite) able to make such a difficult step towards decisiveness and commitment to the Allies, as opposed to duplicity and lack of indecisiveness. In terms of foreign policy culture, Romania is coming from far away towards the EU, and the journey is not over.

Despite the short period of Romanian elite socialization into CFSP norms and practices, Romanian diplomats rapidly adapted to the reflex of coordination and they joined *l'ésprit de corps* various analysts are talking about when describing foreign policy cooperation ever since its inception, according to one of the MFA directors interviewed. Nonetheless, as one director general was saying, there is still a long way to go in accumulating experience and the so called 'European reflex'. The diplomats and civil servants involved, Romanian administration, needs to learn more in the area of specific practices, rules and norms of the EU mechanisms and institutions. Being questioned what diplomats learned before 2007 and after 2007, one diplomat answered: before 2007 we learned

<sup>2</sup> Published in weekly magazine *Dilema* and in *Foreign Policy Romania* journal.

regulations, procedures and the *acquis*, with an accent on *acquis*; after 2007 we learned regulations, procedures, *acquis* and responsibility, with an accent on regulations and procedures. Before 2007, knowledge of the *acquis* was essential; after 2007, knowledge of regulations and procedures proved to be essential in order to be able to act responsibly within CFSP.

The learning process takes time, and Romania became member less than four years ago. The discrepancy between the norms practice in Bucharest ('in centrala' in Romanian, that is, in the MFA headquarters) and the norms learnt by part of the elite working in Brussels is large (or at least this was the situation in the first years after 2007). One example given in an interview was the inflexibility of the instructions coming from the headquarters of the Ministry in Bucharest and the need for flexibility felt by participants in negotiations in the working groups in Brussels, as part of the process of consensus building. In relation to this issue, here is what Denca writes:

"An important asset that national representatives in Brussels bring to the capital is that they have a comprehensive understanding of the EU... In addition, national representatives know when a particular position is unsustainable. In such a case, to carry on with the national mandate received from the capital may eventually lead to isolation in the group. Therefore, they may convince colleagues in the capital that it is not realistic to go on and a change of the national position is required (interviews, Romanian and Slovak PermReps, Brussels, December 2007)." (Denca, 2009: 397)

Leaving aside the creation of successive institutions specifically dedicated to the European integration (the early Department

of European Integration, the Ministry of European Integration, at present Department of European Affairs), this paper focuses on the changes occurred in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in Romania's mission to Brussels during the last 10 years. The questions to be answered are the following. What were the effects of Romania's process of accession to the EU on the infrastructure of foreign affairs? What does the ***bureaucratic reorganization*** consist of?

As a result of Romania's accession to the EU, the Permanent Mission (Embassy) of Romania to the EU in Brussels changed into Permanent Representation (PermRep). The number of diplomats and representatives in the PermRep increased massively over the last 10 years, being determined by the necessities of negotiations and the enhanced functions and attributions mirroring the increased complexity of Romania's relationship with EU. According to a director general from the MFA with extensive experience in Romania's mission in Brussels, in 2002 there were approximately 20 diplomats and about 30 other representatives from various ministries, thus about 50 staff in total. Today, there is approximately 100 staff in the PermRep, the number of diplomats being doubled within this figure. The range of functions performed by PermReps changed as well (Denca, 2009) so as to serve the new position of Romania as EU member.

The reorganization of the bureaucracy in the area of foreign policy is not a formal matter; it is a substantial change: it affects the ways in which political decision is made in Bucharest. The PermRep was restructured so as to respond to the requirements of Romania's accession to the EU. On the foreign affairs side, the PermRep had to be restructured so as to correspond to Romania's need to fully participate in the CFSP process and institutions – that is, to have diplomats



to participate in various institutionalized levels below the Council: working groups, committees, COREPER I, II, COPS etc

With respect to the reformation of the foreign affairs service, Minister Comanescu mentions several times, in 2008, the reform of the Romanian diplomacy that started with the consular section. Indeed, there have been and there are important pressures coming from Romania's commitments toward EU, related to the freedom of movement of citizens in the EU, related to Romania's aspiration to enter the Schengen area in 2011, and related to the development of the European Home Affairs area, reflected in the relatively recent set up of the Directorate General Home Affairs (July 2010). These resulted in the priority of reforming the consular section of the Romanian diplomacy.

With regard to the reform of the diplomatic service, one can notice the following:

1) diplomacy became more and more politicized over the last few years to the point of fully contradicting the legal framework<sup>3</sup> that requires diplomats not to be politically affiliated – thus indicating that old duplicity reflexes are not dead;

2) despite the fact that successive directors of human resources have been trained by prestigious trainers in excellent programs, despite the fact that almost every minister stated the need to reform the human resources area,

(a) the diplomatic career is unpredictable because of the lack of rules and the supremacy of clientele and favouritism,

(b) the promotions and career path are often not dependent on merit but on connections, clientele and political criteria,

(c) some of the most talented diplomats defect and join EU institutions or the private sector,

(d) potential talented newcomers are discouraged by current recruiting practices;<sup>4</sup>

3) every new minister who comes to office (and there were frequent changes over the last three and a half years since Romania's accession to EU: Adrian Cioroianu (2007), Lazar Comanescu (2008), Cristian Diaconescu (2009), Teodor Baconschi (2010)) changes the organizational scheme of the ministry (the organizational scheme promised by the present minister is still awaited by diplomats and the public opinion as well); however, this does not amount to the reform of the ministry.

These are, in short, aspects unchanged in the MFA, despite the declarations of the need to reform diplomacy.

However, beyond these unchanged aspects, one may notice certain Europeanizing trends in the way in which the MFA organizational scheme (*'organigrame'* in Romanian) evolved over the last 11 years. In the organizational scheme of 1999, one may find a simple Direction European Union under DG European and Euro-Atlantic Organizations. In 2003, a Directorate General European Union was in place, besides other DGs centered on international organizations. In the same scheme (2003) 'Europe' is covered by a Deputy Minister responsible with bilateral relations. The DG EU and bilateral relations in Europe went separately. In 2004 a Deputy Minister in charge of European Affairs took responsibility for DG EU and DG Wider Europe, thus uniting the two separate

<sup>3</sup> Statutul Corpului Diplomatic (Legea Nr.269/2003).

<sup>4</sup> The last entry competition to the ministry has been stalled for unclear reasons. The court decided recently to reject the request of the Ministry to invalidate the competition.

entities. ODA is included in the 2004 scheme but not under the Deputy Minister for European Affairs, but under DG Economic and Political Affairs. Ever since 2004, the Romanian MFA had a deputy minister for European Affairs. 2004 was the year of finalizing the accession negotiations with EU. In the 2006 scheme one can notice, under DG EU, a growth in complexity of directorates dealing with EU affairs, including directorate for development assistance (ODA), general affairs, external relations, EU policies. The area of relations with EU countries has been absorbed within DG EU; the DG Wider Europe comprehended Western Balkans, Republic of Moldova, and Wider Europe directions. In the 2009 scheme, the DG Wider Europe was replaced by DG Regional Cooperation. This indicates a shift towards a perspective less focused on bilateral relations, but rather on multilateral relations. It could be related with Romania's ambition to become a regional leader, but also with a different approach to relationships with neighbours, inspired by participation in EU.

The current Minister of foreign affairs, Teodor Baconschi, claims that the new organizational scheme of the MFA, he announced some months ago, will be inspired by the organization of German and French ministries. The reason invoked is that such an organization would facilitate a visible and easy connection between various departments of the Romanian ministry and of their counterparts in other Member States. The intention goes in the direction of further Europeanizing the Romanian foreign policy, undoubtedly. Such a new structure would facilitate the communication, consultation and mutual knowledge and understanding of concerns and interests among EU Member States.

Up until now, the paper discussed the "downloading" dimension of Europeanization, if we consider that elite socialization and bureaucratic reorganization as indicators of Member States' adaptation to EU. In the following section the paper approaches the issue of Romania's foreign policy Europeanization, in its **projection of national interest dimension**.

A series of authors notice the lack of coherence of Romania's foreign policy (Miroiu, 2005; Gosu, 2004, 2006; Fati, 2009). Miroiu even questions whether Romania has a foreign policy. This precarious coherence might affect the success of Romania's initiatives to promote her interests at European level. It is difficult to project interests if one is not clear about them. A good example in this case is represented by Romania's policy towards the Republic of Moldova.

"Does Romania have a new Eastern foreign policy, as announced by President Băsescu almost 8 months ago? ... No. Neither at the theoretical level is there a coherent vision on the new Eastern foreign policy formulated, nor at the practical level can one notice a consistent path of action in this area." (Gosu, 2006) "Romania does not have a clear and well settled strategy on the Republic of Moldova. Between the two states the politics resulted from angry diplomacies and the spontaneities of the two presidents [Voronin and Basescu – n.a.]" (Fati, 2009)

It might be the case that writing, spelling out such a strategy is not possible. The inconsistencies referred to above are partly due to the internal fragmentation of views with respect to Romania's relationship with Republic of Moldova: militancy for unification of Moldova with Romania at

one end of the spectrum (allured by the president and former ministers of foreign affairs) and oblivion at the other end. Support for Moldova to get closer and eventually become EU member is a middle ground.

The interest in intensifying the relationship with Republic of Moldova was explicitly spelled out by president Basescu right in the beginning of his first mandate (2004). Beyond incoherence, Romania tried and succeeded, to a certain degree, in projecting her interest in moving Moldova closer to the EU, despite the duplicity of the former, Communist, administration in Chisinau. Former Minister of foreign affairs, Lazar Comanescu, repeatedly mentioned Romania's contribution to moving Moldova closer to the EU. The same goes for Cristian Diaconescu and the present Minister, Teodor Baconschi. "Romania was, and will continue to be the strongest supporter of getting closer to the point of accession of the Republic of Moldova to the EU" (Comanescu (1), 2008). "The subject Republic of Moldova was included on the agenda of General Affairs and External Relations Council (CAGRE) at the request of Romania." (Diaconescu, 2009) Romanian ministers of foreign affairs seemed to be more interested in the 'Europeanization' of the Republic of Moldova, while the former Moldovan president Voronin was rather ambiguous about it.

More concrete and substantial steps in supporting Republic of Moldova were taken after the change of power there in 2009. Subsequent to this power change, the Romanian Minister of foreign affairs, Baconschi, was asserting that:

"The decision of EU to start negotiations of a new agreement with the Republic of Moldova is to a large extent due to Romania" ... "[I]n the beginning of this

year, 2010, a Group of support for Moldova at the initiative of Romania was set up. [...] "[A]n agreement for financial assistance of RM worth 100 million euros was signed this year." (Baconschi (1), 2010)

These actions may indicate a certain capacity developed by Romania to co-opt other Member States, to form alliances and rally others to act according to her interest. However, Romania is not the only EU country with an interest in promoting Republic of Moldova's getting closer to EU and becoming EU member. Poland, to give a relevant example, is acting in the same direction, and very successfully. The Baltic States are also very sympathetic to Moldova's cause of getting closer to the EU. Nevertheless, **if we were to name one of Romania's successful directions in foreign policy within EU, in terms of projecting her national interest, the case of the Republic of Moldova would be the most conspicuous.** One may suppose that by 2010, Romanian representatives learnt important lessons from the EU membership experience. Romania may be on her way towards turning EU "into an extremely forceful amplifier of national interests" – to use Torreblanca's expression (Torreblanca, 2001). It is worthwhile to note here that, as a director general in the MFA was witnessing, that most of the activity of Romanian diplomats is hidden to the public view. Even research in this area would be extremely difficult to carry on.

One hypothesis to be further tested is that **Romania's foreign policy incoherence with respect to the East noticed by various theorists is gradually fading away precisely because of her participation in the European Common Foreign and Security Policy.** Under the impact of working within CFSP, with the

European partners, Romanian officials and representatives realized that unification with the Republic of Moldova is close to being out of question. Therefore, the idea of supporting Republic of Moldova to join the EU at some point in the future became much more powerful.

Romania's EU membership is contributing to the development of the bilateral relations with Republic of Moldova especially since 2009, when a pro-European alliance took power in Moldova – after a period of time in which barriers were erected on Prut, and in which Romania was seen as an unwanted advocate of Moldova by the Communist administration.<sup>5</sup> Being an EU member, Romania's power to influence the common EU foreign policy has increased. Her capacity to offer expertise and to support Moldova's efforts has increased.

A further step would be to recognize that unless Romania improves her relationship with Russia, further progress with respect to the Republic of Moldova is likely to be stalled. Russia has important leverage means in the Republic of Moldova. The most obviously powerful is her presence in Moldova's territory beyond Dniester (Transnistria) – but there are other less obvious ways in which Russia is furthering with other means her former Soviet. Good signs in the direction of improving Romania's relations with Russia are indicated by the present Minister of foreign affairs: "I believe we have to start a new relationship with Russia. [...] My intuition is that an improvement of the Romanian – Russian relationship might increase our shares in the European Union"<sup>6</sup> (Baconschi (2), 2010). However, a number

of officials were mentioning the idea of the need to overcome Cold War reflexes over the last few years, without being able to actually overcome them.

Romania's participation in the CFSP process may act as a stimulus in this direction, given (a) the existing strategic partnership between EU and Russia, (b) the interest of large European countries in developing the EU – Russia relationship, as well as other circumstances like (c) the oil and gas dependency on Russia of many EU states. One may suppose that even the new attitude of the present Minister of foreign affairs represents a **change of attitude, an intention of policy change, impacted upon by EU membership**. And it does not look as an intention, so far. The Minister has appointed a special adviser on Russian and Central Asian affairs, Dr. Armand Gosu, in the beginning of 2010 – an excellent expert on Russian history and current affairs.

One may identify other actions of Romanian diplomacy in the direction of national projection: "we want to associate ourselves with Poland in a political sponsorship for Ukraine's EU membership target" (Baconschi (3), 2010) and this sponsorship is welcome by Ukraine (talks between minister Baconschi and his Ukrainian homologue, Gryshchenko, 2010). Certainly, this objective may clash with the objective of improving Romania's relationship with Russia, but the issue of Eastwards enlargement of the EU is rather an EU issue, and might skilfully be positioned aside from the Romania – Russia relationship.

Romania is using, like other countries in the 2004-2007 wave, her membership in

<sup>5</sup> New elections are due to take place in November 2010 which might alter the present power configuration.

<sup>6</sup> The original text: "Eu cred că trebuie să începem o nouă relație cu Rusia. E important să nu rămânem la clișee legate de Războiul Rece, cu care, de altfel, eram aliați în cadrul Pactului de la Varșovia. Trebuie să privim lucrurile așa cum sunt. Rusia e o putere regională, în același timp un furnizor strategic de materii prime pentru o mare parte a statelor europene. Intuiția mea este că o ameliorare a relației româno-ruse ne-ar crește acțiunile în Uniunea Europeană."

EU to bolster her relationships in the region (with Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia). Romania is using her EU membership in relation with other countries in the world as well. Minister Comanescu, among others, mentions this idea in one of his speeches. Spain, like other countries which accessed EU over the last decades, did the same thing, as Torreblanca shows. Being a member of the EU represents an asset in the diplomatic relations with other countries in the world as well. However, Romania needs allies within EU in order to pursue her interests and her capacity to rally others depends on her internal performance as well as on the skills of our diplomats. Romania's capacity to promote and support Republic of Moldova's getting closer to the EU also depends on the parties in power in the Republic of Moldova and on the capacity of the Moldovan elite in power to cooperate with Romanian authorities as well as with other Member States. In this very period, the political landscape's stability in Moldova is weakened because of the fragmentation of the alliance in power and because of the constitutional crisis that tainted Moldovan politics in the last year and a half.

## V. Conclusions

Ever since Romania became EU member (2007) her diplomats embarked on a difficult journey of learning: learning the interests and positions of other Member States with respect to a large spectrum of foreign policy issues, learning the importance of reaching a common position, learning how to contribute to building consensus, learning how to compromise in order to reach a common position, and learning many more informal but powerful EU shared norms and values. The diplomats interviewed emphasized the process of learning (the CFSP "cuisine process" as one of them put it) that started before 2007 for them. The learning process

is, however, uneven. Those exposed to the EU norms, values and European reflex in Brussels are more socialized into EU norms whereas colleagues in Bucharest, less exposed, tended to display difficulties in absorbing the value of flexibility in dealing with fellow Member States' representatives. Building consensus is an important element in CFSP, and this importance is grasped by diplomats socialized into the decision-making process in Brussels.

The hypothesis according to which accession to the EU leads to an increase of the number of diplomats at the level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as an increase of the number and complexity of the PermRep in Brussels is verified in the case of Romania. The number of diplomats doubled in the PermRep in comparison with the number of diplomats before Romania's accession, in the Permanent Mission at the EU. Also, the number of diplomats in the MFA increased dramatically over the last 10 years, ever since Romania started EU negotiations. According to one of the directors interviewed, the number almost doubled. The structure of the MFA changed so as to mirror the EU functions and Romania's new status as EU member, as indicated by the evolution of MFA organizational schemes.

Overall, despite the short time since Romania entered the EU, she underwent a considerable process of national adaptation in the area of foreign policy. The question mark lies over the depth of the adaptation process. As the paper showed, the reform of diplomacy was announced, has partly been initiated, but there are considerable areas in which no reform has been made. In a sense, the delay in reforming the foreign policy institutional infrastructure is a proof for the thesis that policies are Europeanized at a faster pace than governmental structures, the bureaucracy, the organizational infrastructure (Bulmer, Burch, 1998). The



foreign policy of Romania has been so far notably influenced in content by her EU membership; it has been Europeanized to an important degree. This is less true with respect to the organizational infrastructure, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Organizations are more difficult to change than policies. This hypothesis proves to be true in the case of Romanian foreign policy.

The Europeanization of Romanian foreign policy is a process with contradictory elements, characterized by successes in projecting the national interest (as the case of the Republic of Moldova indicates it), but also by behind-lagging and inertia in bureaucratic organization (like human resources management in diplomacy). It is, however, a young process that needs time to grow mature.

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